

THE FLOWERS OF KURDISTAN

Childhood between the barbedwire
and bayonettes

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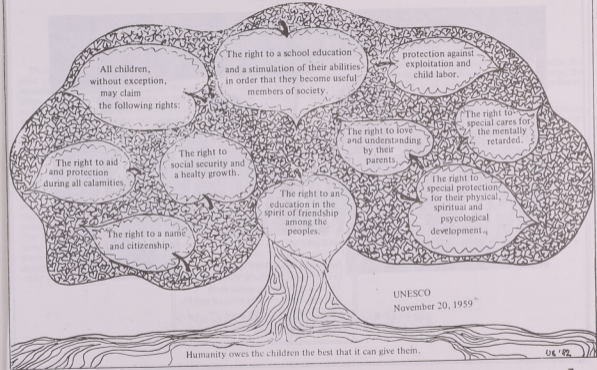


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All the poems were translated by Jillian S. Haeseler and
Malcolm Green.

RIGHTS OF THE CHILD



All children, without exception, may claim the following rights:

The right to a school education and a stimulation of their abilities in order that they become useful members of society.

protection against exploitation and child labor.

The right to special cares for the mentally retarded.

The right to love and understanding by their parents.

The right to special protection for their physical, spiritual and psychological development.

The right to an education in the spirit of friendship among the peoples.

The right to social security and a healthy growth.

The right to aid and protection during all calamities.

The right to a name and citizenship.

UNESCO
November 20, 1959

Humanity owes the children the best that it can give them.



CHILDREN

*Sometimes children are the world
In their faces, the blue of autumn
The rain falls, the sun shines forth
And sometimes children grow up quickly
Shots distancing our love*

Kemal Burkay

LET US ENSURE THE FUTURE OF OUR CHILDREN

Three years ago we spoke of the situation in which our children lived at that time. We spoke of the misery, the hunger and the diseases which plagued our children. We spoke of the cultural assimilation, of the prohibition to teach in our mother, Kurdish language, of the devastating effects of the earthquakes and of the terror of the gendarmerie. We pleaded for help.

Until this day the situation of our children, as well as the situation of the Kurdish people, has alarmingly deteriorated.

The effects of the world economic crisis are continuously increasing in number. The NATO strategists and the United States government are still arming themselves. The children of the whole world are threatened - by hunger, by diseases, by the neutron bomb, by atomic war. The United States are seeking to maintain their positions. The Turkish coup of 12 September 1980 had disastrous consequences. The larger part of our motherland, Kurdistan, and to be precise Turkish Kurdistan, became a preferred Turkish colony for the deployment of nuclear missiles. The Turkish fascist generals are ready to use them at any moment, as they were ready to, and actu-

ally did throw into jail the whole opposition in the country, the progressive and democratic workers, intellectuals, and, of course, the Kurds, while at the same time the working people were suffering from hunger.

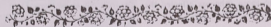
The children are always those who suffer the most and have the least chance of defending themselves. And the children are the future of every people, the future of mankind.

Our children, the flowers of Kurdistan, do not see the sky. Dark clouds are hanging over it and will not scatter. They bring death to our children, to our whole people. Genocide awaits our flowers.

They need help. Your help. The help of the international institutions and organizations which defend the right to a life and human rights.

See to it that the world becomes vigilant. So that it does not allow a part of its children not to have a future. And together we can see to it that the future belongs to all children on earth and that they may see their close friends - the flowers.

June 1, 1983



KURDISTAN –
THE MOTHERLAND OF OUR OPPRESSED PEOPLE

As descendants of the ancient Medes the Kurdish people is a bearer of a millenia old history and culture. Our language is related to the Persian language.

Our country has as many faces as its history has years. It has high mountains as Ararat and large lakes as Van and Ormia. It has arctic cold in the mountains to the North, which are covered with snow, and hot embers in the deserts to the South. It has rocky fields, in which even the most skillful peasant must struggle in order to live, and fertile plains, cut through by rivers. The once huge forests have been partially destroyed. Our land is rich in mineral resources, oil and ores. But our people, with minor exceptions, lives in bitter poverty.

