UNIVERSITETETS ETNOGRAFISKE MUSEUM BULLETIN No. 7

Principles of Social Organization in Southern Kurdistan

BY
FREDRIK BARTH

OSLO 1953

BRØDRENE JØRGENSEN A/S - BOKTRYKKERI

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

The publishing activity of the *Universitetets Etnografiske Museum*, Oslo, had gradually become chiefly concerned with the editing of old historical sources concerning Same (Lapp) culture. There is no doubt that the museum under the directorship of the late Prof. O. Solberg satisfied an urgent need by publishing this material in its series «Nordnorske Samlinger», and we are greatly indebted to the late Prof. Solberg for his having made these extremely important contributions to the understanding of old Same (Lapp) culture. On the invitation of this museum, however, its Same (Lapp) collections have been transferred to the *Norsk Folkemuseum*, Bygdøy; consequently this museum has also taken over the publication of the series «Nordnorske Samlinger» under the new title «Samiske Samlinger».

Of the two series in quarto, «Skrifter» and «Bulletins», published by the *Universitetets Etnografiske Museum*, the latter from now on will be published in octavo and contain both monographs and shorter papers, in English, French, or German. The range of subjects will be very wide, including both descriptive and theoretical studies from different parts of the world and in most various fields of anthropology. I welcome Fredrik Barth's study which will prove to be an important contribution to the scanty literature on Kurdish social structure.

Universitetets Etnografiske Museum (Oslo) — April 1953.

Gutorm Gjessing.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The material on which the following study is based was collected in Kirkuk and Suleimani Liwas, Iraq, in the period February—August 1951. Part of this time was spent with an Oriental Institute, University of Chicago archaeological expedition under the direction of Dr. Robert J. Braidwood, part in doing independent work with a grant from Nansenfondet, Oslo. For further financial assistance, in the form of a liberal reduction in the air fare from Oslo to Abadan, I am indebted to Director Braathen of Braathen's S.A.F.E. Residence permit and other official assistance was kindly arranged for by His Excellency, Dr. Naji al-Asil, the Director General of Antiquities, Iraq Museum.

My thanks are most of all due to my kind host, Baba Ali Shaikh Mahmud, who offered me assistance of every kind during my field-work and graciously extended the most classical Kurdish hospitality. Khalid Said, a young Kurdish artist, was invaluable as interpreter and assistant; I am also idebted to Mr. Fuad, the School Inspector in Suleimani, for recommending Khalid Said to me, as well as for several illuminating conversations. Sayyid Sabri Shukri, now of the Mosul Museum, kindly endeavored to teach me some of the fundamentals of Kurdish language and culture; Linda and Robert Braidwood, through their experience and knowlegde of the area were able to help me and orient me in the problems, and also kindly lent me some necessary equipment. Finally, the spontaneous friendliness and hospitality that I received from everyone I met in Iraq, from the

wandering harvestman to the most prominent *Beg*, will remain one of my fondest memories.

In the analysis of the material and preparation of the manuscript I have benefited greatly from the kind and stimulating advice of Dr. E. R. Leach, Reader in anthropology at the London School of Economics. I am further thankful to Miss Elizabeth Bott of the Tavistock Institute, London, for reading and criticising several drafts. The present manuscript is published through the courtesy of Prof. Gutorm Gjessing, aided by a grant from Norges Almenvitenskapelige Forskningsråd.

Oslo, February 2, 1953. *Fredrik Barth.*

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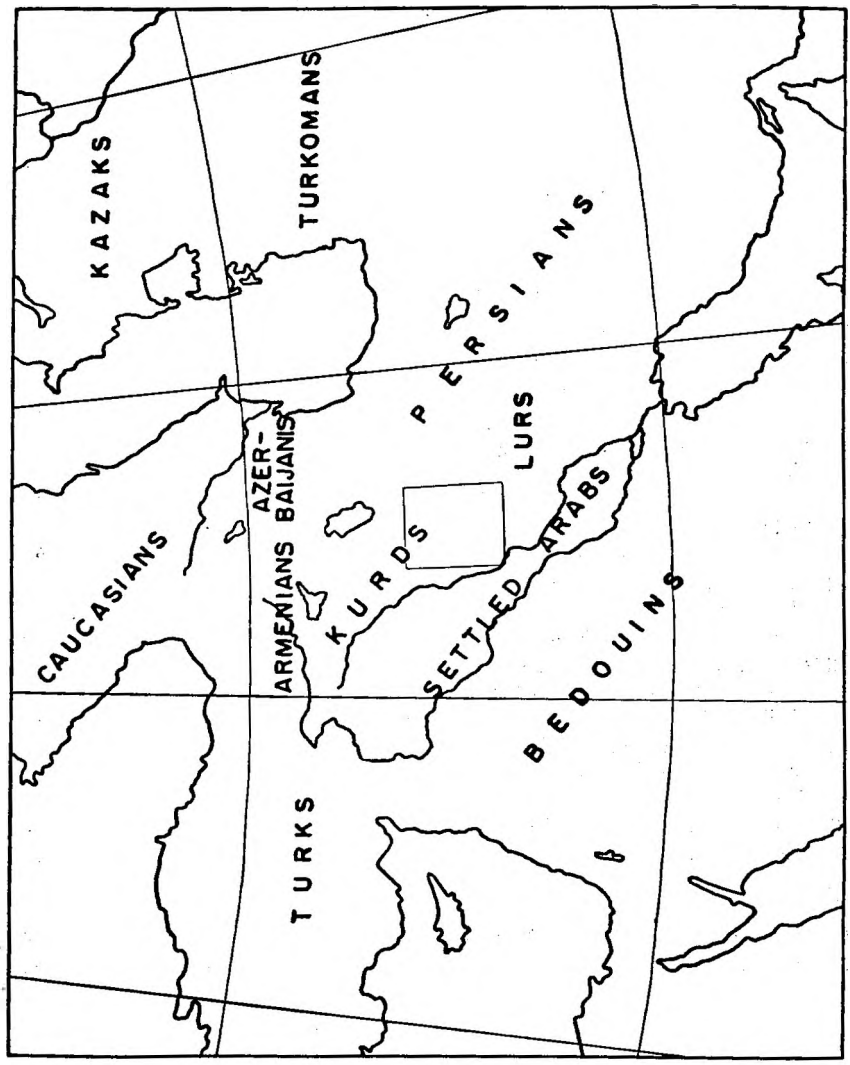


Map No. 1: The Middle East.
(For detail on the area of study, enclosed in small square, see Map. No. 2.)

INTRODUCTION

Scattered over the South Kurdish countryside are a great number of small, compact villages, essentially similar in their physical aspects, yet highly variegated with respect to their composition and organization, ranging from extended lineage organizations to fully developed feudal organization. Thus, on the village level, there is a great diversity of forms of social organization. Yet the *culture* of the area seems essentially uniform, and these alternative principles of organization are universally known. In the recent history of some villages, there has been a rapid, fundamental change from one type of social organization to another. In the following, an attempt will be made to discuss these various types of organization as they express themselves in the actual power hierarchy of individuals in the village. The discussion will thus be directed towards discovering what types of social categories exist, what actual powers each category entails, and which of these categories are found in harmoneous conjunction — since some of the categories that belong in different basic frameworks of social organization are, as might be expected, mutually exclusive in any local community.

It seems probable that a fluid and complex situation of this type is characteristic of societies which lie in the shatter zone between larger culture areas — in this case, between the Arab, Persian, and Turkish. Such a location produces familiarity with various competing normative systems, principles of organization, and power hierarchies. This familiarity on the part of the villager leads to attempts at

manipulating these various systems and principles. Thus competing factions, manipulating the familiar (but in part mutually exclusive) systems, will establish different power hierarchies in different villages, resulting in the present variety of forms of social organization found in the area.

However, one type of basic organization may be said to be autonomously Kurdish. This is usually called *tribal*, and is based on the *lineage principle*. Any movement away from this basic framework of organization will be the result of the above type of manipulations, and may be seen as a step in a «de-tribalization process». A special attempt will be made to explore the structure of the tribal group, and its reactions to the pressures that tend to lead to its breakdown.

Certain characteristics of the lineage system in its Kurdish application might profitably be stated immediately, to avoid confusion. The Kurds practice close family endogamy with preferential FaBrDa marriage, and a Kurdish descent group shows many consequent characteristics, among which is a tendency towards constant branching and the establishment of new, independent endogamous subsections. The concept of a lineage, as developed for other areas, normally applies to an *exo*gamous grouping. However, the main importance of the lineage concept is in the field of political organization, and it will be seen that the political functions of the Kurdish descent groups and the African lineage groups are essentially similar. This might be expected, if only from the following consideration: Women in Kurdish society are normally of minimal political importance, and matrilineal descent has no political significance. The strictly *patri*lineal descent group will be unmodified by any patterns of preferential marriage. Since this, in Kurdish society, is the politically significant group, the fact of endogamy has no direct political importance. I have therefore chosen to call this patrilineal descent group a *lineage* when politically recognized.

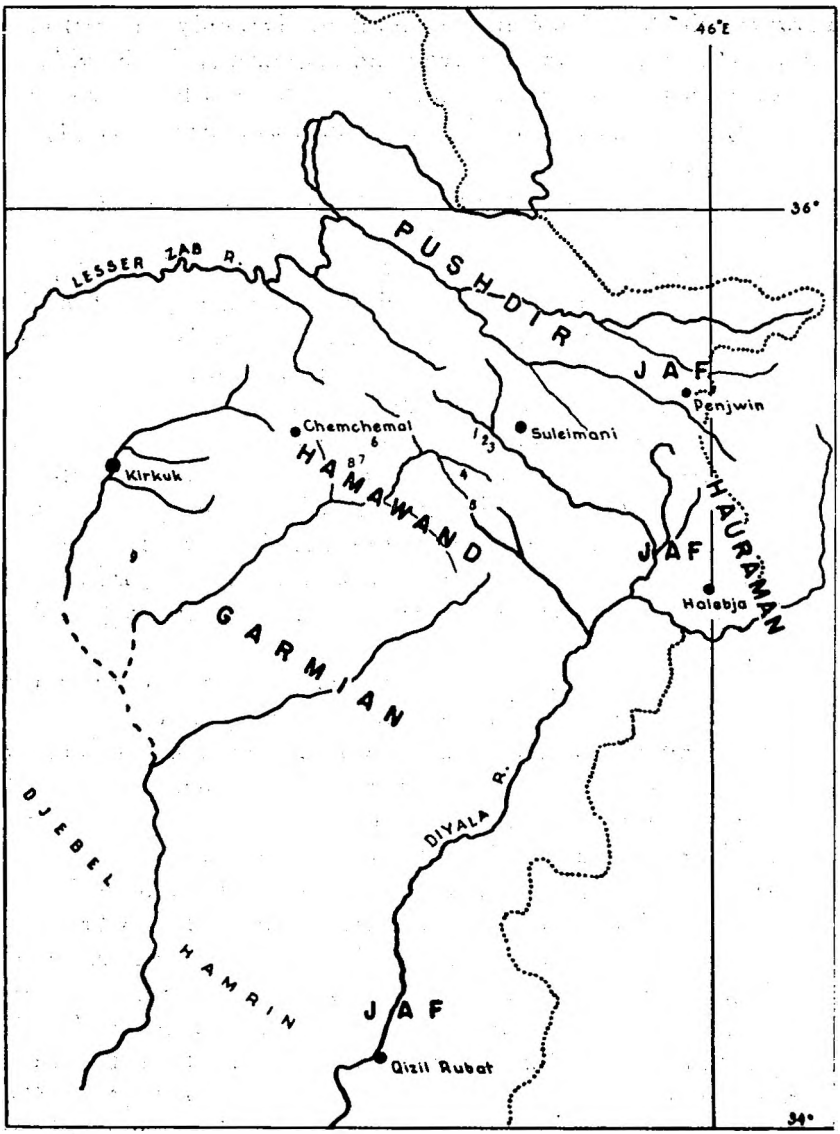
After an orientation on some factors which are uniform over the whole South Kurdish area, notably in the field of subsistence and kinship, the formal lineage organization will be discussed, as well as the basic pattern of non-tribal formal organization; and the fundamental composition of the resulting local groups will be treated.

However, the formal political organization gives only a partial picture of the actual power hierarchy and organization in the village; and the remainder of the paper will attempt to show how this power hierarchy emerges, and what the characteristics of the resulting types of social organization are.

By way of introduction, the ethnic position and history of the Kurds should be sketched briefly. The great majority of Kurds are today, and have been for some time, settled or transhumant joint cereal agriculturalists and stock-breeders; some tribes are still purely pastoral nomads, of what has been called the «vertical», Persian type. The Kurds inhabit the mountainous crescent stretching from the Euphrates in northern Syria and Turkey to Kermanshah in Persia; the backbone of this crescent is formed by the Zagros mountains. Towards the Mesopotamian plain they extend roughly through the foothill area; to the North and East, Kurdish territory blends into that of Armenia and Azerbaijan. In much of their area, Kurds make up only a minority of the total population. Southern Kurdistan is, on the other hand, almost exclusively inhabited by Kurds. (cf. Map No. 1.)

The population density in most Kurdish territory is very low, the characteristic settlement pattern is in small, compact villages of 50 to 300 inhabitants, widely scattered over the area. The Kurds today are estimated to number some 3 million (The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1951), but of that figure a great number are urbanized or turkicized, and Kurds by descent only.

The Kurdish language belongs to the Indo-European stock and shows great similarity to Persian, but also exibits features that suggest a process of parallel development and borrowing rather than recent splitting. Literary efforts in Kurdish have been only sporadic. Historical records seem to accord Kurds as an ethnic group considerable antiquity in the area (Minorsky, 1913), assuming them to be the Carduks who harried the retreat of Xenophon's 10 000 (401—400 B.C.). Early converted to Islam, independent Kurd principalities attained some degree of organization only after the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate, but generally played a minor role (except in producing Sultan Saladin at the time of the 3rd Crusade). A major part of



Map. No. 2. Southern Kurdistan — The territory of the old Baban Pashalik.
Dotted Line: Iraq—Persian border.

