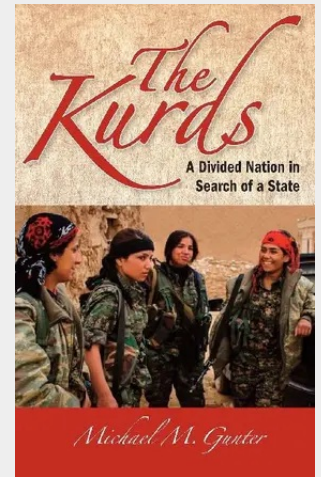


The Kurds

A Divided Nation in Search of a State

Donald Trump betrayed the Kurds, America's most reliable allies in the fight against ISIS, by announcing in a tweet that US troops would withdraw from Syria. Betrayal is nothing new in Kurdish history, especially by Western powers. The Kurds, a nation with its own history, language, and culture, were not included in the Treaty of Lausanne (1923), which contained no provision for a Kurdish state. As a result, the land of Kurds was divided into the territories of Turkey, Iraq, Syria, and Iran. In this updated and expanded edition of the 2016 *The Kurds: A Modern History*, Michael Gunter adds over 50 new pages that recount and analyze recent political, military, and economic events from 2016 to the end of 2018. Gunter's book also features fascinating vignettes about his experiences in the region during the past 30 years. He integrates personal accounts, such as a 1998 interview with the now-imprisoned Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) leader, Abdullah Ocalan, his participation [or attendance if that's more accurate] at the Kurdistan Democratic Party Congress in 1993, and a meeting with the leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran in Iraqi Kurdistan in 2012. In 2017, the University of Hewler in Irbil invited him to give the keynote address before a gathering of 700 guests from academia and politics, including the prime minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), Nechirvan Barzani. In his speech, Gunter praised the KRG's positive achievements and highlighted continuing problems, such as KRG disunity, corruption, nepotism, and financial difficulties. Within hours, reactions to his address went viral throughout the land. Several TV channels and other news outlets reported that officials had tried to interrupt him. A few months later, this event would prove a harbinger of the Kurdish disaster that followed the ill-timed KRG referendum on independence. As an indirect consequence of the referendum, the KRG lost one-third of its territory. The book concludes with a new chapter, *Back to Square One*, which analyzes the KRG election in October 2018 and the latest twists and turns in the Syrian crisis.

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