Our motherland, altogether twice as large as the Federal Republic of Germany, is inhabited today by 22 million people. The first division of Kurdistan in 1639 between the Ottoman and Persian Empires already inflicted great damages on the economy and led to the impoverishment of a large portion of the population. Objects of cultural value were irretrievably destroyed. Today Kurdistan is a colony of Turkey, Iran and Iraq. The exploitation and oppression have reached huge proportions. And those, who are affected the most, are our children, the fortune and the flowers of our people.

Over five million Kurds, a figure which doesn't account for even one fifth of the population, live in Irani Kurdistan. Under the leadership of the Democratic party of Kurdistan/Iran they are waging a forced upon them war with Khomeini and his clique. Khomeini has withheld his former promise to recognize the national democratic rights of the Kurds and their demands for autonomy. Instead the Ayatollahs imposed a blockade and allow neither transports of food-stuffs, nor of medicines. The Iranian Army is deliberately bombarding population centers and hospitals. The Kurdish fighters are avoiding the cities, but on the other hand they are supported by the population of the villages, where they control large regions.

Over three million Kurds, representing approximately 28 % of the whole population of Iraq, live in Iraqi Kurdistan. It is true, the Kurds are recognized as a separate people, both the Ba'ath regime's promises of granting them autonomy, as well as the results of the respective talks, were never fulfilled. After the accords of 1975, signed between the Shah of Iran and the Ba'ath leadership, the resistance was temporarily discontinued. Countless Kurdish fighters were arrested and liquidated, and their families, wives and children were taken as hostages. Over 200 000 Kurds were forcibly settled in the salty desert of Southern Iraq, from where they were not



I AM THE ROSE OF THE EAST

*I am the rose in the vineyard of the eastern paradise.
I am the sun, beaming in the darkness of the night.
Effervesced out of the heart of time,
I am Euphrates, sprung out of far history.
I am full with life, a splendid life is what I want
to sow, with seeds which blossomed in the nineteenth century.
I am lightning, full of sparks, the thunder cloud,
with a mighty voice I come from the heaven of the homeland.
I am the flood, with foaming waves
I want to revive society.
I am lightning, flames, fire, a burning
storm of fire for idols and gods.
I am burning to death and yet light up the darkest night-
light for those, whose eyes can not see
this struggle and my efforts.
I take this path despite the baying dogs,
prepared for self-sacrifice on the way to liberation.
I want to boil, overflow the pot.
I am the struggle, revolution, the grueling feat
of the seas and lakes, of the whole world.
But I am only a trickle beside the stream.
I long for freedom.
I am a democrat, my wish is to live open-eyed,
thus I am full-laden with that which is for the nation.*

Cigerxwin

*At last the mountain villages shall laugh
Loaves of barley bread shall laugh with them
It is high time that my mother laughs
We did say that several things must change
Changed shall be the past and future,
poverty and oppression.*

Kemal Burkay

allowed even once to visit their relatives in the North. In such a way a wide strip of the northern border with Turkish Kurdistan was depopulated. Many children, especially sucklings, died during these forcible actions. The new settlements resemble prisoner of war camps. The cultural rights which the Kurds were temporarily granted, such as education in their mother tongue, were soon abolished. The repressions, the arrests, the tortures and the murders of progressive figures, which were then begun by the Ba'ath regime, led to their alliance with the fighters for national-democratic rights of the Kurdish people. Despite the ensuing war of the Ba'ath regime with Iran they declared war on their regime which in the last few years had been seeking closer contacts and ties with the reactionary forces in the world.

Only a million Kurds, about 10 % of the population, live in Syria. They are also struggling against the policy of Arabization.



TURKISH KURDISTAN – A COLONY OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

The largest part of the Kurdish people, about 12 million, today lives under Turkish colonial domination. Turkish Kurdistan consists of almost a third of the territory of Turkey, while the Kurds are a quarter of the total population. This part of Kurdistan is also rich in petroleum, ores and other minerals. The enormous water resources may be used both for irrigation in agriculture and for the production of electric energy. Until now, though, none of the Turkish governments has adopted any measures for the development of this eastern part of the Republic. Obsolete methods are still being used in agriculture. No industry has been constructed. Only the rudiments of infrastructure, roads, electric and water supply, schools and health-care exist. On the other hand the region is loaded with military sites, support bases and prisons.

The Kurds in Turkey are well acquainted with the prisons, the fences and the barbed wire. The existence of the Kurdish people, its language and culture, its history are officially not recognized. During the different phases of the Republic its policy has always been the same, despite the fact that it has been at times more and at times less severe.