Villages studied:

1—3. Tenant villages of the Suleimani valley.
4. Shaikh Mahmud's village of residence.
5. Village of residence of Derwish Leader.
6—8. Hamawand villages.
9. Tenant village of the Garmian lowlands

Kurdish territory was conquered by the Ottoman Sultan Salim I., but retained considerable local autonomy, leading to adjustment rather than replacement of traditional Kurdish organization.

The area generally called Southern Kurdistan, where the present material was collected, may be delimited on ethnic and geographical grounds (cf. Map. No. 2). It is bounded on the north by the Lesser Zab, on the south by the Diyala river. To the east it stretches up into the Zagros mountains to the Persian frontier. A western border can only be drawn on ethnic, and rather arbitrary criteria, since Kurdish territory extends in part beyond the foothill area, into a a zone where Kurd and Arab villagers and villages mingle.

Physiographically, the area is characterized by a series of ridges running NW—SE, building up towards the Persian mountains. The drainage pattern is rather complex, partly leading to the Lesser Zab, partly to the Diyala, and some smaller rivers dissipating in the dry areas south and west of the city of Kirkuk.

In the lowlands, the «Garmian» (hotlands) of the Kurds, conditions approach semi-desert, and agriculture becomes increasingly difficult. Kurdish territory stretches in places to the edge of what has been called the rainfall zone (Warriner, 1948, p. 100), but generally falls somewhat short of this, leaving the remaining area to Arab agriculturalists with an identical economy.

Though predominantly Kurdish, the area shows some ethnic diversity. There is contact with permanent Arab settlements in a rather broad zone of mixture. Bedouin herdsmen in the summer graze their camels as far as the Chemchemal valley, and have at times remained in the area continuously for several years. The city of Kirkuk has a considerable Turkish-speaking population, and Turkish-speaking villages may still be found in a wide stretch of the lower districs. Some 100 years ago, Turkoman nomads occupied some of these areas (Rich, 1836). The town of Suleimani had till 1951 a considerable Jewish population, as well as the still persisting small Chaldaean Christian minority.

The Kurds themselves exhibit considerable diversity, ranging from tribally organized nomadic herdsmen to feudal peasants. The Garmian lowlands are mainly peopled by detribalized tenant farmers.

The southern sections around Qizil Rubat are farmed by settled members of the Jaf tribe, working as tenants on their old tribal land. Here are also the winter camps of the nomadic Jaf. The Shahr-i-zur plains around the town of Halebja are the autum camp grounds of the same group, and support a large population of tenant Jaf. The summer grazing grounds of the nomads lie in the high mountains around Penjwin.

The Chemchemal valley is the territory of the Hamawand tribe of freeholding farmers, partly co-habiting the area with an impoverished nontribal serf group. In the broad valley around Suleimani are non-tribal tenant farmers, in the high areas of Pushdir, further north, are tribally organized farmers. The Hauramanians in the Zagros range by Halebja are dialectically and ethnicly rather distinct, tribally organized, usually freeholding garden farmers or craftsmen.

Some historical orientation is necessary. The city of Suleimani was for centuries the capital of a rather independent Pashalik segment of the Ottoman Empire, ruled by Pashas of the *Baban* family. This Pashalik included most if not all the territory described above. A strong feudal pattern became established, and centralized government was moderately effective, leading to a breakdown of most tribal political organizations and the development of a large group of serfs and tenant farmers. Conditions during Baban rule are well described by Claudius James Rich (op.cit). a very observant traveller in the early 19th century. Due to complex intrigue in Baghdad and Istambul, Baban rule was suddenly brought to an end in 1851, and considerable instability resulted. The *Jaf* tribe, on the one hand, became powerful and assimilated remnant groups of other tribes in their organization; the Jaf leaders consolidated their positions as landowners and took on the appearance more of feudal lords than tribal chiefs. On the other hand, the *Hamawand* tribe entered on a career of systematic brigandage and war, and, though a very small tribe, became quite powerful. Suleimani became the scene of a tug of war between these various interests and the efforts of a saintly family of the Berezinje to reestablish some form of Pashalik. After the end of the First World War, conditions slowly became more

stable, and official administration, directed from Baghdad, grew in scope and progessively enlarged its area of effective control.

Such then is the background of the villages where the following material was collected. They are primarily tenant villages in the Suleimani valley, or villages dominated by freeholding Hamawand farmers. However, certain aspects of local social structure become clear only by comparison with other situations — particularly those found in the *Jaf* areas — or by historical comparisons and deductions. The data on Jaf organization was obtained from a limited number of informants on short visits to various villages. For historical material, C. J. Rich's accounts (op.cit) have been found most useful.

I have tried to avoid bringing conditions and factors in the towns of Suleimani, Chemchemal, Halebja, etc. into the picture. The numerous «Western» influences in these centers are extremely complicated and difficult to evaluate. In the intricacies of the class and near-caste system, differential contacts and reactions due to sub-cultures are indeed complex. The rural areas, on the other hand, show greater uniformity in patterns: the tribal areas are organized and separable, and the tenant villagers, in their small, endogamous communities, have strong patterns of localism and traditionalism. There is a popular story illustrating this localism: A donkey belonging to one of the tenant farmers in a village ran away; so the farmer followed it, to catch it. The donkey climbed up the hillside, far away from the village, but the farmer did not want to lose it. So he followed it high up into the mountains, never turning, and finally close to the mountain top he caught it. On turning around he saw below him the whole beautiful Shahr-i-zur plain, in which his own village lay. The peasant gasped and exclaimed: «I never knew the world was so vast!»

What goes on in the towns belongs, as far as most villagers are concerned, to a quite separate world, and it seemed both in the field and in working up the notes valid to separate off the Kurdish *countryside* as the area of study. But due to diversity even in this area, any attempt at giving a conventional anthropological description of «the culture» of «the society» must fail. Each of the compact, widely separated little villages shows characteristics of its own, local

permutations of pan-Kurdish institutions, or traits derived from the specific setting and history of the particular village.

No one of these villages, however, is self-contained. Though each shows a high degree of self-sufficiency and endogamy, it is tied to others in a web of social relations, embracing the whole of Southern Kurdistan. Many institutions affecting large districts have their main focus in one or another of these local villages, not visibly different from the next: the home village of the leader of the derwish brotherhood, that of a tribal leader, a rich landowner, a locally important mullah. Ordinary trade ties village to village and village to city; illegal tobacco trade follows back roads and high mountain passes in a web of its own. Thus no village is self-contained or seperable in structural terms. Clearly, a larger unit of study than any one village is needed.

But as soon as one proceeds beyond the village level, complications arise. Social relations within the village are virtually continuous, and a constant set of relations and hierarchy of organization persists, or changes only slowly. Relations outside the village, on the other hand, are *dis*continuous. In such relations, there is a stronger tendency to press any immediate advantage to the limit. To this end, the individual attempts to manipulate a variety of competing institutions and norms, derived from tribal Kurdish, purely local, Arabic, Islamic, Persian, «modern» etc. cultural contexts. On the other hand, to give these relations the degree of permanence that they do have, some generally accepted principle must exist, or the social relations would break down (as they in fact do in the case of feud). — An attempt will be made to unravel the institutionalized forms that these inter-village relations take.

The internal organization of the village presents problems of a different kind. The great differences between villages make it meaningless to construct an average «typical» or «modal» type of village organization. They may be classified according to type, the basic dichotomy being between those of freeholding, tribally organized farmers, and those of non-tribal, sharecropping tenants. But rather than construct an arbitrary number of types, it seems more fertile to exploit the existing diversity to discover co-variance of

institutional forms. Thereby the structural connections between various institutions and principles of organization should become clearer. It will be found that the principles that serve to organize the village are to large extent the same as those which are applied in the more inclusive systems of organization.

Chapter I

Subsistence and kinship

SUBSISTENCE

Subsistence patterns of the settled population are essentially uniform over the whole South Kurdish area. A long day is spent by the farmer in food producing activities, in part because of primitive techniques, in part because labor is invariably expended in preference to capital.

Subsistence is based on cereal agriculture, combined with herding (cf. Table I). With an average yearly rainfall of 400—800 mm., concentrated mainly in a rainy season during winter and spring, artificial irrigation is only necessary for special crops, such as rice and tobacco. — Wheat and barley are of approximately equal importance; tobacco, rice, cotton, peas, lentils, and garden patches of vegetables are subsidiary. Of these, cotton is a recent innovation, and typical only of the tenant villages with an active and interested landowner.

Among the domestic animals, sheep and goats are the important producers. Cattle are kept more for their use as work animals in plowing and threshing than for their products. Donkeys are used for all transportation, no wheeled vehicles are seen. The horse is primarily a prestige symbol, and has little economic use.

Productive techniques are generally underdeveloped. Agricultural methods are exceedingly simple, especially with regard to the basic

TABLE I

LIVESTOCK AND FIELDS OF THE HOUSEHOLDS IN *DECON*

households:	adults	children	oxen	cows	sheep goats	donkeys	horses	wheat	barley	tobacco	rice	other
Hadji Maolud	2	5	5	4	60	2	1	23	27	4	1.5	4
Mahmoud	2	7	4	2	50	4	1	15	15	3	.5	5
Derwish 'Hassan	3	1	4	5	10	1	—	20	20	2	.5	4
Hadji Aziz	3	4	4	4	20	1	—	25	25	3	.5	5
Karim	3	3	2	3	—	1	—	10	10	2	.5	4
Derwish 'Hammed	3	—	2	4	1	—	—	15		2	.5	3
Hussein	2	2	—	2	10	—	—	5	7	2	—	—
Ali	2	4	—	2	—	1	—	—	3	—	—	—
Rahman	2	3	—	—	—	—	—	2		—	—	—
single woman	1	—	—	—	3	—	—	3		—	—	—
10 households, pop. 51			47		150	10	2	225		18	4	25

(areal measure 1 Donum = 50×50 m. = ¼ hectare)

cereal crop. Much reliance is based on the general fitness of this crop to the area. Consequently, the yield is low, and a large area pr. capita must be brought under the plow.

To preserve, in some measure, the fertility of the soil, the fields are left fallow alternate years. These fallow fields should however be plowed at regular intervals, obviously at considerable labor cost. (cf. Appendix I). The plow itself is made of wood, with a conical iron cover over the point. It has a very low level of efficiency, and it is generally necessary to cross-plow all fields. In the hilly areas, the slow moving oxen are the only draft animals, which further extends the period of labor. The outcome of this is that the Kurdish farmer spends a very great amount of time plowing, but whith rather meagre results. Average return in wheat and barley seems to be c. 8/1 in an openly seeded field.

Reaping takes place, according to altitude, between May and July. The grain is cut with a short, curved sicle, and heaped on areas of hard sunbaked clay by or in the field. Threshing is done by the oxen trampling the heaped grain, winnowing with a simple wooden fork.

As contrasted to grain, where most of the work comes either in winter plowing or harvesting, the subsidiary crops which require irrigation take constant attention in the growing season. The irrigation system of tiny dikes and channels in a tobacco field is at best a rather temporary one, and must be constantly repaired and reinforced. The flow of water must be started and stopped periodically, and one rarely sees a tobacco field in summer without some farmer with his long handled irrigation shovel, fussing with the watering system.

Herding involves much less work, and the supervision of the flocks can easily be delegated. In the hills, the herdsman is supported by dogs. Morning and evening milking is not too time consuming, and even under quite extreme conditions winter fodder is never provided for the animals, so thus very few man-hours are expended.

LAND TENURE.

The characteristics of subsistence and available techniques should to a considerable extent influence the size and composition of economically cooperating groups and work-gangs, and thereby the form of the households. As is evident, however, the above type of activities lays down few imperatives and requires no cooperative division of labor in the fields. Furthermore, the additional factor of land ownership intervenes, and influences group composition according to other principles.

Any comprehensive discussion of land tenure in the area, however, takes on considerable complexity. Property rights have never been mapped and settled (overall mapping and registration is now in progress), and conflicting interpretations and claims are advanced in the various contexts of modern legislation, Ottoman land codes, tribal political organization, or de-facto power. For the moment, we may disregard the historical factors leading up to the present situation, and discuss only those factors that influence division of labor and social classes.

As far as the farmer is concerned, the basic contrast is between a/ land owned by himself, or land belonging to the government, but to which he has traditional usifruct rights, and b/ land on which

he himself is considered a tenant farmer — the land belonging to an absentee landowner, a tribal chief, or some privileged section of the local community. The typical situation is for the freeholding farmers to have retained what is generally called *tribal* organization (see below), whereas the tenant farmer has no clear political affiliation, but is largely subject to the control of the landowner. This dichotomy between the tribal, freeholding farmer and the tenant, more or less dependent on a capitalist for land and other privileges, is basic to much of the following discussion. The dichotomy is clearly made by Kurds themselves, and is associated with the co-variance of other institutional forms.

The characteristic tendency on the land which does not directly belong to the farmer who is using it, is a progressive delegation of rights. This influences the division of labor and the form of work-gangs in the fields, and reinforces class differences.

In the tribal village, each farmer generally works his own fields with own equipment, or may hire some outside labor to assist him at certain times of year. Mutual borrowing, or renting, of livestock may be resorted to. The grazing area belongs to the village as a whole, and herding the animals is generally delegated to one or more full-time shepherds of low status, who may serve the whole village.

The land of the typical tenant village belongs to an absentee landowner, who collects 1/10—1/5 of the cereal crop by right. The old residents of the village have informal inherited right of use of certain fields. These are not inalienable. Any person needing more land may apply to the landowner, and if he can demonstrate that he is able to use more, he will be alotted fallow land that formerly belonged to other households. Where no fallow land is available and the need is great, e. g. due to increase in the size of a given family, any type of land may be transferred. Theoretically, the landowner has the right to evict any one for any reason — though this is a power he rarely exercises, since it generally precipitates conflicts and disrupts village unity.

