



A history of hostility and bloodshed

The most famous Kurdish Emirates which fought back the Ottoman occupation

The history of the Kurds under the Ottoman Empire is full of tragedies, as a result, the Turkish Republic carry the burden of this history, while the Kurds did not forget its tragic facts.

The most tragedy suffered by the Kurds; is that they felt that their lands were merely the frontier principalities between the Ottoman and Safavid fighting over their lands, and they were fuel for them. The Kurdish lands became a transit area and a meeting point between the armies of the Safavids and the Ottomans, and how many times Kurdistan was the scene of many battles between them, during which Kurdistan incurred heavy losses on the human and economic levels.


Kurdistan took economical and human strikes; given its geographical condition and being surrounded by two tyrannical forces.


As time passes and as conditions change, the Ottoman sultans did not respect the state of autonomy of the Kurdish Emirates. The clash between the Ottomans and the Kurds began in the era of Murad IV. The Ottoman armies violated the special condition of these emirates. We can see a lot of conflicting views on this matter between Kurdish and Ottoman sources; The Kurdish sources viewed this as a massacre to the Kurds, while the Ottoman sources described it as punitive campaigns for the Kurdish princes, and a subjugation of all the states to the authority of the central state. Things get worse in the nineteenth century as the Ottoman state grows weaker, and its economic crises, defeats in foreign wars, and the fall of some of its states into the hands of its enemies. Hence, the Ottoman Empire abandons the policy of decentralization that the Ottoman administration was recognized therewith, for long periods, and the state adopts a policy of centralization, which means direct confrontation with its subjects. In addition, this century was considered the era of nationalities, hence the great clash between Turkish nationalism and Kurdish nationalism, such as the clash between Turkish nationalism and other Armenian, Arab and, before them, Greek nationalities.

Some studies conducted on the documents of the Ottoman archives indicates to the complaints of the Kurds about the abuses of the Ottoman administration, especially that the Kurds initially maintained their loyalty to the Ottoman Sultan, for fear of falling into the hands of the Safavids.

In his study about the Kurds and Kurdish clans in the Ottoman archives, Muhammed Ali Ahmed observes the complaints of the people of Suruj district regarding the behaviors of the Ottoman army, as he presents a document dating back to (1845) explaining that the Ottoman army took a decision to discipline the people of Suruj for refusing to send men to participate in the Ottoman campaign on the Arabistan region.

The author also exhibits another document dating back to (1898) that narates the armed rebellion carried out by the people of Suruj and its surroundings against the soldier detachment. The author also monitors the forced displacement of Kurdish clans, which began in the last quarter of the eighteenth century and continued in the nineteenth century. These operations include the displacement of Kurdish clans from their areas of residence in northeastern Syria and present-day southeastern Turkey to the exile specified by the Topkapı Palace. The author exhibits a document explaining the displacement of the Kurds from the Marash area to the Raqqa area and its environs.

Not only were the displacements of the Kurds, but the clash between the Ottomans and the Kurds over the fall of the Kurdish Emirates, which had a kind of autonomy; we will present some examples of the fall of these Emirates.

Emirate of Soran:



Some interpret the name Soran as referring to the name of one of the main Kurdish Dialects, called the Sorani dialect. The Emirate of Soran was one of the most important Kurdish Emirates; It included Mosul, Kirkuk and Erbil. These emirates were reportedly characterized by tolerance and openness to the point where they allowed women to lead.

As stated before, the Ottomans abandoned the policy of decentralization and adopted the policy of centralization, as a result, the Ottoman army marched to the Emirate of Soran, where it launched a fierce attack. The Ottoman propaganda focused on religion, especially since the majority of the emirate's residents are Sunnis. The Ottomans won over some Kurdish scholars to their side, and these scholars issued a fatwa to the Kurdish people prohibiting fighting the Sultan's army, because it is the army of the Caliph. That this fatwa arguably played an important role in the defeat and fall of the Emirate.

Emirate of Bhan:

The Emirate of Bhan is one of the most important emirates, this emirate is located in the region of the island of Bhan in southeastern Anatolia, and most of its residents are Sunni Muslims. In the Ottoman era - as we mentioned before - the Emirate of Bhan became a hereditary, self-governing Emirate with subordination to the Topkapı Palace.

Qubat al-Jafi describes the Emirate of Bhan as the jewel of the Kurdish Emirates. The Emirate of Bhan is characterized by its long history. It was the last Kurdish Emirate to fall into the hands of the Ottomans. Some even compared it to the Emirate of Granada, being the last emirate to fall into the hands of the Spaniards in Andalusia.


The Emirate of Bhan aspired to repeat the Khedive experience in Egypt.


Sources narrate the story of one of the most important princes of Bhan, Prince Bedr Khan Pasha, this reformist prince who was extremely impressed with the experience of Muhammed Ali in Egypt, and wanted to emulate him and carry out major reforms in the Emirate of Bhan. Bedr Khan also worked on developing a Kurdish political project for the future of the Emirate, but his project conflicted with the policy of Ottoman centralism. Nevertheless, Bedr Khan continued his reform project, following the example of Muhammed Ali; where he was keen to build a strong army, and established an ammunition factory in Bhan. He was also interested in encouraging education in the Emirate, and even sent students to Europe.

The anticipated clash occurred between him and the Ottoman Sultan, when he refused to participate in the Sultan's foreign wars. As a result, the incident occurred between him and the Sultan's army, and he could not resist any longer, so he was finally forced to surrender.

At first, Amir Bedr Khan was sent as a captive to Istanbul; there, the Sultan exiled him and his family to the island of Cyprus. The Bedr Khan family dispersed in many countries, some of them arrived in Egypt and their descendants is one of the most famous Egyptian directors, "Ahmed Bedr Khan", and also his son, "Ali Bedr Khan".

The Ottoman Empire slandered the Kurdish Emirates, and caused a history of conflict between the policy of decentralization and the policy of centralization; this centralization policy failed to preserve the Ottoman Empire, but rather contributed to the struggle of nationalities in the Ottoman Empire.



References:

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