Our people is also acquainted with assimilation, forced internment, mass murders – the whole spectrum of genocide measures, measures for exterminating a whole people.

Turkish Kurdistan has in all respects been turned into a poor house of Turkey.

The average income of a family in Turkish Kurdistan equals just over one third of the income of a family in Istanbul. The peasant families earn on the average less than one third of the incomes of city families.

Since only 2 % of the industrial enterprises, which employ more than 10 workers, are situated in Turkish Kurdistan the larger part of the population subsists on agriculture. Nevertheless, almost half of the peasant families in the region do not own any land. Only a fraction of them can guarantee their existence through agriculture. The majority of the peasants in Turkish Kurdistan, who do not own land, subsist as semi tenant farmers under feudal bondage to the large land owners. A large part of the petty peasantry, though, subsists on so little land or on so poor a soil that it cannot guarantee the survival of its family with it.

There now exist very few nomadic Kurdish tribes. They cannot cross the border with their cattle any more. They are allotted pastures, belonging to the state or the large land owners, for which they pay high taxes. And since the stock-breeding tribes receive no assistance from the state, they are gradually becoming poorer.

Land reforms are constantly being planned, but they often fail because of the resistance of the large land owners. According to the law, though, land may be allotted only to persons who can both speak and read and write in Turkish.

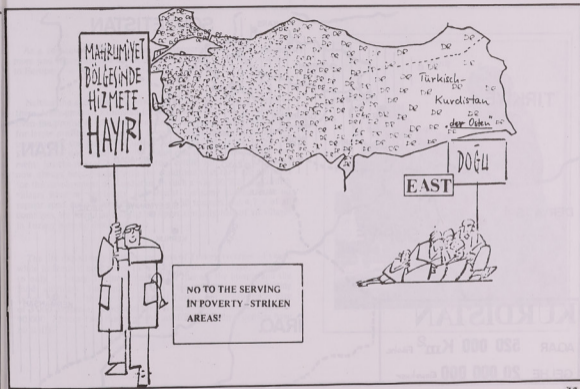


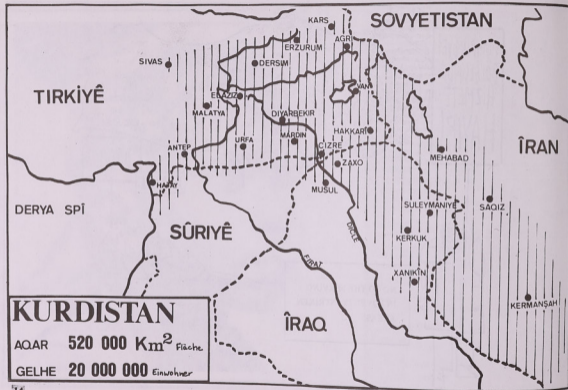
OH WOE IS ME

*Impossible now - to live in Turkey!
A new poison everyday
We didn't see
a garden, a flower, a town,
We saw noone who smiled.
In short, no merriness, no peace:
instead we put up with
sadness, misery
The reason being is that we side with you,
Fraternal Life!*

*Impossible now - to live in Turkey!
Come, look at our appalling state!
In the hands of thieves and Shylocks,
of strangers, may God forbid
Severed were my abilities, my way out
(...)
The dawn of violence is near
Strength, my knees! - just a little bit more*

Enver Gökçe





As a consequence of the constant impoverishment of the villages more and more families are fleeing to the cities or, if it is possible, to Europe.

Neither the state nor any private party has tried to put an end to these developments. Kurdistan is quite insecure for private investors. Even the profits which have been earned there are invested elsewhere for larger profits. The situation is such that only 5.8 % of all private investments are made in Turkish Kurdistan. The state invests in Kurdistan a sum equal to only about one third of the total investments for the rest of Turkey. Western credits for Turkey have until now always been binded with the condition that they are not used for the development of Kurdistan. In such a way 90 % of all Kurdish villages have no electricity and almost the same number have no regular road connection. Only 3.3 % of all tractors and 4.7 % of all combines are found in Kurdistan. Approximately half of all villages in Turkey have no drinking water.