Not infrequently, the more well-to-do tenant farmer will in fact do no farming himself, but will hire labor in his fields for a share of the crop, or other payments. Such payments are traditionally

stipulated, e. g. for reaping 1/6 of the wheat crop, 1/5 of barley
for plowing, food plus 100 fils/day (= 2 shillings)
or 150 fils/day and no food.

The large landowner may rent out the rigths to a certain village or area for a limited period of time to some intermediary capitalist for a small fee plus 1/2 of the intermediary capitalist's profits. This intermediary is then free to stipulate the share of the tenants' crop he wishes to collect as rent for the year. The number of non-productive links in the chain from the laborer on the fields to the ultimate landowner may thus become quite considerable, and the

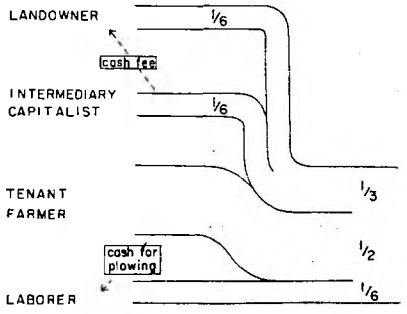


Diagram No. 1. Shares in division of a cereal crop.

division of the crop might be as illustrated in Diagram 1. More frequently, however, the intermediary capitalist is missing in the hierarchy, and the landowner, collecting direct from his tenants, is content with the smaller, traditional share of 1/5 of the crop on un-irrigated land.

At harvest time, a characteristic work-gang in the grainfields of a tenant village will consequently consist of 5—10 men, in part made up of migratory labor, cutting the grain, and young women carrying it to the threshing place. Threshing and winnowing, on the other hand, are generally the work of only two men; plowing is usually a solitary occupation.

Attending to the irrigation of the tobacco-fields usually follows a different pattern. The various farmers who share a certain watering system either tend it each in turn, or one man among them may

take on the major responsibility. In tobacco picking, all the women and children of the village take part.

Rice cultivation usually takes place far from the village, if it is pursued at all. Rice requires a quite well developed irrigation system, connected with a dependable perennial stream, usually in the main valley bottom. The growing season is long, generally said to last some seven months. Persons living close to the fields are hired to tend the rice, and 1/3 of the crop is collected by the landowner as tax. It is therefore an expensive crop, but is considered to be the finest kind of food, and has considerable prestige value. In Table I, village status groups are indicated by the size of individual rice crops.

ECONOMIC CLASSES.

The system of progressive delegation of land rights in the tenant villages, referred to above with respect to the basic food crop, is in considerable measure responsible for the lack of efficiensy in agricultural techniques and the low level of capital investment in equipment. Each person in the chain from laborer to landowner is only interested in obtaining his part return, not in further investments. An example might illustrate the point.

Threshing is generally done with six oxen, without any mechanical appliance or equipment. There does however exist a quite efficient thresher (mentioned by Leach, 1940) which could greatly reduce the necessary expenditure of man-hours. The value of this tresher was given as £ 12, its life approximately 20 years. It is generally considered that 2 mules working 3 days with the thresher do an equivalent of 6 oxen working 10 days without it. If we, to simplify comparison, equate the work value of a mule with that of an ox, that gives a reduction to 1/3 in man hours and 1/12 in expended energy. Though the gain thus seems quite spectacular, the thresher is in fact very rarely seen. The laborer himself has no capital to invest in equipment. The tenant farmer pays the laborer the customary share for doing the threshing, whether it is one way or an other, and is certainly not interested in assuming any further expenses. Continuing up the hierarchy, there is no greater incentive to such «investment» for the intermediary or the landowner. Conceiv-

ably, the laborer might save or borrow enough money to procure a thresher, and then be in a position to take on more work and thus increase his income. What the laborer with access to such capital in fact does, however, is to become a tenant farmer by obtaining the minimal equipment necessary for farming. He then rises one notch in the class hierarchy, and may employ laborers in the peak season of the harvest!

A class distinction is thus constantly reinforced within each village by these dispositions of capital and labor, dividing it into the distinct groups of tenant farmers and laborers — *sapani* (harvestmen) in Kurdish terms. Prerequisite to being a tenant farmer is a minimum capital (1951) of ca. £ 50: 2 oxen at £ 10-15, plowing equipment £ 10, seed pr. donum of land ca. £ 1. In addition comes the normal stock of productive animals for household use, of which the harvestmen also generally have a certain number.

The frequency of tenant farmers doing all or a major part of the agricultural work themselves was not ascertained, but it is certainly quite high. Thus the daily routine of field labor, and similarly the organization of household units, is essentially similar for the two classes, the tenant farmers and the laborers.

This two-class distinction is sufficient as far as the tenant village is concerned. The landowner and his family, occupying a third class position, are usually residents of a nearby larger town. In the tribal village, a similar two-class distinction tends to grow up between freeholding tribal farmers and conquered non-tribal tenants, though often the situation becomes more complex (see below).

HOUSEHOLDS.

The division of labor in the village is thus to a certain extent regulated by a two-class system. But the main division of economic roles and responsibilities is found within each household unit. The household is economically independent, and consists typically of one elementary family: husband, wife, and their children. Among these, the economic roles are distributed along the same lines that will be familiar from rural Europe. It should be unnecessary to enumerate these in detail. The male finds most of his work in the fields; his

is also the privilege of looking after the horse. The other animals are tended by the women, who do the milking and preparing of food, and other household duties, including mud plastering of the house interior every fall. The roof on the other hand is kept in repair by the man. In the busy season the women also assist in the fields, especially during the grain harvest and in tobacco picking. The smaller children share in these latter tasks, and, among less well-to-do people at least, serve as shepherds for the smaller flocks. Theirs is also a series of smaller jobs, such as collecting dung for fuel along the paths and cow-tracks.

Table II.

COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLDS IN FOUR KURDISH VILLAGES

	non-tribal		tribal		totals	
	Hazar Merd	Djeshana	Koni Sard	Tazgah		
widow and children	3	10	3	3	19	
elementary family (and plural wives) .	20	24	5	8	57	
» + husband's mother ...	3	1	1	1	6	93 = 75 %
» + husband's mother and unmarried siblings .	1	5	—	—	6	
» + husband's unmarried siblings	—	3	1	1	5	
» + husband's father and unmarried siblings .	3	—	—	—	3	
patrilineal extended family .	2	4	1	3	10	13 = 10 %
other (incomplete families) .	—	9	2	3	14	
Total number of families					120	

The general form of the Kurdish village households may be seen in Table II. Only 10 % of the households could be called patrilineal extended families, vs. 75 % consisting of an elementary family or a group of dependents maintained by an elementary family. Each household is an independent economic unit, except for a certain insurance in the form of kin obligations to support survivors in

case of bereavement and need. This obligation supposedly passes to nearest agnatic male relative, but practice is in fact very elastic, and follows «reasonable» arguments of residence and means.

Since each household is generally based on one elementary family, the marriage tie is the pivot on which household organization rests. The verbalized theory on choice of spouse is quite simple. A man decides he wants to marry a certain girl — any girl. He chooses a reliable representative — preferably an older male relative — and the representative visits the father of the girl and makes the proposition. Considerable subtle diplomacy is performed by both sides in fixing a tentative brideprice. If the young man accepts the price, preparations proceed. The importance of the representative is evidently considerable. In one case, a laborer who was a transient in the area chose to send two representatives he did not know very well to a potential father-in-law whom he in fact knew better. The answer seems to lie in the better bargaining position of an outsider — he is freer to eulogize the virtues of the groom.

Theoretically, you may propose to marry any girl. In practice, there is a strong preference for FaBrDa marriage. Certainly a FaBrSo is considered to have first right of refusal. The case of the above mentioned transient laborer brings out the point: He was refused because, said the girl's father «I am afraid my brother's sons will kill me if I give her to you».[1])

The rationalizations and manifest reasons for this preferential marriage pattern are of several types. The father's interest in his daughter is used as an explanation for his preference of a BrSo as a son-in-law: he knows the nephew's possible shortcomings, which reduces the risk of mis-matching; furthermore, he would be able to exert some influence over the groom after marriage, through the agnatic kinship tie, to protect his daughter's interests. It is further usually said that «it is customary» for the nephew to pay only a

[1]) The same transient laborer had at a previous occasion in northern Iraq been refused a girl on similar grounds, although in this case *he* threatened to murder *her* if she was not given to him. The girl was indeed killed shortly afterwards, and the laborer spent a period of time in jail till he was released due to lack of evidence.

reduced brideprice, or none at all; so from the point of view of the potential groom, the incentive to cousin marriage is considerable. No rationalization of the pattern in terms of the Koranic approval of close kin marriage was ever advanced in conversations on the subject — in fact, the contrary was occasionally claimed. — We shall return later to some more basic factors relating to this marriage pattern.

Any special preference for FaBrDa as against the other three types of cousins was denied, and the higher incidence of FaBrDa marriages was explained by the fact that there «are more of them». This is in fact true, as far as the local village is concerned. A certain amount of inter-village marriage does take place. Marriage being neolocal in the man's village or occasionally patrilocal, all FaBr's children will be living in your own village, whereas a certain number of those related to you through a female will reside in other villages.

The frequency of marriage with actual, non-classificatory cousin is very high, ranging around 60 % in many of the villages studied (see Table 3). Considering that any irregularity in sex or age distribution of cousins must affect the opportunities for cousin marriage adversely, 60 % is probably close to the practical maximal frequency which such a marriage form can ever attain.

A second type of marriage is the *zhin-ba-zhin* (= sister exchange). In such cases of course the bride price is eliminated by the reciprocity of the two men exchanging their sisters with one another, and only the expenses immediately connected with the marriage celebration and trousseau remain. From the purely financial point of view, the sister exchange is thus advantageous, and may in a sense be regarded as an extension of the FaBrDa marriage pattern within the village community. In the non-tribal villages, such marriages are fairly frequent. On other counts, however, they are not considered too satisfactory. Where no close kin ties exist between the two men performing the exchange, the chances of disruption of the unions are increased: sibling loyalties are of the same order of magnitude as loyalty between spouses, so domestic difficulties in the one household are said to produce similar conflicts in the other household, in a vicious circle.

In the case of a marriage between non-relatives, where no direct exchange of women is arranged, the brideprice is quite high, running from £ 30 to 100 — and these prices are in fact paid. This is considered to correspond to the actual economic value of a woman, so no obligation — e. g. a return marriage in the next generation — remains. Because of the size of the sum involved, it is often vital for the young man to avoid full payment, and the high incidence of cousin marriage, as well as of sister exchange, may be seen partly as a result of this.

It is on the other hand more difficult to explain how the father can be willing to forego his right to a brideprice in the case of a nephew. His household is quite separate from that of his brother and nephew, and non-payment of brideprice constitutes a direct net loss. The origins of the rule might conceivably be sought in a now passed patrilineal extended family organization, where transfer of property between brothers would be meaningless. Today, the pattern is an etablished privilege of certain categories of relatives, enforced by those who profit from it. And the right is indeed enforced, as indicated by the statement of the father, cited above, and by the not infrequent murder of girls refusing their cousins (e. g. Hay, 1921 p. 71). Stories of such conflicts are very popular among Kurds, and the occasional forceful reminders serve to assure the privilege.

Probably the most fundamental consideration inducing a man to give his daughter to a brother's son has the character of a positive sanction, and is connected with the feud, and political power in general. In essence, it may be summarized as follows: A man's power is proportional to the number of riflemen he can mobilize to support his case. Especially in the feud situation, these alignments of younger men around an older leader are in lineage terms. If a man has alienated his nephews by denying them their traditional rights, he will have great difficulties rallying them in time of need. A marriage between his daughter and a brother's son contributes positively to prevent such alienation of collateral branches. No other son-in-law can fill this function, since a man is not regarded as responsible for his affinals *qua* affinals. The only persons who can be expected to give such political support are co-lineage males. — After a descrip-

tion of the Kurdish lineage organization we shall return to a more complete discussion of these interrelations (pp. 69 ff).

Plural wives are rather uncommon in the villages, though they are thought to be a quite desireable investment for the man who can afford it. The average incidence for 94 men in 4 villages runs c. 4 %. The levirate is not infrequently practiced, but more as a convenience than as an established rule or right. Unless the widow has a well established father or brother, she tends to remain in the house of her late husband under the protection of her brother-in-law, in which case he might as well have some return for his expenses. Strict observance of the Islamic rule of unlawful conjunction however prevents him from doing this if his first wife is a close relative of the widow (and where cousin marriage is common, this will be a fairly frequent limitation). The sororate is not known as a marriage practice.

KINSHIP.

A positional system of rights and privileges organizes the household group. Following Moslem ideals, the adult *male* has complete control, and can make any decision he sees fit. This Islamic rule seems slightly to exceed Kurdish popular feeling on the matter. It is very difficult to obtain any inpression of the internal workings of a Moslem family, but one has the feeling that Kurdish women have considerable influence in the close family circle. Occasionally this even carries outside the kinship group, so a woman may come to occupy a high political position. Similarly, the father's absolute authority is strongly questioned by the sons, as indicated by the frequency of neolocal residence. There are almost invariable tensions connected with the setting up of an independent household for a married son — the father tends to resist this reduction of his power, and for the son it takes on the color of breaking lose and becoming fully adult. However, with sacred sanctions and de-facto power supporting him, the father certainly occupies the central position as authority and organizer of the group.

