

KURDISH

21 February International Mother Language Day

Kurdish and being Kurd are similar. Mother Tongue Day does not only remind the Kurds the language they are trying to protect. Happy Mother Tongue Day.

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Geographic location, culture, religion, sect, race, natural resources... These are the prominent reasons of war of civilizations, nations and societies.

Humanity has witnessed wars as a result of sometimes not believing the same religion or not being of the same color or same culture, or sometimes not having the same idea. Like other nations on earth Kurds also did get involved in conflicts due to similar reasons. Apart from, as well as within these reasons there is another reason that made Kurds live through all these wars, conflicts, deaths, and exiles. Kurds maintained their existence under the reign of other states without having a state of their own for along time. Under the power of these states, they neither had the chance to use their language officially neither had the environment to develop it. The ones recognizing the traditions do not recognize their names, the ones do recognize the names do not acknowledge their existence; the ones accepting their existence do reject their language. Within these conditions Kurdish did not find the possibility to improve, neither it has extinct.

Niccolo Machiavelli offers two options to the rulers facing new/different nations; massacres that make death and fear unforgettable or assimilation that wipes out memories. The rulers have tried both... Every single element that is Kurdish, from clothing to traditions, religion and sects to language all became subjects of a political existence. These are all banned through written and unwritten laws. The Kurdish identity was put under pressure not as a political body but also as a language. The intensity of the assimilation has gained the Kurdish language a new aspect beyond being a language. Ownership of the Kurdish language does not merely mean to protect a language but also ownership of daily life in that sense. Kurdish names and speaking Kurdish by itself is a reflection of Kurdish identity.

Some countries where Kurds are concentrated has shifted their policies to a certain extent at the sight of this "danger". However, as indicated at the beginning; the ones who do recognize the names do not acknowledge their existence; the ones accepting their existence do reject their language...

Recently the Turkish government has established a TV channel broadcasting in Kurdish. Initially the legal status of the channel was vague. The state channel was on live illegally. Once this is resolved, there emerged another problem; the state that has banned Kurdish for years is now banning many words and terms, including the word "to ban" in Kurdish.

As George Orwell has asserted certain words having political meanings or utilized in political language have made "evaporated". Yet, Kurdish does have a political stand on its own. And for that very reason dozens of words have made evaporated. The Kurdish language in many cases is used in an orientalist approach. Within that context, Kurdish was portrayed as a dialect of Turkish or an "eastern" tongue rather than a language. In many films, TV serials and documentaries Kurdish was pictured as a non-modern language and the speakers of Kurdish are presented as people not yet evolved to be modern. As one of the government members has stated "Kurdish is a daily life language and can not be a language of civilization."

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