The life expectancy in the poor parts of Turkey averages 54 years, while in Izmir it is 62 years. In Turkish Kurdistan, though, it is equal to only 45 years. The main reasons for this are the hunger and the food shortages. Inadequate health care is another contributing factor. While in the western parts of Turkey one doctor takes care of 3 000 people, in Kurdistan the corresponding figure is 20 000 to 90 000. Almost two thirds of the insufficient medical centers have no staffs.



THE FLOWERS OF KURDISTAN

The children of Kurdistan are our flowers, our pearls, our future. The children of all peoples on earth are the future of mankind. In order that they grow and can develop harmoniously they need adequate food, medical care, a good upbringing and education in all respects and the cares and love of the adults.

But the Kurdistan child lives in bitter poverty from the moment that it sees the first light of day in our world. If it survives it will get to know diptheria, whooping cough, measles, malaria or typhus - infectious diseases which for a long time have existed only in the history of the industrialized countries. In our Motherland, in Kurdistan, and in Turkey too, they are an everyday occurrence. The children of our people are faced daily with the brutal methods of the policy of genocide.

"Mankind is obliged to give the children the best that it possibly can". So states our first duty which corresponds to The Declaration of Childrens' Rights. The flowers of our people, the children of Kurdistan, lack even an ensured existence.



HEALTHCARE

The state of health of the population of Turkey is generally poor. Since there are very few people on social security the expenses for doctors and medicines generally have to be paid.

For the children of Kurdistan a doctor's examination is a luxury which almost no one can afford. In the winter, when the villages are covered by a meter of snow, a doctor's visit becomes an impossibility. And that is exactly the time of the year when the children suffer most from illnesses due to the lack of clothing and food. Furthermore, at least 100 000 people in Kurdistan live in dug-outs.

51 % of the pregnant women and 41 % of the suckling mothers suffer from anemia which, if it is not treated, may lead to permanent damages to both the mother and the child. Approximately 20 % of the children aged between one and five receive permanent impairments due to infectious diseases. In some regions of Kurdistan the figure reaches 45 %. The state health care centers which must carry out prophylaxis on pregnant women and children up to six years old, even in the capital, Ankara, can manage only 6 % of the planned cases.

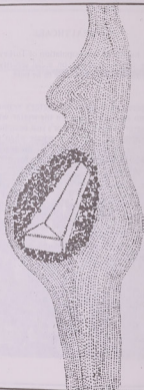
Of the approximately 8.8 million active women aged between 13 and 49, only 200 000 are socially secured in all of Turkey. They have the right to maternity leave for six weeks before and six weeks after giving birth. Almost one million women die annually after giving birth because they have never been given professional medical attention.

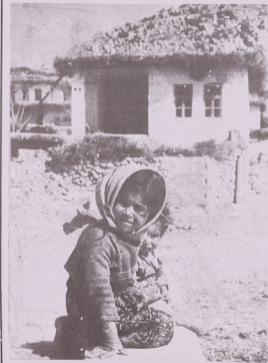


Of the one million newly born infants 150 000 usually die soon after their birth. At least 80 % of the sucklings die of diseases which can be cured. Over half of all deaths in Turkey are of children aged up to four. Measles alone, a very light childrens' disease in Europe, accounts for the death of 35 000 children annually. The children of our people in the villages, as well as those in the poor city neighborhoods, are affected additionally by infectious diseases which in Europe have for a long time been existent only in its history, about 2 000 people die annually of typhus, almost 6 000 of infectious hepatitis. Over 60 000 people annually suffer from tuberculosis, with a few thousand deaths a year. 4 000 cases of leprosy have been registered. In some parts of Kurdistan, due to existing climatic conditions, there exist such illnesses as malaria or trachoma, a disease of the eye which leads to blindness if not treated.

Only 1.5 % of the mentally retarded children are under doctor's control.

Towards the end of the winter in the villages of Turkish Kurdistan the flour, the bread and the beans all finish. One may seek in vain milk, vegetables or fruits. No wonder that diseases there are more common and that their victims are more numerous.





EDUCATION AND UPBRINGING

According to Turkish law every factory which employs more than 300 women must have a nursery and a day care center for children up to six years old. Most often this good decree exists only on paper. A few years ago in the whole country there were 132 controlled by the state private day care centers with a capacity of 16 000 children up to six years old. Now a capacity of 8 million is needed in such centers in order to cover the most urgent cases. At the same time only 5 % of the children are able to attend pre-school kindergarden. Of the 1.3 million complete orphans the state takes care of only 1.6 %.