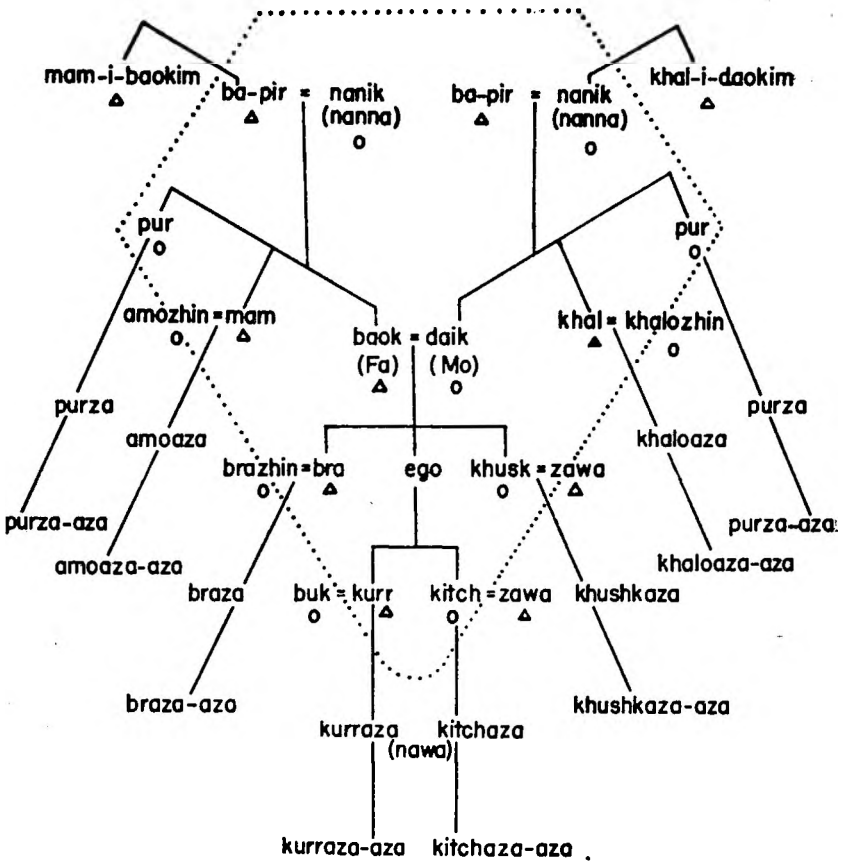
In the case of a widow with one or several sons, the household is named after the major son, and the actual position of authority

passed on in the male line. But the mother does generally retain some recognized and actual authority by virtue of her parental position. There is a general feeling that the ties between mother and son should be close and intimate. In the case of divorced or discarded plural wives, the woman will normally, if she has an established son, become an honored member of her son's household. But the nominal succession should certainly pass in the male line, and only where there is no male member above puberty will the household carry a woman's name. If only for economic reasons, this is a quite rare situation.

The daughter is entirely subject to her father's authority. He functions as her marriage guardian, and even has the right to impose marriage on her — according to Islamic law only before puberty, but in practice also later. The position as marriage guardian — giving the right to receive the brideprice — passes on the death of the father to the girl's nearest male agnatic relative. In *Shafi* law, that is first to her grandfather, second to her brother. Only father and grandfather, however, have the legal right to impose marriage.

Between brothers, relations of supra- and sub-ordination are determined by relative power. In the early years, this means physical power, and is closely connected with relative age. There is, however, no rule of succession, either primo- or ultimogeniture, and the relative positions of brothers are at any time decided by de-facto power and force of personality.

This positional system has further kinship ramifications, best seen in connection with the actual system of kinship terminology, Diagram 2. a) The child's relations with the grandparents are usually mediated through one of the parents, e. g. the son accompanies his mother on her frequent visits to her paternal household. In this situation authority and control over the child remains with the mother, and the relationship grandmother-grandchild is generally indulgent. The term *manik* or *nanna* then also has an extended usage as a term of endearment to all older women of the village. Relations with the grandfather, especially the paternal grandfather, will be more tempered with respect. b) The other special relationship is with *mam,* father's brother. This term again is used in an extended meaning towards older men to indicate a relationship of closeness



IN-LAW TERMS

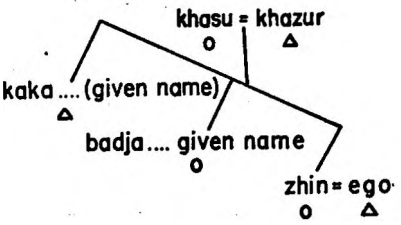


Diagram No. 2.
South Kurdish kinship terms,
Suleimani dialect.

but respect. This and the above use of *nanna* is however in no real sense of the term a classificatory usage, any more than is 'sis' in colloquial American or *farbror* in Swedish, the latter having connotations very parallel to *mam*. As a potential father-in-law, ones *mam* is an important relative, and a friendly relationship will secure one's right to his daughter and release from brideprice obligations.

An interesting contrast to Kurdish intimacy with FaBr and his descendants is evident from Afghan usage, where the word for MoBr.'s children is synonymous with friends and FaBr.'s children with enemies, this in spite of a probably otherwise similar social structure.[1]) The general explanation for such strained relations with FaBr.'s relatives lies in the potential conflict connected with inheritance, where MoBr.'s children are less important as competitors. The prevalence of FaBrDa marriage in Kurdish villages undoubtedly serves to gloss over these tensions.

Affinal relations are, as far as the male is concerned, of secondary importance, and the basic terms for spouse's father, mother, adult brother and adult sister suffice. The woman, except for these terms, adopts the kinship designations of her husband, usually with the given name of the person appended. Children are called by their given names. — The general nature of in-law relationships is indicated by the proverb: *Khoda bida mergim, zawa neka bergim* = God let me die, rather than be dependent on son-in-law (or brother-in-law).

Certain affinal relations are designated by suffixing *-zhin* (woman) to the term for their agnatically related husband. The resulting terms, *amozhin* (= wife-of-FaBr) etc., seem to be used as actual kinship terms. The parallel usage of 'husband-of-so-and-so' is purely descriptive and does not constitute a term in itself. Son's wife is called «bride» and husband of sister and daughter is called «groom».

A striking feature of the Kurdish kinship system is the small number of basic terms, totalling only twelve. The group of relatives covered by these terms is a bilateral kin group, and includes all individuals in the elementary families of which ego or ego's parents

[1]) I am indebted to Prof. Morgenstierne for drawing my attention to this contrast.

are members during their lives. The suffix *-aza,* literally «child of» or «born of» indicates removal by one descending generation from this group; repetition of the term indicates two generations' removal. Thus son's son is *kurraza,* while FaBrDaDa, a frequent substitute wife when a closer relative is unavailable, is *amoaza-aza.* Ascending generations are categorized by constructing similar bilateral units with ego's father or grandfather in the position of ego. They may thus be described in several ways, according to the type of relation one whishes to stress. E. g. FaFaBr may be *bra-i-bapirem,* brother-of-my-grandfather, or more commonly *mam-i-baokim,* uncle-of-my-father.

So much for the structure of the family and household. The village community, in which these activities take place and relations exist, will be described more fully at a later point, (p. 101 ff). Suffice it here to say that in physical layout it is a very compact, small unit, located close to or within the village agricultural lands. Usually placed on a hill, one will tend to find the un-irrigated fields of beans and lentils above the village, higher up in the valleyside. Irrigated tobacco and vegetable plots, where such are found, generally depend on the same source of water as the village itself, and are thus found close around and below it; while the dryland grainfields usually cover the flats in the valley bottom. The village grazing grounds may be quite large, stretching from the fallow fields in the valley bottom to the top of the ridge which divides this valley from the next. And the limits of the village lands are the limits within which most life activities take place.

Chapter II.

Formal political organization

The preceeding chapter has dealt with some basic factors in the culture and social organization of the settled population of Southern Kurdistan, essentially uniform over the whole area. Political organization, on the other hand, shows great regional variation, the *tribal* types being built on the lineage principle (cf. p. 10), others disregarding descent in a non-tribal, *feudal* organization, which is based on residential groups only.

The Kurdish application of the principle of patrilineal descent in organizing the largely endogamous descent groups, or lineages, in a larger political structure, will be discussed first with respect to the nomadic *Jaf* group. The organization of the settled *Hamawand* agriculturalists is essentially similar, and demonstrates the tendency toward segmentation, especially visible where such a lineage organization is found among settled villagers. These tribal systems are contrasted with the formal organization of the non-tribal villages of the Suleimani area. Some uniform principles are found in all types of Kurdish political organization; these will be discussed, and an attempt will be made to show how they operate in a more extensive and segmentary feudal type of organization.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF THE *JAF*.[1])

The Jaf is a powerful federation of tribes, until recently almost wholly nomadic, and still counting among its members a majority of

[1]) For data on Jaf organization, I am indebted to the Jaf *Begs* of Halebja and to the *Raiz* of the Wurda Shatri tira.

the nomads in the South Kurdish area. Their traditions place their origins in the *Djoanro* area of Persian Kurdistan, where in fact some 10—12 Jaf tribes still live. About 250 years ago, the tensions between the *Shi'i* Persian government and the *Sunni* Jaf precipitated conflict, and the tribes which refused subjection were unable to defend themselves, and fled across the border to the *Sunni* Ottoman Empire. This group of migrants is said to have counted some 500 families. They were given pastures close to the Persian frontier, which they in turn served to protect. As a result of natural growth, and by assimilation of small and broken tribes into their organization, the group grew to the present total of some 60,000 persons. Up till 35—40 years ago, they had remained nomadic. At the present time the nomadic section makes up only a small fraction of the total, numbering some 2—3000 individuals.

The annual migration of the nomadic Jaf carries them ca. 250 km. from their winter camps on the plains to the summer pastures in the high mountains. Unlike the otherwise similar Central Asiatic nomads, the Jaf have no permanent houses for winter use, but live in their black tents all year. Agricultural pursuits are rare, and generally only involve hiring a man to raise a crop of grain, or renting out oxen to the farmers. More typically, the economy is purely pastoral.

ASHIRET. There is some vagueness as to the Kurdish classification of the Jaf unit. If one asks a solitary Jaf to what tribe, *tira*, he belongs, he will tend to answer Jaf. On the other hand, Jaf informants outlining the political structure were unwilling to use the term *tira* for the whole group, and preferred to reserve it for the next smaller unit: the various sections making up the Jaf group. Usually the Arabic term *Ashiret* was preferred, having reference both to a people and to an area (cf. Leach, op.cit., p. 13). Obviously, this is a slight misapplication, considering that the nomadic Jaf share their area with a number of other groups. Due to the above mentioned historical process of growth by assimilation, the Jaf today constitute a federation of groups of diverse origin. They themselves make the distinction between «true» Jaf and later associated groups, but have no special term or organization for the «true» Jaf.

For lack of a better term, the Jaf confederacy as a whole should

then probably be called an *ashiret*. This *ashiret* is ruled by a recognized leader, the *Beg* or *Pasha*. He is the head of the «royal» family, the *Begzada*. The size of the *ashiret* unit was considerable, even before sections of it became sedentary. In 1820, while still entirely nomadic, the Jaf could muster 1000 infantry and 300 horses, and were said to number several thousand families (Rich op. cit., p. 280, conflicting with his statement on p. 112).

TIRA. The Jaf *ashiret* is divided into a number of tribes, *tiras*. The various lists of these component *tiras* conflict slightly in names and total numbers, but a characteristic enumeration of Jaf *tiras* is:

(1) Shatri group:
  Wurda (little) Shatri
  Mirweisi
  Hos-i-Brahim
  Josuf-djani
  Bawa-djani
  Kamali
(2) Haruni
(3) Sadani
(4) Badakhi
(5) Galali
(6) Tarkhani
(7) Roghzadi
(8) Maqajali
(9) Amala
(10) Hos-i-Jarweiz
(11) Shaikh 'Smail:
  Shaikh 'Smail
  Benadjut.

The *tira* is the primary political group and landowning unit. Membership in a *tira* is patrilineally inherited, and the *tira* itself approximates a maximal lineage. But though all members of the *tira* should be able to trace patrilineal descent from one common ancestor, it may frequently become difficult to document the connection between some of the major kinship segments in any one *tira*. And, on the other hand, every maximal lineage is not automatically regarded a *tira;* the concept is fundamentally based on political

criteria and assumes a functioning organization. A simple descent group or lineage is in Kurdish called *hoz; Hoz-i-Kaka-Hamma* is simply the family, all the descendants in male line from Kaka Hamma, and not a *tira* in any sense of the word. However, since the concept of the geneologically defined lineage group is important in the definition of the *tira,* and, in fact, ideally the whole basis of it, a certain confusing interchange of the terms might be expected. In the above list, *Hoz-i-Jarweiz,* the family or descendants of Jarweiz, serves as the name of a *tira;* but this group is a *tira* by virtue of its organization as a political unit, not merely because relationship in a large *hoz,* founded by Jarweiz, has been recognized.

Further confusion may result from the use of Arabic synonyms for the Kurdish terms. Leach (op. cit., p. 13 ff) unsuccessfully attempts to make a distinction, based on size of the unit, between *tira* and *taifa,* the latter being in fact an Arabic term for *hoz,* family.

The term *tira* is regularly used for tribes and tribal sections of highly variable size, and seems to refer to the political unit of the size which is significant in the context of immediate discussion. Thus the solidary Jaf will tell strangers that he is of the Jaf *tira,* while among a group of Jaf the term *tira* will have reference to subtribe or branch.

Each *tira* in the above list is led by a hereditary *Raiz* (leader), and has traditional rights to specific pastures and camping sites. These grazing rights are usually exclusive, or they may be shared with local villagers, who raise a crop in the spring and let the Jaf flocks graze there in the fall. Formerly, this relation between nomad and sedentary might be established by force by the Jaf on any land; now some rent is generally paid to the local farmers in return for right to pasturage. The migrations of the whole Jaf *ashiret* are coordinated, and the movement of each *tira* is regulated by its *Raiz,* who serves as intermediary between his group and the *Begzada* leaders of the whole *ashiret.*

BRANCHES. With the internal growth of population in one *tira,* or due to tensions and conflicts within it, a branch may split off and become an independent unit. This group then traces descent from the parent group, but is formally independent. In the above

list, the Benadjut are such a branch, which has split off from the parent, Shaikh 'Smail *tira*. The Shatri group of *tiras*, on the other hand, are all «sons of one father», and no one of the *tiras* takes precedence. Such groups have more than mere legendary unity. Firstly, as «brothers», they have the right of inheritance to each others' pastures and campsites, in the case of one of the *tiras* dying out. There is also a minimum of political coordination: In the case of war or other far-reaching decisions, the leaders of all Shatri *tiras* meet in a council. So that no one of them should have an advantage, this council meets in the tent of a rich follower, *not* in the tent of any one *Raiz*. The council reaches agreement by discussion, and has, as a body, no formal powers.

