



After World War I **Atatürk** **repeated Selim's I** **scenario to deceive** **the Kurdish people**

Most of the Kurds lived within the states of the Ottoman Empire, and a part of them lived outside the borders of the Ottomans under political regimes; most of them were in Iran. According to the Ottoman statistics, some Turkish references estimate the number of Kurds within the Ottoman states in 1844 at about one million out of a total of 35 million inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire in its various states.

The Kurds played an important role throughout the Ottoman history, started with the alliance of the Kurdish Emirates with Selim I against Shah Ismail al-Safavi. Subsequently, the Ottomans bared their teeth when they exploited the Kurdish Nationalism for their benefit, and tried to domesticate and fuse it into the Turkish culture, which led to a direct clash between the Kurdish emirates and the Ottoman army; accordingly, the Kurdish Emirates lost their independence, which they enjoyed starting from the borders of the Ottomans, and were directly subjected to Istanbul. At that time, pages of hostility and clash between the Kurds and the Turks began.

Another new page in the history of Kurdish-Turkish relations, which began with the end of World War I and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, as the allied forces began to invade the states of the Ottoman Empire and even the heart of the state - Istanbul - and it became as if these Allied forces intended to divide the Turkish lands among themselves. To top it all off, the Ottoman government in Istanbul accepted the Treaty of Sèvres (concluded on August 1920) 10), which was not in favor of the Turks. At this point, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk came through, as he succeeded in forming a national government in Anatolia, and was able to gather the remainder of the Ottoman army under his control, as Atatürk rejected the Treaty of Sèvres, and was determined to resist the Allied forces that invaded the Turkish lands.

The Kurds fought alongside the Turks in World War I, and their favor was returned with repression, marginalization and executions.

As Sultan Selim I did when he asked to form an alliance with the Kurds during his conflict with the Safavids, Atatürk asked for help and sought for an ally with the Kurds to stand up to the Christian European invasion, and to support Islam and the Caliphate. Atatürk gave his word to the Kurds, that he would achieve their ambitions if they would stand by him against the invaders until achieving victory. Most of the Kurdish leaders already agreed to ally with Atatürk against the foreign armies, and their motive was to believe Atatürk, and in retaliation for the English army that occupied southern Kurdistan - i.e., Iraqi Kurdistan - as Iraq was occupied by Britain in World War I.

Kurdish sources mention that Atatürk told the Kurdish leaders that the Turks and the Kurds are the original owners of the country, and that victory will come by their hands, and that after achieving victory, Atatürk will recognize the independence of Kurdistan, and that the rights he will grant them shall be much more than what was stipulated in the Treaty of Sèvres, which Atatürk did not recognize.

Therefore, the Kurds joined the Turkish army led by Atatürk. The increase in the number of Kurdish people's representatives in the National Council formed by Atatürk in Ankara after the fall of Istanbul to the Allied forces, helped with that. Meanwhile, the Peace Conference in Paris was looking into the conditions of the Ottoman states and the peoples subject to them. A representative of the Kurdish people in this conference was the Kurdish General, Sharif Pasha, who was the head of the Kurdish delegation to the conference. The Kurds' support to Atatürk and the Turkish army in Anatolia, turned the scales; as the allies realized that the Kurds were not on their side.

According to Turkish sources, Kemal Atatürk managed to win over the Kurdish representatives to his side, and even sent the representative of the Kurds in the Lausanne conference, Ismat Pasha the Kurdish, to the conference that took place after the failure of the Treaty of Sèvres, where the latter was - at the same time - a representative of Turkey. At that time, he stated the famous historical declaration: "Turkey is for the Turkish and Kurdish peoples, who are equal before the Empire and enjoy equal national rights." This led the members of the Lausanne Conference to abandon the idea of the independence of Kurdistan, and to accept the idea of Turkey as a state with two peoples: Turkish and Kurdish. Thus, the Treaty of Lausanne failed to address the national rights and independence of Kurdistan, which were stipulated in the Treaty of Sèvres, which was not destined to survive.