After the establishment of the Republic of Turkey compulsory fifth grade education was introduced, but more than 40 % of the children do not go to school. This percentage is significantly higher in Turkish Kurdistan.

There is nothing odd in this fact since 27 % of the villages don't have a school, and in Kurdistan the figures is 50 %. Altogether more than 3 000 villages lack a school. Another 5 000 have school buildings but lack teachers. In more than half of the villages with three to five grade education there is only one teacher who very often lacks the proper education. In Turkey twice as much taxpayers' money is invested for military purposes than for education.

Approximately 20 % of all students continue their education in schools, while in some regions of Kurdistan only 0.5 %. Only 22 % of all high school graduates are able to continue their studies in a university after passing entry exams.

Officially recognized professional education may be received only in the professional high schools in the big cities which are as a rule inaccessible for our Kurdish children.

It is often not possible for our children to learn to read and write. 60 to 70 % of the men and 88 to 97 % of the women in Kurdistan are illiterate. In Turkey there are over 13 million illiterate people altogether.

After the military coup of 12 September 1980 the situation in the educational sphere deteriorated still further. Many committed, progressive teachers were preventively transferred, fired or even imprisoned. The bulk of all political prisoners are young people, school-children or students. Some schools have been transformed into military prisons.

The rest of the teachers and students conduct their classes from morning until the last period under strict military control. It is no rare occasion for the military to inspect classes, and all important posts in the educational sphere are occupied by army officers. And even this is not enough, since all childrens' books are now sold to adults at least 18 years old. All childrens' books and textbooks are subjected to strict selection and re-writing. All this aims to place education on a military and fascist basis.



THE EAST

*There were hundreds of thousands of Lice
on bedsheets, in clothing
like grazing flocks of sheep
They're a part of life.*

*That is the East. Lice, earthquakes, and pain
Our greatest joy is a bit of bread
A handful is an ember called hope
The remainder- snow, mush and dung.*

*Black blood floods the nights
flowing death, flowing despair
A flaming ray of sun, the barking of dogs
Cocks crowing, ascending like dusk.*

*That is the East. Deadlock, silence and pain
There the rose is a flower of the fields
A meal consists of wild rhubarb and herb roots
The draught of death's hour from the hand of a loved one
is what you've been drinking and will go on drinking.*

*That is the East. Like the heads of slaughtered sheep-
so are the eyes of people there
Love, warmth and gentleness
are saved in songs since thousands of years.*

Cahit Külebi



ASSIMILATION

But there is something much worse: our children are submitted to a systematic assimilation. Their bringing up and education are carried out only in the Turkish language. Our children are punished, beaten and today even thrown in prison if they use their mother tongue - Kurdish. And we - their parents - are threatened by a death sentence if we speak in our own language. To use the Kurdish language in the Republic of Turkey of the generals is highest treason. At the same time the United Nations considers the right to one's own language and to an education in one's mother tongue as a basic human right. All Turkish governments so far have violated this right and have not complied with the other international agreements as well.

The free use of our language and the development of our culture are hindered in all parts of Kurdistan. In many parts of our motherland our language has reached a different stage of development, since the contacts with our people across the border are systematically obstructed. Different Kurdish alphabets exist today and our speech is written in three different ways.

In Turkey it is forbidden to sell newspapers, magazines, books, cassettes or records in the Kurdish language. The most famous Kurdish epic "Mem and Tsin", which was published after its contents were amended, was banned and seized.

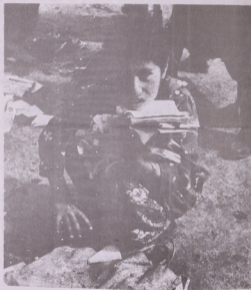
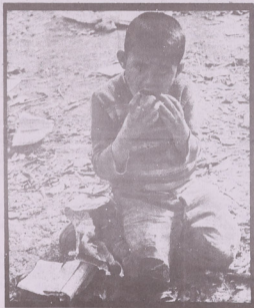
The educational programs of the schools pay no attention to the fact that our children don't speak even a word of Turkish. After 1960 not schools, but boarding schools, are being intensely built in Turkish Kurdistan and through them our children are separated from

their parents and in such a way their language and cultural ties with them are torn. Now, on the orders of the junta, pre-school kindergartens are being added to these boarding schools so that the forced assimilation can begin even earlier, at the age of five. The nationalist-chauvinist education in Turkey, which allows teachers to refuse to teach children who consciously declare themselves Kurds, has passed into a new, offensive, phase. Instead of being educated in a spirit of respect towards others, towards human rights, peace and understanding among peoples, our children are systematically taught just the opposite.