KHEL. Though the *tira* holds grazing rights in common, it will rarely camp in one unit, but generally divides into several separate tentcamps, each called a *khel*. The *kehl* may vary in size and composition, but may roughly be regarded as a lineage segment. It is, however, held together by economic as well as lineage ties. Hired shepherds etc. may thus belong to a specific *khel* without being members of the Jaf *ashiret*, or economic partnership between persons of different lineage segments may temporarily influence *khel* membership. The *khel* is led by an older man, more or less informally elected or granted authority because he is the person with the greatest power and prestige. The *khel* is thus primarily a residence unit, and is less permanent in its composition than the larger units which are based on descent only.

HOUSEHOLDS. Each *khel* in turn is made up of a number of households, frequently some 20—30, each inhabiting a separate tent. The households seem to have roughly the same size and composition as those of the sedentary village Kurds, described above. If a father can afford the necessary expenses in tent and utensils, he will set up an independent household for his married son. Poor people, on the other hand, may find this impossible. — Marriage is preferably with FaBrDa or other close relative, very rarely outside the *tira*. Brideprice varies from £ 200 to occasionally nothing in the case of close relatives. Payment may take any form, either in kind or cash, but is computed in terms of money.

This whole framework of formal organization may be diagramatically illustrated as below, Diagram 3.

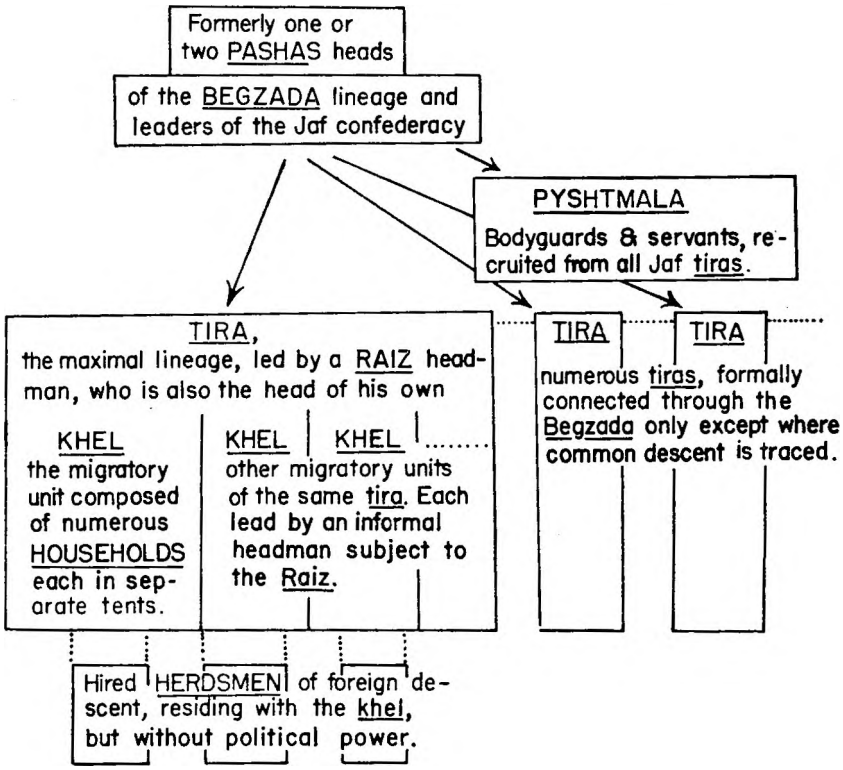


Diagram No. 3. Formal organization of the nomadic Jaf.

Within the *khel*, wealth, primarily in the form of herds, is the main source of power. Any member of the *tira* has unlimited grazing rights for his flocks, so there is no legal limit to the accumulation of wealth. The cattle are herded in flocks of 500 or so, with one herdsman for each flock. Herdsmen are preferably hired among the poor people of the *tira*, or they may be «foreigners» associated with the *khel* purely because of their economic functions. The typical pattern is to exploit poor relatives for this purpose, a practice familiar from Central Asiatic nomads (e. g. Hudson, 1938, p. 57). Self-

respecting men should not engage in economic pursuits, their main role was formerly that of warriors, protecting the people and flocks from attacks by other groups. Only the very poor herded their own cattle. Where one person does not own enough animals to make up the normal herding unit of 500, composite herds are created along kinship lines, with father, brother, *mam,* etc. Differences in wealth are tremendous, apparently on a continuous scale, some persons owning a total of 2,000 animals, some as few as 50, some quite destitute and dependent on richer relatives for subsistence and work.

With the tendency towards parallel cousin marriage, every group tends to split up into separate lineages, which continue separate over long periods of time. Thus semi-endogamous sections are created within the *tira* itself, usually identified with separate *khels.* But since the *khel* is a residential unit, the main unity of which stems from economic ties, persons of any lineage section may travel for longer or shorter periods with any *khel* to which their economic activities might attach them. Generally, one of these semi-endogamous lineage sections will form the wealthy core of a *khel,* to which a more or less variable group of less privileged families, related or not, are connected by economic ties.

These endogamous tendencies are also operative in the family of the *Raiz.* The position as *Raiz* is inherited, and the family of the *Raiz* therefore takes on the appearance of a noble class or caste. The process by which such a caste would truly emerge, however, would be through intermarriage with the «noble» lineage segments of other tiras. There seem in fact to be few such kinship ties established between *Raiz* families of different groups. A certain number of marriages will be exogamous as far as the *Raiz* family is concerned, if only from the occasional lack of available spouses in the limited family group. But these exogamous marriages more frequently establish ties between the *Raiz* and wealthy lineage segments among the «commoners» within the *tira* itself. It would thus seem that marriages are manipulated to reinforce the power of the *Raiz* within the *tira* itself, rather than to separate him off as a member of a distinctive and noble caste. To reify a distinction between «nobleman» and «commoner» within the *tira* would thus be an error, since the separa-

teness of the *Raiz* lineage follows from common marriage usage, and is no different in nature from the separateness of the wealthier as compared to the poorer lineage sections of the group.

The hereditary position as *Raiz* is simply vested in the leading lineage segment of the *tira*. An interesting problem arises as to what adjustments are made in the event of decline in wealth or the appearance of other impediments to leadership in this lineage. It is costumary for persons in a position of leadership to appoint their successor, usually a son, while they are still in a position of control. In the case of disagreement between the existing *Raiz* and the general population as to who should succeed him, the pattern of succession is probably decided by the bias in the balance between the positive power (primarily economic) of the *Raiz*, and the degree of general resentment to his decision. Where the power and prestige of the *Raiz* has declined, leadership might thus fairly easily be shifted to a stronger and wealthier collateral line. (Compare p. 126 for a more nearly «democratic» mechanism of appointing successor to the *Raiz.)*

I had no opportunity to ascertain the actual extent of the power vested in the *Raiz*. It would seem to be rather dependent on his means and personality, but, these permitting, to afford him considerable possibilities to enforce his decisions. He is on the other hand regarded as being subject to the *Begs* in all matters, and directly responsible to them.

The *Beg* leaders of the Jaf are sometimes represented as belonging to a *tira* of their own, the *Begzada;* more correctly the *Begzada* is regarded as a family or *hoz*, divided into the three branches Welled Begi, Kikhasrao Begi, and Bahram Begi. The political head may be drawn from any of these. The Kikhasrao Begi and Bahram Begi of today are descended by 7 generations from the common ancestor Zahir Beg. The Welled Begi are somewhat further removed. All the *Begzada* are now settled and live as absentee landowners of numerous Jaf and other villages. It is thus extremely difficult to form any picture of the true position of the leaders in the political organization of the nomadic Jaf. Some 60 years ago, authority was divided between the two Begzada brothers Osman and Mahmud Pasha, the latter being the leader of the nomadic section. Mahmud Pasha was

the last of the leaders to follow the nomads on their annual migrations. Today the 2—3000 who have remained nomads receive only slight attention. A description of the Jaf *Beg* at the time of Rich, (op. cit.) in 1820, pictures him with considerable sympathy as a powerful and despotic patriarchal ruler. A similar exhalted position is indicated for 1908 by Soane's description of the *Pasha* receiving the first cucumbers of the season, rushed to him on a foaming horse over some 50 dusty kilometres. (Soane, 1912, p. 207).

An important institution reinforcing the powers of the Begzada is the *Pyshtmala* (= around-the-house), a group of men recruited from all *tiras*, who protect and perform services in the home of the *Beg*, and used to serve as bodyguard. As well as constituting a type of levied tax, this group paralleled the Viking *hird* in form and function, being constantly at hand to maintain the *Beg's* position, effectively and immediately executing his orders. The composite origin of the group, and the fact that it included members of *all tiras*, made the *Pyshtmala* more readily subject to discipline than a group recruited on any other principles, and extricated the *Begs* from the need to create dangerous factionalism and initiate feud by using one traditional *tira* organization to control an other.

The functions of the Jaf confederacy, and the reasons for its permanence where similar organizations among settled people have been at best very ephemeral, pose interesting problems. Presumably, the direct advantages to all the nomads of a larger confederacy have always been evident enough to encourage submission to the central authority of the *Begs*. These advantages were considerably greater for the nomads than they would be for the settled tribes. Firstly, since all the property of the nomad is movable, he may lose everything if he is raided, where the farmer at worst loses one year's crop. Secondly, a high degree of consentration of population is possible in temporary tent-camps, whereas the agriculturalists necessarily live in smaller, more widely scattered communities. Given the social mechanism, there were thus no physical obstacles to large groups of nomads driving their flocks together and uniting for defence in times of strife while the villagers, to protect their property, were forced to remain scattered over the countryside. Thirdly, a larger

organized unit gave a direct economic advantage to the nomads in their relations with the settled population. The Jaf, by consentrating men and animals, were able to descend on whole valleys, tyranizing the local villagers by their larger numbers, and freely graze their flocks on pastures and fields belonging to the settled people.

This confederacy was admittedly not based on any lineage principle of common descent, since it counts among its members numerous *tiras;* yet all Jaf insist that the ruling position of the *Begzada* lineage has never been questioned. The fact that a central core of «real Jaf» can trace common descent surely contributes to stability. Furthermore, the *Begzada* group may have been large enough so there would constantly be a number of pretenders to the position as leader of the *ashiret*. Thus, if the pressure of exploitation became too great, the commoners could give their support to a competing pretender within the royal lineage, who would then be in a position to gain ascendancy.

The formal position of the Jaf *Begzada* is thus conceptually different from that of the *Raizes* of the separate *tiras*. The leaders of *tiras* and their segments are acclaimed, and should ideally base their power on informal sanctions. This «unquestioned» type of authority seems to be inherent in the principles on which a segmentary lineage organization is based. E. g. Peters (1951) discusses the organization of the Cyrenaica Bedouin in terms of the opposition of lineage segments of a like order of segmentation, and emphasizes the absence of a real *hierarchy* of political offices. Any Bedouin shaikh of a primary section must necessarily also belong to a specific secondary and tertiary section within it, and he can function as informal leader of the other sub-sections in his primary section only when it is in opposition to *another* primary section; in other situations, the unity of the primary section breaks down. The only way leadership can be stabilized and a hierarchy of authority established is by divorcing the super-ordinated leader and his group from the segmentary structure of the tribe as a whole. This is achieved in the case of the Jaf *Begzada* by elevating that whole lineage group to a semi-royal status. In relation to the Cyrenaica Bedouin, the Sanussi may for a time have occupied a structurally somewhat similar position (cf. Evans-Prit-

chard, 1949). The presence of the Jaf *Begzada* as political heads necessarily affects the internal organization of the various Jaf *tiras*, and the segmentary nature of the lineage organization is therefore not expressed fully. Each *Raiz* becomes de-facto vested with some authority as the representative of the permanently established Jaf *Begzada*, and the political structure is thus actually a compromise between a truly segmentary lienage organization and a hierarchical organization.

As far as its formal structure goes, the Jaf confederacy seems extremely similar to the political system of the early Mongols, as described e. g. by Hudson: The prominence of Chengish Khan's lineage is phrased by him in terms of the vassalization of other descent groups, to emphasize that «all the subjects of the Khan were considered as the vassals not of the ruler but of his family and his close kinsmen as represented by him» (op. cit., p. 92). Essentially the same might well be said if the relation between the *tiras* of the Jaf confederacy and their *Begzada* lineage. It is interesting to speculate whether, since the political mechanism seems to be present, it was merely the difficulties of topography that prevented the Jaf and similar Kurdish confederacies from forming the larger units that one finds in the Central Asian steppe area.

The immediate modification in Jaf formal structure made necessary by the adoption of sedentary life and agriculture are slight, thought the meanings and importance attaching to the various aspects of the organization change radically. Generally, each *khel* settles in a part of the old *tira* pastures, and the informal head of the *khel* becomes the formally elected *kikha* (mayor or headman) of the resulting village. Any one *tira* thus tends to split up completely, some *khels* settling at the winter camp sites around Qizil Rubat, others 80 km. N.E. on the autumn campsites of Shahr-i-zur. Whereas tribal unity thus loses its significance, each village is registered as the property of one or another of the *Begzada*, and *Jaf* identification, as well as the acceptance of *Begzada* leadership, is natural.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF THE HAMAWAND.

According to their own traditions, the Hamawands entered Southern Kurdistan from Persia as nomadic herdsmen. Seeing the opportunities offered by the ineffectual nature of Ottoman governmental control, they entered on a career of brigandage, looting the caravans that passed between Persia and Iraq. The uneasy relations between the Persian and Ottoman empires made this all the more feasable, since any activity detrimental to one power had the covert support of the other. Though the Hamawands later settled in villages, they did not immediately take up agriculture, except for small garden patches of melons etc. As they proudly assert: «For more than a generation we reaped our daily bread with our gunbarrels». All accounts by early travellers describe how this small group terrorized the district by striking quickly and effectively in widely separated areas. Only after the First World War did their economy become truly based on farming. Through this turbulent history, tribal political organization retained its importance, and some features of the system may be seen very clearly.

