

**Editorial** | Djene Rhys Bajalan<sup>±</sup>  
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In this issue of *Kurdish Studies*, the eleventh since our first publication five years ago, we are again fortunate to have a thought-provoking collection of pieces covering a variety of different topics pertaining to the culture, history, and politics of the Kurds. This issue includes two original pieces written by Sacha Alsancakli and Aram Rafaat respectively, as well as a translation by Ethem Çoban of Joachim von Elbe's 1929 piece *Der englisch-türkische Mossulkonflikt* [The English-Turkish Conflict of Mosul].

In the opening piece, Sacha Alsancakli offers important insights into the cultural history of early modern Kurdistan through an examination of the *Sharafnāma*, a Persian language chronicle of Kurdistan and its nobility completed in the late sixteenth century. Scholars have long recognised the chronicle, composed by the hereditary Kurdish governor of Bitlis, Sharaf Khan, as one of the preeminent sources for understanding the history and culture of early modern Kurdistan. Indeed, Alsancakli has emerged as one of the leading scholars of the *Sharafnāma* with his 2017 article *Matrimonial Alliances and the Transmission of Dynastic Power in Kurdistan: The Case of the Diyādīnids of Bidlīs in the Fifteenth to Seventeenth Centuries*, receiving the University of Central Florida's "The Best Article Award in Kurdish Political Studies" for 2018. However, in his latest article in this issue of *Kurdish Studies*, rather than focusing on the *Sharafnāma* itself, Alsancakli lucidly examines two Turkish language translations of the chronicle produced in the late seventeenth century. In doing so, he provides new perspectives on the social meaning of the work as well as more broadly the process of cultural change in the region brought about by the advent of Ottoman rule.

While still maintaining a historical focus, Aram Rafaat's contribution takes us forward to the early twentieth century. It seeks to shed light upon the processes through which the Kurdish-inhabited districts of the former Ottoman vilayet of Mosul came to be incorporated into the newly formed Kingdom of Iraq. A number of historians, including Wadie Jwaideh, David McDowall and Saad Eskander, have tackled this topic before. However, these earlier studies often focused on Kurdish resistance to this process and, most notably, the efforts of Sheikh Mahmud Berzenci to establish a Kurdish nation-

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state in districts in and around Sulaimani. However, Rafaat's article takes a different approach. Rather than concentrating on resistance *per se*, he examines the mechanisms through which the British sought to legitimise the inclusion of Southern Kurdistan in Iraq. These include the 1921 referendum over the Faisal candidacy for the Iraqi throne, the 1924 Constituent Assembly that ratified Iraq's basic law, and finally the League of Nations sponsored fact-finding commission of 1925, which ultimately awarded Mosul and its Kurdish districts to Iraq despite heavy Turkish objections.

As already noted, the third and final piece published in this edition of *Kurdish Studies* is Ethem Çoban's translation of "Der englisch-türkische Mossulkonflikt" [The English-Turkish Conflict of Mosul] by the German-American jurist Joachim von Elbe. Published in 1929, this piece constitutes a detailed discussion of the legal issues surrounding the conflict over Mosul's final status, namely whether it would become part of the newly formed Republic of Turkey or the British-backed Kingdom of Iraq. As such, this translation, which includes a critical introduction, will be of importance to not only those with a specific interest in Kurdish, Turkish, or Iraqi history but also those interested in issues pertaining to international law more generally.

Finally, it was with great sadness that we received word of the death of the noted Iraqi social scientist and scholar, Faleh Abdul Jabar. On behalf of *Kurdish Studies*' editorial board, we would like to extend our condolences to his friends and family. In his obituary of this prominent scholar, Michiel Leezenberg charts the important contribution Faleh Abdul Jabar made to Kurdish studies in particular, but also to our understanding of Iraq and the Middle East in general.

### **Acknowledgment**

Special thanks to Janet Klein for her diligent work in copy-editing the content of this issue and to Ergin Öpengin and Aram Rafaat for the translation of the abstracts into Kurdish.