The educational measures in the whole of Kurdistan are also being supported by the campaigns "Speak Turkish!". In the state institutions all other languages except Turkish are forbidden. Up to now Kurdish publications were forbidden and seized on the pretext that according to the constitution the official language was Turkish. Now the junta is preparing a law which is to ban the Kurdish language altogether.

A campaign for liquidation of illiteracy among adults has begun in Turkish Kurdistan. It is being conducted chiefly through army officers in the Turkish language and is being used for the dissemination of "Kemalism" and for intimidating the people.

What's more, according to recently issued instructions, children are to be given only "decent" names. This is especially true for the short names ending in "o", as, for example, Memo or Zeino, which are prohibited as "indecent". Such names are typically Kurdish. Today they do not fear only our songs, they fear even our names!



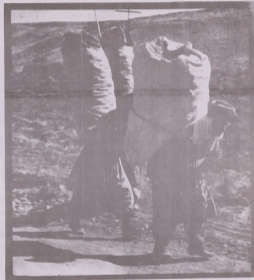
CHILD LABOR

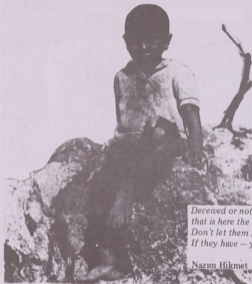
Despite the fact that Turkish youths are allowed to work only if they are 15 years old or older, almost half of the children aged between 12 and 14 are registered as employed. The employment of children below the age of 12 is not included. Only those aged 12 to 14 represent 7 % of all people employed in Turkey. 90 % of these children work in the villages without being socially secured.

The boys and girls from the villages are trained to work while still very young. Girls aged three or four perform petty house chores. The bigger ones sometimes manage the whole household. Together with their mothers they supply the fuel for the winter, and with the younger girls they pasture the family cattle. Girls aged 6 to 7 are especially suitable and sought-after as carpet-weavers because of their gentle fingers.

The boys perform mainly agricultural work, carry food for their parents who are working in the fields and during harvest sit on the threshing machines. 7-8 year old boys pasture the flocks of sheep and goats and the herds of live-stock.

In Turkish Kurdistan there is an especially large number of families which are employed as seasonal workers. Quite often the families travel to distant fields and work from sunrise to sun-set. For their heavy labor the children receive only half the adults' wages. Since they represent very cheap labor, the large land owners intentionally seek children for certain jobs and exploit them to full exhaustion.





*Deceived or not deceived
that is here the question
Don't let them fool you — you are alive
If they have — you aren't*

Nazım Hikmet

The exploitation of child labor in the city slums is no different. And the migration from Kurdish villages is very large so the Kurdish children are most affected. Many of them do not attend school because they work. Nevertheless, their wages are often not enough for a single warm meal a day.

Despite the fact that these children are endangered socially and with respect to their health, they receive no extra support. Their situation is further deteriorating because approximately half a million youths annually enter the labor market. Not more than half of them can be used productively. The number of unemployed is constantly rising. At the same time the social position of the working class families is constantly deteriorating since the legally set wages have for a long time been out of proportion with the growing inflation.

VIOLENCE AND TERROR

The measures which were adopted by the Turkish government for the assimilation of the Kurds are not limited only to the cultural sphere. Our children are submitted daily to numerous forms of terror.

The natural calamities are used to the detriment of our people. Kurdistan is a region which is threatened by earthquakes. Nevertheless, no systems of preliminary warning or earthquake resistant buildings exist there. On the contrary, aid is being slowed down, parcels from abroad, containing aid for the victims are seized by the military or sold on the black market. After the earthquake in Lihse, Diyarbakir province, in 1975, the donated DM 55 million simply disappeared. The soldiers barred the foreign military doctors from examining the women and the children. After the earthquake in Muradie, Van province, in 1976, 10 children froze to death in a single day because the military had seized the blankets and the cold-resistant tents. During the earthquake, which claimed 4 000 lives, an additional 6 000 died from the hunger, the cold and the lack of aid.