The Hamawand group as a whole is regarded as one *tira* of the same magnitude as the various component Jaf *tiras*. Even in its greatest period of glory, the Hamawand *tira* could muster no more than 200-300 horsemen, implying a total population of 1,000-1,500 individuals. The process of branching has however been initiated; in fact, as compared to the Jaf, the Hamawand political structure seems to be based on a clearer political recognition of the segmentation into lineage sections which follows from the marriage pattern. The hierarchy of progressively more inclusive lineage segments, from the single village level (population 50—100) and up to the maximal lineage group, is given political significance.

There is no single leader of the whole Hamawand *tira*[1]); questions concerning the group as a whole are discussed and decided in a council made up of the *Aghas* (=headman) of the 4 primary branches. Each of these branches are again divided into sub-branches,

[1]) Actually, Mohammed Amin Agha of the *Begzada* claims paramount position.

and so on ending at the village level. The leader of any category of group is called *Agha,* any branch or named section thereof will in certain contexts be called a *tira.*

The geneology of these branches is traced, but varies somewhat from villages to village. Such variations derive partly from the lack of interest in collateral units, partly from an attempt to stress certain relationships or to construct a more flattering genealogy.

Descent is traced in male line from the common ancestor Hamma, the founder or the tira, nine generations removed from the present

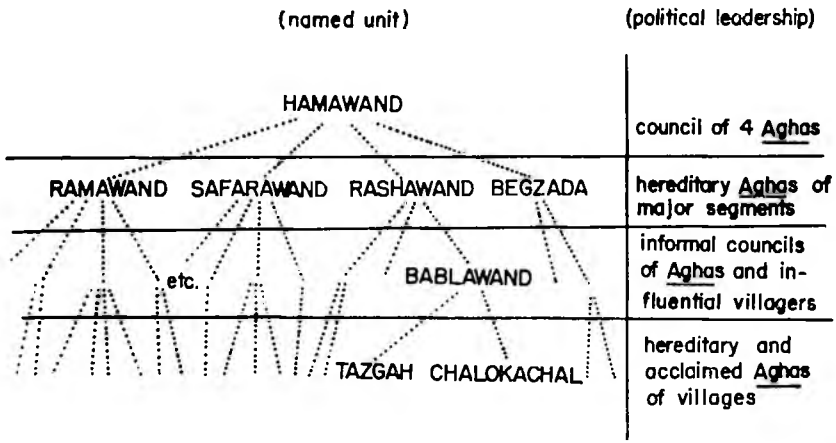


Diagram No. 4. A Tazgah model of their position in the Hamawand formal organization.

adult group. The origins of Hamma, having no political significance in the group, are of little interest to the villagers, though Arabic origin is occasionally claimed for its prestige value.

One version was collected in the village of Koni Sard: Hamma had 4 sons, Saffar, Yadjar, Rashid, and Ramazan; from these are descended the 4 major branches of the group. The villagers themselves claim to be Yadjar. They could indicate the areas where the descendants of the three other sons live, but were unable or uninterested in tracing relations in any greater detail.

In the village of Tazgah, a somewhat different version was given. The major branches were named as Ramawand, Safarawand, Rasha-

wand, and Begzada. As will be noticed, the branch of Yadjar, to which the Koni Sardis belong, is not in this list. The Koni Sardis in fact belong to the Begzada branch, so either Yadjar is the ancestor of all the Begzada, or a smaller segment category has been elevated to the level of a major branch, for the greater glory of the Koni Sard group. The villagers in Tazgah assert to belong to the Bablawand division, again made up of the villagers from Tazgah and Chalokachal, the latter now having been abandoned and the villagers scattered. The Bablawand were derived from the Rashawand, in unspecified fashion. A Tazgah model of their position in the *tira* would thus read as shown in Diagram No. 4.

The *Agha* of a village is appointed or granted power by the male inhabitants of that village. In practice, the position is hereditary, but not according to any rule of seniority, and village preference undoubtedly influences the pattern of succession. The village *Agha* has only the authority which follows from his own power and prestige, and the goodwill of his followers.

The position as *Agha* of one of the four major branches is either similarly hereditary, or, «if there is no suitable son of the old *Agha*», a new *Agha* is elected by the villagers. These *Aghas* will generally have the position and means to support a group of retainers, parelleling the *Pyshtmala* of the Jaf *Begs*. They thus have a vaguely institutionalized mechanism to enforce their authority. Thus, though the formal position of the *Aghas* of the four major Hamawand segments is unlike that of the Jaf *Begzada*, the actual differences more reflect the difference in scale than in formal position.

Neither the Jaf nor the Hamawand lineage organizations function in the «ideal» pattern closely exemplified by the Cyrenaica Bedouin, discussed above. A position of authority and super-ordination does in fact become vested in the individual *Agha* and *Raiz*, who tends to apply coercive means to support such a hierarchy of authority. Though the ideal «charter» of the political structure is that of a segmentary lineage organization, the system does in fact function in a somewhat different pattern, as will be shown more fully later.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF TENANT VILLAGES

The political organization of the non-tribal areas is generally much simpler, unifying a much smaller group. Immediately above the village level, external administration takes over control. In the village itself, a *kikha* or *mukhtar* (mayor, headman) is elected to serve as an intermediary between the people of the village and the authorities. Frequently he is appointed from above rather than freely elected, in an attempt to achieve a balance of power within the village. In the official governmental system, the *kikha* of the village is the official of the smallest unit. A hierarchy of officers, appointed from above in the bureaucratic system, administers progressively more inclusive areas, terminating in the bureaucratic head, the *Mutasarriff* of the *Liwa* (governor of the province), directly responsible to the government ministries, and with considerable autonomy. In practice, however, the landowner of the village intervenes at the base of this hierarchy, and the *kikha* serves as an intermediary between the villagers and the landowner, and has few dealings directly with official administration.

When left to their own devices, the villagers generally elect to office the older male leader of the largest kinship group. As a consequence of the marriage pattern, such kinship groups tend to separate off as endogamous blocks. But due to the lower frequency of FaBrDa marriage among the non-tribal villagers (see p. 68), these blocks show less organization and unity than the endogamous subsections in the tribal system, and could not properly be called lineages. Furthermore, they tend to be bilateral, in the sense that relationships traced through female links attain some importance. The relative sizes of these bilateral kinship blocks change fairly slowly, so village headmanship, as well as leadership in the kinship groups, tends to follow an apparently hereditary pattern from father to son.

The powers of the *kikha* derive in part from his powers as the head of such a group, in part from his closer relations with the landowner, and the implicit threat of reporting illegalities (or in fact making false accusations) to him. As the leader of the village,

he also exercises certain rights in his relations with the landowner — he can e. g. exclude any newcomer from village membership.

Among the various villages in an area, or those belonging to one landowner, there is no attempt at coordination. My host owns, among others, the three neighboring villages Hazar Merd, Decon, and Darbaro in the Suleimani valley. These villages share, for historical reasons, the usifruct rights to the surrounding area. Rather than making any attempt at conserted action in matters concerning them all, e. g. by meetings of the village headmen, there exists considerable enmity between the three villages. A marriage between the son of the *kikha* of Decon and the daughter of the leading family of Hazar Merd does not seem to have had any «political» results, and was probably manipulated to enhance the prestige of the *kikha* and his son in their own village.

GENERAL FEATURES OF POLITICAL SYSTEMS

The application of these formal political organizations, both of the lineage and feudal types, is modified by one basic principle, namely, the universal application of status difference, and the resulting lack of conceptualization of «the office», as apart from the total person occupying it at any one moment. An example might illustrate the point: Upon my arrival in the village of Decon, a small group of workmen were engaged in laying a brick floor in the local house of my host, the landowner. In their social classification of me, the only criterion available to them was the fact of my being his guest; so I enjoyed a reflection of his high status position, and consequently found myself in a relation of super-ordination with respect to the workmen. They found it necessary to interrupt their work unasked to perform personal servises for me, e. g. serving me my tea, etc. The workmen, brought to the village for the sole purpose of laying the brick floor, had no feeling that theirs was only a part-role in the situation, where they were expected to perform a specific service and no more. The status of bricklayers is clearly inferior to that of friend-of-the-landowner; the fact that their contact was by virtue of their office as bricklayers did not release them from universal sub-ordination to the occupier of higher status. Werever a

clear status difference is recognized, such an all-inclusive relation of super- and sub-ordination seems to result, and demands even of personal services by the posessor of higher status are thought reasonable.

In the formal organization, groups are clearly defined, on criteria of descent and residence, and each group is furnished with a named leader. But the nature of the leader's *office* remains rather vague; he is, in Max Weber's terms (Parsons 1941, p. 121), granted a liberal sphere of «arbitrary free grace». For a large part, the political leaders are not followed by virtue of their holding an «office», but are granted the right to make political, as well as other, demands on their followers by virtue of their higher status position — which waxes and wanes with the vicissitudes of fortune. Though the formal political categories are named and hierarchically ordered, the actual distribution and foci of power and control in the village and lineage remain quite fluid.

It is profitable in our analysis to make a distinction between *authority*, the more or less «legitimate» powers attached to a specific office or part-status, and the blanket term *power*, which depends upon the *total* status position of a particular individual, and his personal charisma (Weber, 1947), and is taken to cover the individual's total ability to lead or otherwise control the actions of other people.

This distinction is generally not made by the Kurdish villager, since, indeed, the abstract concept of an office is hardly developed; but it is useful in an analysis to distinguish the legitimate powers that belong with the office or part-status. The lack of a conceptual distinction in Kurdish thinking between authority in this sense and total power is evident in the almost complete absence of *lateral* relations between a specialized staff of functionals, in favor of a complete dominance of *line* relations of supra- and sub-ordination.

Returning to the applicability of the term *authority* in such a system: The total status position of the individual, from which his power stems, is a product of *all* his part-statuses, not only in the political field, but also in other hierarchies (e. g. hierarchies of religious power, wealth and class status, etc, cf. p. 78 ff.). Any for-

mal, named political position, however, is connected with an approximate total status position as a sort of stereotype. The relative grading of formal political positions is vaguely defined, and the individuals of a village, through competing for the positions, will align in supra- and subordination according to this grading. Thus certain ill defined demands and powers are *expected* (and therefore more readily submitted to) from persons occupying such positions. This amount of expected and generally unquestioned power is the authority that belongs with the particular position. The authority is thus not *derived* from the part-status, as it would if it were an office; it is brought to it. Persons occupying the position may at times not be able to exert it; nonetheless, in the formal political organization, this authority and degree of ability to apply sanctions of some kind is assumed.

These considerations are applicable in both the tribal and the non-tribal political systems, and modify the expression that these systems take. The evident differences between Kurdish tribal and non-tribal structure are thus reduced, and the Kurdish segmentary lineage organization becomes in its actual application more similar to the Kurdish non-tribal organization than to the classical segmentary organizations, exemplified above by the Cyrenaica Bedouin. When combined with this principle of universal application of status difference, the segmentary structure of the lineage offers the framework for a hierarchical organization of leaders of segments. And these segments are residential and territorial units, as are the units in the non-tribal system. In the following, then, Kurdish lineage organization will be seen as a hierarchy of leaders of groups of increasing genelogical spread, rather than in the classical manner as whole segments in opposition.

The general characteristics of Kurdish political systems correspond in many ways to those of the *traditional* system of Max Weber (op. cit.). The rules governing the various positions in the hierarchy are not enacted, they are traditionally defined. «The order underlying a system of traditional authority always defines a system of statuses of persons who can legitimately exercise authority». The concept of the *office* is undeveloped: «Such a status is different from an «office». It does not involve specifically defined powers with

the presumption that everything not legitimized in terms of the order is outside its scope». «So long as the encumbent of such a status does not act counter to the traditional order, ... loyalty is due, not to 'the order', but to him personally.» (Parsons, op. cit., p. 121).

The main contrast between the Kurdish systems and this «traditional» type lies in the implication in the definition of the latter that concrete traditional prescriptions are indeed accepted and agreed upon by all. The cultural heterogeneity of the South Kurdish area has been emphasized above; this heterogeneity makes for a situation where a truly traditional system can not operate. Any single concrete traditional prescription tends to be questioned by all but a minority, and conflicting interpretations of what is in fact the traditional order are constantly advanced. As a result, the theme of *power* attains an overriding importance, following the line of reasoning that if you can get away with something, it can't be *very* wrong. The effective check on excesses in the use of power is the threat of murder. Though there is obviously much more excited talk than action, Kurds are rightly famous for being «trigger-happy», and a person who strongly feels that his rights have been infringed upon may go to great lengths to retaliate. Since no institutional means exist, violence has become institutionalised as the only mechanism at hand.

It is tempting to see the present situation as the result of breakdown of a formerly functioning traditional system. There is considerable evidence indicating that Southern Kurdistan some 100 years ago was better integrated than today, in the form of a strongly feudal Pashalik centering around Suleimani. The Baban Pashas of Suleimani had frequent opportunities during conflicts with both the Persian and the Ottoman rulers to show that they had the unquestioning support of an overriding majority of the population, and through several centuries of rule they built up a traditional hierarchy of hereditary status positions, entitling persons to political offices (Rich op. cit., p. 115). The traditional nature of the rule is strikingly brought out in the following citation, where the Pasha of Suleimani explains the solidarity that his subjects feel towards him by contrast-

ing his form of rule to that of the feudal usurper in Sinna, Persia: «You are not the lord of a tribe, nor are your men your tribesmen. You may clothe them, feed them, and make them rich, but they are not your cousins, they are but your servants» (ibid, p. 86).