While Kurdish sources indicate that the government of Atatürk after the Treaty of Lausanne, did not respect the fact that Turkey was a country of two peoples: the Turkish and the Kurdish, and resorted to the policy of Turkification, and weakening the Kurdish character, it even labelled the Kurds with "Turks of the mountains." This raised some Kurdish nationalist forces, and the matter was further aggravated by Kemal Atatürk's declaration to Westernize the Turkish society; Some Kurdish spectrums felt that the bond of religion that linked the Kurds and the Turks were easily abandoned by Atatürk, as he fell into the arms of Europe, embracing Westernization.

At that time, a revolution led by Sheikh Saeed the Kurdish, one of the senior Kurdish clerics, against the Turkish presence; this revolution began in (1925 AD), and it included the eastern provinces of Turkey. Sheikh Saeed was a Sufi, as he was the head of the Caliphs of the Naqshbandi Dervish.

In Ankara, it became clear that the Kurdish rebellion was rapidly spreading in the east of the country and had become a major threat to the Turkish government. Thus, the Turkish government declared a state of emergency; A law was passed to maintain public order, which grants extraordinary authority and powers to the Turkish government, also independence courts were established in the east of the country as well as in Ankara. These courts were given the power to issue death sentences to those it called "rebels."

It also sent large numbers of Turkish troops to the east of the country; these forces managed to eliminate this revolution, and arrested Sheikh Saeed the Kurdish, after which, the Independence Court in Diyarbakir sentenced him to death, along with 46 of his followers on June 1925) 29 AD), and the sentence was executed the next day.

Given that the Kurdish rebellion had begun at the hands of the Sufi dervishes, and their leader was from the Naqshbandi, Atatürk's attitudes against the Sufi dervishes evolved, so he closed all their private councils, dissolved their associations, and prohibited their meetings and celebrations.

The American historian Bernard Lewis records the repercussions of this revolution and the law on maintaining order on the whole of Turkey, saying: "The Public Order Law - Emergency Law - gave Kemal Atatürk the legal authority to deal, not only with the rebels in the east of the country, but also with political opponents in Istanbul, Ankara, and others. After the Kurdish rebellion, the Progressive Republican Party was banned, and opposition newspapers were strictly censored.

The Turkish betrayal to the Kurds made them believe more in their famous saying, "We have no friends but the mountains and the winds."

The Egyptian journalist Imad Al-Din Hussein refers to an important phenomenon in the history of the Kurds, saying: "We have no friends but the mountains and the winds." A saying repeated often by the Kurds, but the majority of their leaders do not comply with it. This saying is considerably true, given the mistaken bets and major disappointments of the Kurdish leaders, the last of which was the Turkish aggression against them in Syria and the fact that America sold them out.

1) Akml Aldin Ahsan Awghly and others, State Ottoman: History and Civilization, translated by: Salih Saadawi (Istanbul: Research Center for History and Arts, 1999).

2) Bernard Lewis: The Emergence of Modern Turkey, translated by: Qasim Abdo Qassem and Samia Muhammad (Cairo: The National Center for Translation, 2006).

3) Imad Al-Din Hussein: The Kurds... One Hundred Years of Lost Bets, Al-Shorouk News - Egypt, October 2019) 29).

References:

- 1) Akml Aldin Ahsan Awghly and others, State Ottoman: History and Civilization, translated by: Salih Saadawi (Istanbul: Research Center for History and Arts, 1999).
- 2) Bernard Lewis: The Emergence of Modern Turkey, translated by: Qasim Abdo Qassem and Samia Muhammad (Cairo: The National Center for Translation, 2006).
- 3) Imad Al-Din Hussein: The Kurds... One Hundred Years of Lost Bets, Al-Shorouk News - Egypt, October 2019) 29).