The transportation facilities and the buildings are not being restored. The possibilities that this presents are being used for the deportation of whole families to the cities in the South and West where they are left to manage on their own. The children are being forcibly sent to the boarding school of Western Turkey. The peasants, whose stores of fodder have been destroyed by the earthquakes, are being forced to sell their cows at prices much lower than market prices. In such a way they are being ruined and are not in a position to support their families any more.



The attacks by the Turkish gendarmerie and military are part of the everyday-experience of our children. Under the pretext that they are seeking black market goods the gendarmes of all the Turkish governments have raided villages in Kurdistan, maltreated the women and the children, arrested the men and shot them arbitrarily. The valuable articles are seized, while the foods and the fodder are rendered unfit to eat. From fear of such attacks often whole villages flee for days and weeks at a time into the mountains.



THE KURDISH FLOWER

*The dawn lights up the East
The policeman is coming, says the child
A child pulls the quilt over its head
A child spits out onto the floor*

*The policeman is coming, says the child
A child had put a stone in a catapult
A child begins suddenly to cry*

*The policeman is coming, says a child
A child cries, „berde lo“ (Kurdish: let go)
A child quietly wets his pants.*

Hüseyin Ferhad

SLEEP, MY CHILD, SLEEP

*My son, light of my eyes, steadiness of my inner self,
Strength of my soul,
Sleep, sleep well, it is already late.
Sleep, sleep my child, before the peace of the night is rent.
Sleep, sleep, my child, sleep,
or else I spend a night of sorrow*

*Stop, my child, stop your crying,
I know, you cry because it hurts to lie in the cradle
You're asking yourself why you are swaddled and bound,
You think that your body can no longer stand these fetters,
You want to know why only the Kurds are bound like this
Trust in my experience, my son:
Let me tell you, it is better for you to accustom yourself
now to bondage.*

Hêjar



HELIN

*On the day of her birth I was in the mountain villages
As she was six months old, in prison
As I returned, she had forgotten me
As she was three years old, we met between bayonettes*

*She offered me and the uncle's policeman biscuits
As she was six years old, the war orders knocked on our door
For a year I circled between Ankara, Istanbul and Diyarbakir
As she visited me in prison
She was angry with me because I didn't come home
And as she was seven years old
I got out of her way and left my homeland*

*Now she is eight years old
She doesn't know my reasons for leaving
She knows the pain
And everything that happened is like the
smashing of a toy for her*

Kemal Burkay



*Onward, keep going,
spit into the face of the hangman,
the opportunist, the instigator, the traitor.*

Ahmet Arif

After the fascist junta assumed power the military have systematically covered the whole of Kurdistan with terror – village after village and town after town. One cannot see young people any more in the villages of Kurdistan. Those that have not been arrested have fled. The women and the children are taken as hostages and tortured if the wanted member of the family is not found. Even before the coup, in the Diyarbakir prison, for example, there were many children under 15, despite the fact that the law prohibits their arrest. The commandos' attacks are regularly accompanied by murders, often of women and children.

By now two thirds of the Turkish Army is situated in Kurdistan, which represents only one third of the area of Turkey, and by 1988 this share must rise to three quarters. The large military maneuvers, part of which are conducted jointly with NATO, serve the purpose of further intimidating the population. But even this is not enough. The peasant families, living in the so called "security sphere", comprising of a ten kilometer strip along the borders with Syria, Iraq and Iran, are prescribed a certain number of cattle and a certain quantity of various foods which they may own. They are allowed three cows, water buffalos or camels, up to ten pieces of small farm animals, up to twenty kilograms of olive oil, four kilograms of kernels, up to two kilograms of almonds or hazelnuts and up to one kilogram of pistachio. Therefore, these families are ordered to live in poverty.

The conscious part of the Kurdish people, which is demanding its democratic and national rights, is today in prison if it hasn't managed to flee abroad. Thousands must have been sentenced to death at mass trials. The junta is carrying on what was begun before it with even greater cruelty. The terror, which reached its peak on Christmas day in 1978 in Karamanmaras, has moved from the streets into the prisons.