When Baban rule was broken in 1851, Ottoman legal practice as well as personnel achieved a footing in the area. This contributed further to the breakdown of traditional principles, since it offered individuals the opportunity to manipulate the two different systems, traditional usage and Ottoman legal code, to their own advantage. This most profoundly effected land tenure. All land, unless otherwise registered, was decreed to belong to the Ottoman Sultan. Though the rule existed that no whole village should be registered as the property of any single person, this and other rules were generally overlooked. Thus leaders of *tiras, Begs,* or in fact any other person who could bribe a few witnesses, registered large tracts of land as their personal property. Although actual power was of course necessary to make these formal transactions effective as far as the collecting of tax was concerned, the result was that a category of landowner emerged for which there were no clear traditional prescedents, and their claims, when supported by power and supposed Ottoman land code, could not truly be disputed. As a result, the field was left open to individual exploitation on a much larger scale than in Baban times, and the only effective checks were the above mentioned threats to the personal safety of the exploiter.

COMPOSITE COMMUNITIES

In the Hamawand area, some local groups are found today where tribally organized Hamawand exploit a non-tribal tenant population *(Meskjin)* as a serf group. Such situations have come about by recent military conquest, and show incipient developments of a caste system. Certain aspects of organization have been developed by the Hamawand as an adjustment to this situation.

The Hamawand formal political structure already outlined was also a military hierarchy of command. Each village was expected to muster a group of horsemen, usually 10—15, led by the village *Agha,* as a fighting unit in the Hamawand army. Each of these soldiers,

usually called «riflemen», owned at least one horse and one rifle, and kept a constant large supply of ammunition. During their periods of insurgence, it was difficult for the Hamawands to obtain such supplies. An informal symbiosis was therefore established with merchants in Suleimani and Kirkuk, who, in return for furnishing the items that the Hamawands needed, were permitted to pass through the area with their other goods. The Hamawands used Turkish Mauser rifles, and made their bullets of soft lead. As late as 1880, swords and lances were still employed.

When a Hamawand boy reached the age of 7, military instruction began — «just like soldiers are trained». The father supervised the training, and according to legend, any boy who did not show sufficient fearlessness was chased out of the area. After the youth had killed his first man in battle, or otherwise showed himself worthy, he was given the full status of rifleman, and generally a present from the *Agha* — a horse, a good rifle, or a quantity of stolen animals for sale.

The village *Aghas* were expected to mobilize the riflemen of the village at short notice for service in the larger units, led by the *Aghas* of the major branches of the Hamawand. But the village *Agha* was also free to initiate raids or conquest himself. A small group of *Aghas* from closely related villages might get together and contribute forces to the venture, or a single village might undertake the enterprise. Thus a warparty was formed, under the leadership of one *Agha* or one senior *Agha*. If the purpose were not looting of caravans, but conquest, some as-yet unconquered village was chosen as the object of attack, and the normal procedure would be for the group of riflemen to ride in a body to the village and offer the inhabitants an ultimatum. If the village surrendered, one of the Hamawand party was settled in it to collect taxes. If the village chose to resist, it would be attacked, and if the Hamawand gained entry they would rob the village of all movable property, as well as domestic animals, and carry it all away. The defeated villagers, unable to continue their agricultural work without implements and animals, would then normally send a delegation to the victorious Hamawand village, promising submission for return of the property.

A Hamawand *Agha*, normally a close relative of the leader of the warparty, would be appointed to the conquered village. He would settle permanently in the village with a small group of Hamawand supporters. What remained of the local taxes after their immediate needs were satisfied would be passed on to the *Agha* leader of the original party.

Conflicts easily arose between the Hamawand usurper and his original backer. As soon as the balance of power changed in favor of the former, and he further felt that he would be able to control the conquered village with his own forces, he would declare himself independent and thereby found a new lineage branch.

It may seem surprising that the smaller group in such a village should be successful in forcibly dominating the larger group for any length of time. As far as the conquest itself is concerned, the point was clearly made to me by the leader of one group of subjected serfs: «In those days, people were so busy with their farms and things, they had no time to be ready with guns and horses. Those who had enough money to feed the man that ride around on horses could conquer such poor villages.» And later, although the local Hamawands may have declared themselves independent of their old village, they could still count on support from their fellow tribesmen in case of revolt. The peasants, on the other hand, had no organization integrating a larger group. Furthermore, it is the peasant group who has the vested interest in peace, so that the crop can ripen and the stores survive. In case of conflict, the Hamawands risked only the loss of an asset, whereas the peasants, no matter what the outcome might be, were practically assured the loss of their whole year's crop.

The local group that emerged from these conquests has a very characteristic structure and organization. Except where external administration intervenes effectively, all political power is in the hands of a well organized Hamawand minority, led by an hereditary *Agha*. This ruling group has vested interests in remaining separate from the remainder of the village, and the close tribal organization limited by descent provides the necessary mechanism.

This political dominance serves primarily to enforce certain privileges in the economic field. The Hamawands regard themselves as

the owners of the land, and collect as tax the traditionally stipulated fraction of the peasants' crop: 1/5—1/10 of the cereal crop, 1/3 of the irrigated crop, where such is grown. Usually the Hamawand section of the village is too large to live entirely on these taxes, and since raiding activities are no longer possible (at least not on any scale, though they are still accused especially of cattle-theft by their neighbors), they find it necessary to contribute to subsistence by farming. The Hamawand farmers hold land as private, inheritable property. They recognize the rights of sons of non-tribal peasants to inherit the usifruct rights to specific fields from their fathers, but where the situation permits, such rights may easily be infringed upon.

A third group is also usually present in the village, consisting of laborers, generally of «foreign» origin. This group is in a similar economic position to that of laborers in the ordinary tenant villages, with the exception that upward mobility is virtually impossible. Neither of the two conflicting groups, the Hamawand or the subjected *Meskjin*, are willing to weaken their position by transferring the rights on land to any outside group, and the laborer can therefore never procure the necessary land to rise to tenant farmer status, even when given the economic means.

The economic conflict between the Hamawand and the *Meskjin* is more bitter now than before external administration pacified the area. Formerly, the relation was more nearly one of symbiosis. The peasants, by being attached to a militarily powerful tribe, were in fact protected from the raids of other war-parties in return for the tax they paid. Furthermore, they benefited from the raids of their Hamawand lords by serving as intermediaries in realizing the value of the loot. The Hamawands themselves could not enter the Bazaars of the towns, for fear of being recognized. The peasants, on the other hand, were free to enter the markets and sell the goods — for a consideration. If their war-lords were at all successful, the income from such transactions might well more than balance the rental tax paid on the farmland.

As a result of the persistent tensions between the two groups, and the clear difference in status position, very little, if any, inter-

marriage takes place. The marriages exogamous with respect to the close kinship group — few in any case — will among the Hamawands be with Hamawands of other villages. Thus a caste separation

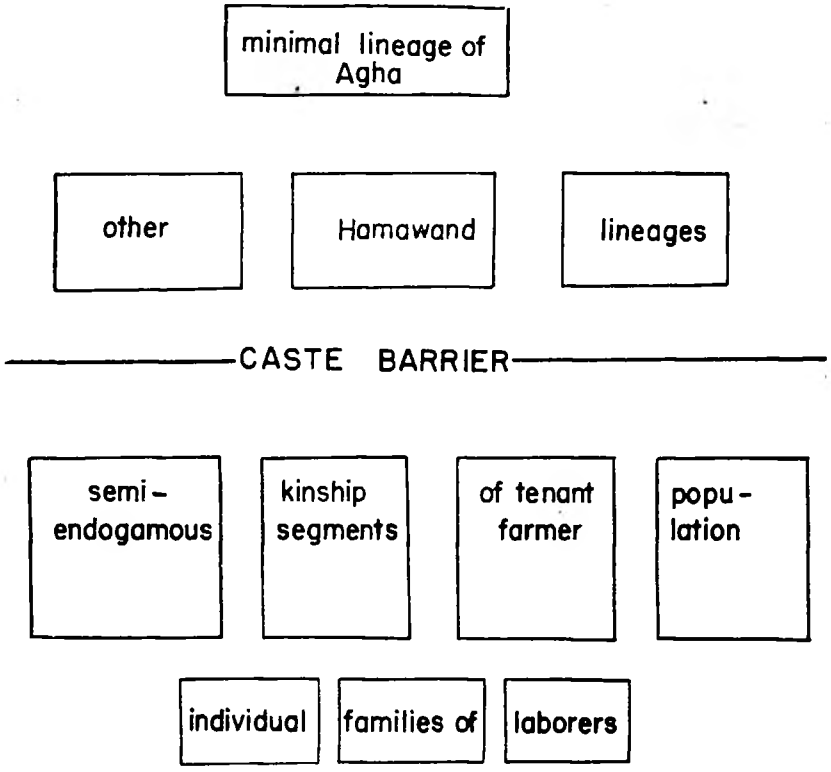


Diagram No. 5. Organization of composite village.

tends to grow up, separating the Hamawand effectively from the Meskjin group, and the composition of the local group might be schematically represented as in diagram No. 5.

One of the composite Hamawand- *Meskjin* villages was studied briefly. However, due to increased tensions connected with the app-

roaching review of their case in the Land Settlement Comission[1]), when claims and counter-claims would come to a head, it was impossible to obtain detailed census material.

The village in question was conquered some 40 years ago by a segment of the Rashawand Hamawands, and lies at present on the very edge of Hamawand territory. Villages to the north of it, formerly under Hamawand control, have lately torn themselves lose.

The total population is ca. 100 individuals; of them, 5—6 households are Hamawand, 15—20 households *Meskjin*, subjected tenants, and there are a few families of laborers. The Hamawand faction is led by an *Agha;* the *Meskjin* are led by the *kikha* (official headman of the village). The latter is descended from the former headman, and was elected by the majority of the villagers, so in the face of government approval, the Hamawands had to accept him. Between these factions there has been no intermarriage.

The conflict in this village is related to that in the neighboring village, to which, according to the *Meskjin* version, the Hamawands wish to extend their privileges. The balance of power between the two factions seems at present to be quite labile. The *Meskjin* have been gaining ground through a slowly rising standard of living whereby rifles and ammunition have become increasingly available to them, and through the growing mediating effects of external administration. To fully understand the present tensions, one rule of the Land Settlement Comission which is to review ownership claims shortly should be noted: Where conflicting claims are advanced, any party who has for the last 10 years regularly collected tax on the land is regarded as the de-facto owner. It is thus vital for the Hamawands to retain their power, and for the *Meskjin* to break that power, before the Land Settlement Comission arrives on the spot.

To this end, the factions are mobilizing all available mechanisms.

[1]) The Land Settlement Comission, established during the British mandatory period, is a court of claims relating to questions of land tenure. Coordinated with a comprehensive program of mapping, its object is systematically to cover all agricultural land, and definitively settle and register proprietory rights (cf. Dowson 1931).

Unless a certain sum of money is paid, all young male citizens of Iraq are liable to two years of military training and service. This is much resented by most villagers, and they attempt to avoid being called up. According to the *Meskjin*, the Hamawands have an arrangement with the police whereby they give the names of all *Meskjin* men in the two village who are liable for such service, in return for being left in peace themselves. Thus, it is said, the fighting strength of the *Meskjin* is constantly kept down.

The *Meskjin*, on the other hand, are accused of manipulating the religious brotherhood of Derwishes for political purpose, so as to organize all the *Meskjin* of the neighboring villages in a movement of resistance. To counteract this influence, the Hamawand *Agha* is at pains to expose the derwishes as fraudulent, and attempts to enhace the position of the local mullah, the recognized leader of the local mosque. — The final verdict, however, rests with the Land Settlement Comission, an institution the integrity of which few persons choose to question.

The rigidity of the Kurdish tribal system is here clearly illustrated, and might profitably be contrasted to that of the Nuer, as described by Evans-Pritchard (1940). The Nuer have, in spite of extensive conquests and various vicissitudes, retained a system of patrilineal *exo*gamous lineages as the basis of their political organization. These lineages however are *not* corporate localized groups, but are conceptually identified with certain areas, where they tend to form the organizing core of the local villages. Through a system of adoption of conquered Dinka tribesmen to specific lineages, and by reckoning descent through females, a larger community is built around this core, based on «sociological» kinship. Among the Kurds, on the other hand, the general practice of FaBrDa marriage and other close family endogamy makes any initial *rapprochement* impossible between conqueror and conquered, and encourages caste separation. Furthermore, kinship through female links is given no political recognition. The principle of «sociological» kinship is unfamiliar and would be in conflict with Islamic doctrine — the kinship terminology describes actual, genealogical distance, and practices of adoption into lineages would be unacceptable. The only way two groups could fuse in the

tribal system would be by demonstrating (or inventing) genealogical connection. This can hardly be done on any grand scale where common residence is virtually impossible, except as based on a relationship of conqueror and conquered.

As a result, the Kurdish tribal village retains a high degree of lineage unity, reckoned strictly patrilineally, as compared to Nuer villages. The Kurd who leaves his tribal territory, or even village, can obtain no political power in his new environment, therefore has minimal prestige, and thus tends to remain with his lineage group. But because of this, the Kurdish lineage system has not the adaptability of the Nuer system, and breaks down in a situation of conquest or external administration.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BABAN POLITICAL STRUCTURE

In the light of these miniature examples from Hamawand territory today, some of the characteristics of the old Baban rule become much clearer. The Baban themselves were not a *tira,* but a «royal» lineage of the same type as the Jaf *Begzada,* ultimately derived from the *Sekkir tira* of the Pushdir area. Their power, however, was based on the tribally organized groups, and a majority of the villages seem to have been controlled in the fashion of the above Hamawand villages, with a basic split between a ruling, tribally organized «soldier» caste and a non-tribal peasant population. This separation was clearly recognized by Rich in 1820, and in his lists of the populations of the Pashalik, only the Pushdir area is described as wholly tribal, the «other districts are mixed. Some inhabitants are of the peasant, some of the clannish race (= tribally organized), i. e., no village has inhabitants of one exclusive kind.» (Rich op. cit., p. 280). The tribally organized minority was employed by the Pashas to control the larger population: «. . . it would never do for him (Omar Agha, one of the feudal lords under the Pasha) to keep the citizen or peasant caste in his service. They never grow much attached, nor will they stand by you in any difficulties. The clansman (= tribal Kurd), on the contrary, though not of your own clan (= *tira),* grows warmly attached to you; and then neither hunger, thirst,

poverty, fatigue, nor danger, ever affect him or separate him from you'» (ibid., p. 263-4).

