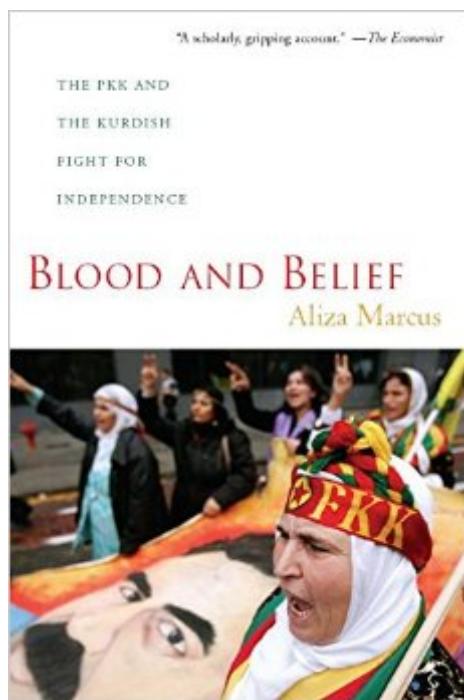


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Blood And Belief: The PKK And The Kurdish Fight For Independence



Synopsis

The Kurds, who number some 28 million people in the Middle East, have no country they can call their own. Long ignored by the West, Kurds are now highly visible actors on the world's political stage. More than half live in Turkey, where the Kurdish struggle has gained new strength and attention since the U.S. overthrow of Saddam Hussein in neighboring Iraq. Essential to understanding modern-day Kurds—*and their continuing demands for an independent state*—is understanding the PKK, the Kurdistan Workers' Party. A guerilla force that was founded in 1978 by a small group of ex-Turkish university students, the PKK radicalized the Kurdish national movement in Turkey, becoming a tightly organized, well-armed fighting force of some 15,000, with a 50,000-member civilian militia in Turkey and tens of thousands of active backers in Europe. Under the leadership of Abdullah Ocalan, the war the PKK waged in Turkey through 1999 left nearly 40,000 people dead and drew in the neighboring states of Iran, Iraq, and Syria, all of whom sought to use the PKK for their own purposes. Since 2004, emboldened by the Iraqi Kurds, who now have established an autonomous Kurdish state in the northernmost reaches of Iraq, the PKK has again turned to violence to meet its objectives. *Blood and Belief* combines reportage and scholarship to give the first in-depth account of the PKK. Aliza Marcus, one of the first Western reporters to meet with PKK rebels, wrote about their war for many years for a variety of prominent publications before being put on trial in Turkey for her reporting. Based on her interviews with PKK rebels and their supporters and opponents throughout the world—including the Palestinians who trained them, the intelligence services that tracked them, and the dissidents who tried to break them up—Marcus provides an in-depth account of this influential radical group.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“Marcus’ dispassionate recounting of events is impressive in its factual, documented style and avoidance of partisan shrillness.” -The Bloomsberry Review
“Blood and Belief offers unusual insight into the rebels’ shadowy universe and, by extension, into Turkey’s festering Kurdish problem. . . . [A] scholarly, gripping account.” -The Economist
“It’s an achievement of Blood and Belief that despite the bloodletting, Marcus still generates empathy—not for the murderous Ocalan, but for the desperate Kurds who joined the PKK revolution feeling they had nowhere else to turn.” -The Washington Post Book World
“Marcus’ dispassionate recounting of events is impressive in its factual, documented style and avoidance of partisan shrillness. While never condoning any of the PKK’s excesses, she points out its one achievement: to have put the Kurdish problem on the agenda in Turkey and in front of the world.” -Bookforum
“Blood and Belief gives meaning and context to the grinding guerrilla war that claimed tens of thousands of lives.” -Boston Globe

Aliza Marcus is formerly an international correspondent for The Boston Globe and lives in Washington, D.C. She covered the PKK for more than eight years, first as a freelance reporter for the Christian Science Monitor and later as a staff writer for Reuters, receiving a National Press Club Award for her reporting. She is also a recipient of a MacArthur Foundation grant for her work.

This was a good book. Having spent some time in Kurdistan (Iraq) I found it quite interesting. While there I did not get a clear picture of the fact that the Turks were fighting the PKK and the occasionally crossing into Iraq. It was hard enough to figure out why Barzani and Talabani were fighting at one time and then finally decided to stop and divide the spoils. I worked a bit with the peshmerga and the special police. They were indeed a motivated group. It was an especially timely book for me to read as now Erdogan is especially concerned about the Syrian Kurds. My Iraqi friends told me about a year ago how Turkey was letting the IS fighters into Syria. Now Erdogan is concerned about the Kurds displacing the Arabs and Turkomans. This book put a lot of the situation in historic perspective.

Great BOOK

I have lived in what could be called Turkish 'Kurdistan'.....very factual account.

Was a gift for Christmas. Recipient was very pleased

Fantastic read. I'm not sure why people thought this was a biased book. It isn't at all. Worth reading.

Great book

That book gives you reality of Kurdish Nation which you really have not heard at all. Face to face of an unfair world with interests while a nation ruined and related a one hundred years that cruel and hidden war in Turkey last 30 years. Over thirty thousand people lost their life and over four thousand Kurdish village has been burnt plus missing people. PKK used a weapon which has been used against Kurdish all the places they are. Turkey, Iraq, Syria and Iran. Forgotten nation just come up first line with a organisation (Kurdish worker Party) and get bigger and bigger with a very high level war. A organisation set up a group of university student and became hope for a nation and tight rules of Guerrilla war. But hidden war from all world media because of interest. That book will take you to a journey that sometimes you would feel guilty, sometimes you will cry. You will learn how human being can be wild when interests are stand up there. You will learn that MARCUZ ELIZA did great job with a very high risk. She deserves a lot of thanks..

In "Blood and Belief", Marcus provides a thorough overview of the PKK from its origins in the chaos of 1970s Turkey through the capture of Afê "calan" in 1999. The next 8 years are much less thorough (fitting into one chapter), but the book nonetheless provides an excellent foundation for understanding the PKK and the relationship between Kurds in SE Anatolia and the Turkish state. The strength of this book is its use of interviews with former PKK members. These interviews do not paint a positive picture of the PKK - in fact, they completely remove any of the romanticism that could be associated with 'freedom fighters' in the minds of some. The brutality of both the Turkish army and the PKK (including the latter group's general disregard for human life, even that of its own members) is portrayed in detail. Marcus does not need to label the PKK as a terrorist group; this is a political designation that creates black and white distinctions, when in reality the situation is far more complicated. By presenting the situation in all its brutality and presenting the facts

impartially, Marcus allows the reader to make the moral judgement on the PKK- its origins, methods, and goals.

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