And there it is being carried on even more systematically, with scientific methods, so to say. The Kurdistan prisons are extermination camps of a new type. The tortures are performed by experts, using methods which maim the tortured for life or make them lose their reason, and this is only one part of the exterminating machine. The ensuing brainwashing through endless learning by heart of texts, the military exercises, the torture of the wives and children, as well as the systematic undernourishment are all included. Only a hundred or so of all the thousands of prisoners in Kurdistan have the hope of leaving the prison. All the rest are being exterminated slowly and systematically. The prisoners who have been cruelly tortured and are thin as skeletons are not in a state to offer any further resistance. They only struggle to survive. It is clear to them that as active defenders of the rights of their people they must be destroyed.

Many perceive these mass murders of political prisoners only as a preliminary stage, as a preparation for contemplated large scale campaigns of extermination to be conducted by the Turkish Army against the population of Kurdistan. The NATO led generals had really perceived very well that September 12 is really their last chance to place the situation under their control. Thus our people must prepare itself for mass murders as in Guatemala or El Salvador, mainly of our women and children. When the lives of our children are concerned our future is at stake. Without our children we have no future.



ADILOŞ

*You were born
For three days we let you starve
Nor for three days did we suckle you
Adiloş, my child
so that you won't become sick, as they say
Our custom says so
Now take the breast
Grow while you can
There are
vipers and centipedes
Our meal and our bread
Behold
and grasp them
By grasping them, grow
That is dignity
written to us in the family album
and patience
drawn from poison
Grasp them,
By grasping them, grow.*

Ahmet Arif

OUR CHILDREN IN EUROPE

Many families flee from their homeland, in order to save themselves from the poverty, and emigrate to Europe. 1.5 million people from Turkey live in the Federal Republic of Germany and West Berlin. About 640 000 of them are under 18 and more than 400 000 are children of school age. Approximately one third of them are Kurds.

Here they encounter various inequities in the legal, social and political fields, because they are migrant workers, and lately refugees seeking political asylum from persecution in their country.

Nevertheless, our people, while working abroad as an integral part of the working class of this country, have quickly grasped the situation. Here we are able to speak freely in our own language, to publish in it and to maintain and develop our culture. We include here our holiday Nevroz, New Year, the beginning of spring and the Day of Liberation – March 21. Our children, especially, use these possibilities to acquaint themselves better with their language and culture. All attempts of the official Turkish side to interfere in our work or to intimidate us have born, and will bear, no results. We understand our responsibility before our people and our children and will not cease our efforts here for explaining the situation which exists in our motherland and the reasons for it.

Because we, as Kurds, encounter inequity here as well. Officially, we are not received as Kurds. The result is that our children, for example, are viewed upon as "Turks" and they are taught in the Turkish language. Thus they are further overburdened. And if they have the misfortune of being taught by a nationalistically minded Turkish teacher, who calls them stupid and lazy, instead of openly pointing to the reason, namely that their mother tongue is Kurdish, it often happens so that the children are transferred to special schools. It is well known that their chances of receiving professional education are strictly limited. Thus the assimilationist policy of the Turkish government has its consequences here as well.



Such an amazing world

it is here, in that it

dies with abundance
and lives with want.

In the suburbs sick people

go about like hungry wolves,

the granaries are locked,

they are full of corn.

The machines are able

to weave out of silken cloth the way

from the earth to the sun.

The people are barefoot,

The people are naked...

Such an amazing world

it is here, that

while fish drink coffee,

the children find no milk.

People feed them with words,

the pigs with potatoes...

Nazım İlikmet

THE FUTURE BELONGS TO OUR CHILDREN

Turkish Kurdistan is in a state of siege. Our children, the flowers of our people, are placed under the arbitrariness of the occupying forces. Their place is between the bayonets and the prisons. But they do not give up. They are conscious children of our people and are helping their parents in their struggle for a human life.

Today the issue at hand is that they survive. To preserve an oppressed, enslaved people, of whose songs some are afraid, whose name is being quoted.

Let us not allow that it comes to the point when our children have no future. Let us not allow our people to be erased from the face of the earth. It has a right to live. Our children have a right to look at the sun and its friends – the flowers. Help us, so that our children can see the flowers.