A tentative reconstruction of the formal organization of the Baban Pashalik suggested by this is schematically represented below, diagram No. 6.

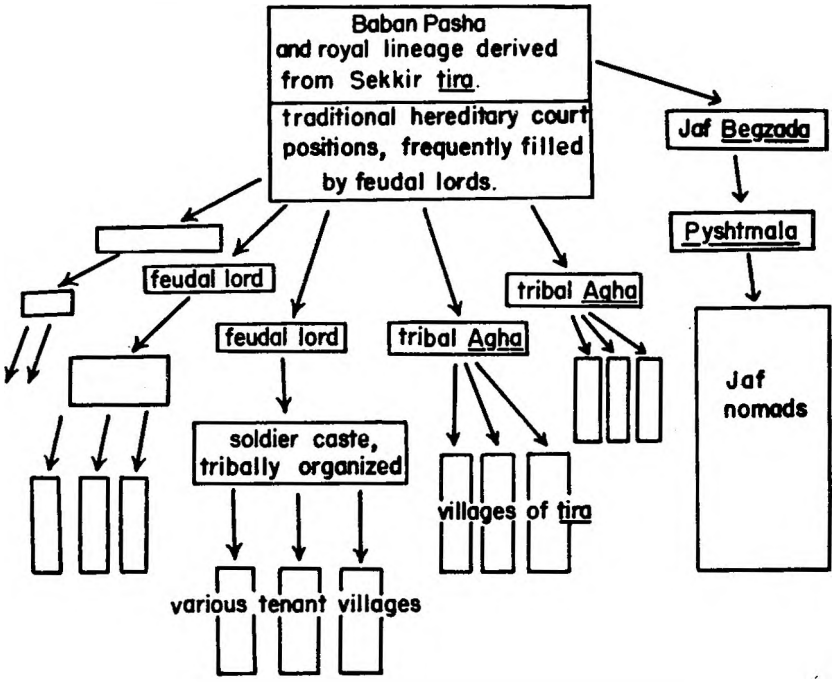


Diagram No. 6. Formal organization of the Baban Pashalik.

THE CHARISMA OF THE LEADER

In the formal political organization, principles and social segments derived both from the lineage system and the feudal system can thus be combined, and a more complex structure created. This is made all the more possible because of the similar expectancies attached to the person of the leader in both these systems. The qualifications and impediments to leadership will be discussed more fully in a later section, p. 119; however, some of the characteristics of the formal organization derive from the nature of leadership in Kurdish culture,

and can not be understood as divorced from the total *person* of the leader.

The interplay of structural and personal factors in defining the position and power of the leader, and thus the specific *form* of the political organization, may best be illustrated by the history of Shaikh Mahmud[1]), a leader of considerable importance. His emergence as *Malik* or King of Kurdistan after the First World War, frequently misrepresented or given a biased account in English sources, is the most outstanding feature of political development in Southern Kurdistan in the present century. He constitutes the charismatic leader scheduled by Max Weber (op. cit.) and others to appear upon the breakdown of an established order. The variety of the sources of political power, as well as the importance of the *person* and the vagueness in the definition of the *office* in the Kurdish system, are here clearly exemplified.

The family of Shaikh Mahmud traces its origin from two learned brothers, theologians, who arrived in Kurdistan from Persia some 570 years ago. Due to descent from Mohammed and a tradition of sanctity, the family retained a spiritually leading position. The immediate founder of the present lineage is Kaka Hamma, revered as a saint in Suleimani. During the centuries of Baban rule, the Shaikhs remained divorced from politics; their wealth grew slowly from occasional gifts of land and villages, especially from the Baban themselves.

With the political instability and disorganization following the end of Baban rule, Shaikh Said, the father of Shaikh Mahmud, entered actively into the conflicts, and asserted his secular powers in the area through a successful combination of violence and diplomacy. Competing factions attempted to have him deposed by arranging for him to be called to Istambul by Sultan Abdul Hamid. The Sultan, being extremely wary of court intrigue, frequently preferred to seek his support among «outsiders», and the meeting was a great success from Shaikh Said's point of view, effectually reinforcing his position. Shaikh Said was murdered in Mosul in 1909, and succeeded by his son Shaikh Mahmud.

[1]) It should be noted that the term *Shaikh* in Kurdish is not a political title, but merely indicates descent from the Prophet.

Upon his succession to leadership in the Shaikh family, Shaikh Mahmud continued his father's policy with great force. Southern Kurdistan was at the time in a state of anarchy, large areas had been depopulated, the old trade and pilgrim routes were largely closed by brigands, especially by the Hamawands, who successfully challenged Ottoman supremacy in the face of large punitive expeditions.

Obviously in such a situation; conflicting stories are told about the part played by each faction in the struggle, and the various versions of Shaikh Mahmud's carreer form no exception. Any evalution of the practical and moral virtues of his activities is outside the present scope, and must be based on much fuller evidence than is available at present. What is of interest in this context is merely the foundations of his power and the form of his control in the area.

Economic bases. From the modest beginnings in Baban times, the family's economic power was progressively enhanced. The possibilities inherent in the Ottoman practices of land registration seem to have been utilized. After closer relations had been established with the Sultan, the Shaikhs were able to gain control over numerous villages by buying the land at very low rates from the government. A major source of revenue that made this type of transaction possible was the ownership of the Bazaar (market district) of Suleimani (even today, 1/4 of the Bazaar belongs to the Shaikh family vs. 3/4 municipally owned). In addition to its economic importance, this also enabled the family in effect to control the city of Suleimani. The Shaikh family thus became one of the three major landowning groups in the area. It should however be pointed out that in spite of nearly continuous expansion of property, the whole Shaikh family today owns less land than *one* member of the Jaf *Begzada* alone (Hassan Beg of Halebja). Thus Shaikh Mahmud's political supremacy did not derive directly from *ownership;* landed property merely offered the necessary economic foundation for his political activity.

Semi-sacred position. As descendants of the Prophet, the Shaikh family is considered to be vested with certain supernatural powers, derived secondarily from the sainted ancestor Kaka Hamma. This gives Shaikh Mahmud the specific power to make amulets that

protect the bearer from bullets and knives. The amulet consists of a number of Koranic citations; it is sewed up in a triangle of cloth of specified color, and carried pinned to the shoulder, in the hair, or suspended by a string around the neck or under one arm. If occasionally the bearer of such an amulet *is* killed by knife or bullet, this can easily be explained, since the protective power is not operative while the person is thinking bad thoughts or if he loses his temper in battle. Stories proving the efficacy of the amulets are told: it has been hung around the neck of a rooster, and no matter how hard they tried, competent marksmen were unable to shoot the bird.

Charisma. The personal charisma attached to Shaikh Mahmud is rather difficult to separate from his semi-sacred powers, and in part springs directly from them. He is attributed with the ability to read a person's thoughts and character; he knows before a word is spoken for what purpose a person has come to him. A certain delight in other people's uneasiness and a taste for tricks and practical jokes further contributes to his un-ordinary, semi-sacred reputation. Last but not least, he also strikes a Western visitor by his extraordinary personality and force of character.

The failure of his charismatic mission to succeed must be ascribed primarily to external rather than local factors. Towards the end of the First World War, contact was established between Shaikh Mahmud and the Indian Army in Mesopotamia, and, after being given informal promises of Kurdish independence, Shaikh Mahmud chose to shift his loyalties from the Turks to the British. He proclaimed himself King, thus in a sense re-establishing the form of the Baban Pashalik, and perhaps hoping to emerge as the leader of all of Kurdistan. By the treaty of Lausanne, Allied plans were reversed, and intermittent conflict over the question of Kurdish independence continued in the area till 1932. Some of these conflicts derived from international developments, others seem rather unnecessary. It is indeed surprising that the British administration should chose E. B. Soane as their agent in the area, and the person to cooperate with Shaikh Mahmud — Soane who, due to personal experiences well before the war makes the most highly emotional attacks on Shaikh

Mahmud in his book (Soane, op. cit.), published well before his appointment. Such personal antipathy between the two leading figures could only make the struggle more bitter and a compromise more difficult to reach.

The formal organization contemplated by Shaikh Mahmud for his larger domains never had time to take shape, and by now it is claimed to have been in accordance with recent Western principles. The «preliminary» pattern of the early 1920s was along traditional feudal lines — he is said to have travelled around with a large army, living «off the land» as he passed through the various districts he administered. A suggestion of some of the patterns and institutions may be observed today.

At present, Shaikh Mahmud lives in the small village Darikelli south and west of Suleimani[1]). He is surrounded by a group of retainers paralleling the Jaf *Begs' Pyshtmala* in form and function, but recruited along more irregular lines. A typical escape for a young man who has become inextricably involved in feud or has other strong reason to leave his village is to join a feudal lord of Shaikh Mahmud's type, buying security by being the follower of an important leader, and in return serving in the leader's private police force. The Shaikh thus has a group of men who depend on him for protection and livelihood, and may use them to enforce his control over the villages he owns. His opponents like to make veiled accusations that this group also is used to tyranize minor leaders of others areas. However untrue, such stories do not serve to reduce the value of his friendship or the weight of his wrath.

Friendly relations with leaders and groups outside the Shaikh's immediate control are reinforced through contacts on the major festival days of the Islamic year, when Darikelli is a bustling bee-hive full of embroidered robes and flying turbans, and the Shaikh himself is constantly active in three separate reception rooms. Furthermore,

[1]) It should be noted that Shaikh Mahmud denies taking any part in present politics, and the following in no way contradicts his statement. The activities described serve simply to perpetuate his prestige, and are of interest in the present connection only by virtue of the parallelism in the mechanism used in securing prestige and in reinforcing a power position.

obligations are constantly created by liberal gifts («He steals from the poor and gives to the rich» in the words of one critic!).

Such institutionalized or regularized means of coersion and establishing relations of dependence are very parallel to those used by the leaders in the traditional tribal political organization, and illustrate how the charismatic leader attempts to utilize traditional symbols and institutions. It is also striking how the importance of the charismatic leader extends to the limits of the previous, disorganized unit — here the Baban Pashalik — and no further. It is very doubtful that Shaikh Mahmud ever had any appreciable following outside the districts of Southern Kurdistan.

Personal charisma being important even in the traditional system, it plays a tremendous role in a situation of disorganization, and may survive a series of defeats. Characteristic is the comment by numerous Hamawands, whose treason in fact once contributed to the Shaikh's defeat: «We still respect the Shaikh, and if he treats us right, we will serve him again.»

Chapter III.

A. Kinship composition and organization of local groups.
B. The blood feud.

KINSHIP COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION OF LOCAL GROUPS

The important dichotomy between tribal and non-tribal villages has been touched upon previously, and the actual differences in the formal political organization have been outlined. The following table (No. 3) attempts to illustrate co-variation between the type of formal political organization and the frequency of certain marriage patterns, resulting in a contrast in the kinship composition of local groups. In the limited period of fieldwork, and due to local difficulties in connection with land tenure and military training, it was not feasible to collect extensive census materials; and the table should serve as an illustration of a point, the validity of which was checked more extensively by less exact means, and does not pretend in itself to be statistically conclusive.

A further comment should be made to justify the separation of tribal vs. non-tribal frequencies in the «tribal» village of Koni Sard. The non-tribal category is made up of recent immigrant families, largely born or even married in other villages, and does not truly belong in the table as representative of Koni Sard.

The generalization that seems to hold for all the villages which were investigated would be: A contrast exists between the frequency

of cousin marriage in tribal as compared to non-tribal villages, high frequencies of cousin marriage being associated with a *tribal* political system, that is, with the lineage type organization. General village endogamy, on the other hand, remains high in the non-tribal villages, marriages exogamous with respect to the village having similar low frequencies in both groups.

Table III.
Illustration of the correlation between political organization and frequency of marriage with relatives:

NAME OF VILLAGE:	own village: amoaza	khaloaza	purza	other relative	un-related	foreign village:	total
NON-TRIBAL:							
Djeshana	6	1	1	9	19	10	46
	village endogamy: 78 %						
	family endogamy: 37 %						
	cousin marriage: 17 %						
TRIBAL:							
Tazgah (Hamawand)	5	1	—	2	1	1	21
Koni Sard »	4	—	2	1	1	3	
	village endogamy: 80 %						
	family endogamy: 71 %						
	cousin marriage: 57 %						
Koni Sard (non-tribal)	—	—	1	—	—	6	7

As a result of these contrasting frequencies of marriage types, the kinship composition of the two types of villages show important differences. The tribal village constitutes one close-knit kinship group, or is made up of distinct endogamous lineage segments of a larger lineage group. The non-tribal village, on the other hand, presents a less organized picture in terms of biological relationships; though predominantly endogamous, it is internally essentially unstructured above the household level. The non-tribal village might

thus be considered an example of Murdock's *deme* type of community, that is, an endogamous, but unstructured localized kin group (Murdock 1949, p. 63).

Some of the interrelations between marriage patterns, kinship composition of local groups, and type of political organization are fairly clear. In the tribal political system, patrilineal descent is of considerable importance. Membership in the political unit itself depends on patrilineal descent and one gains prestige from belonging to particular segments of the larger lineage. As compared to the non-tribal village, the whole status system is considerably more elaborated, as one would expect in a traditional system. Since marriage, both according to Islamic law and general Kurdish values should be between equals, and since each lineage segment wishes to preserve its own status position (and may in fact tend to over-rate it), neither sex is willing to marry *down* in the social scale, and near-kin marriage is the reasonable solution. Most clear is the status equivalence of children of brothers, and FaBrDa becomes the preferred spouse.

This emphasis on equivalence is however only one factor inducive to a pattern of FaBrDa marriage. Perhaps more important is its political significance, briefly indicated previously.

A comparison of the tribal and non-tribal patterns may clarify this point. In the tribal system, power relations on the village level are more amenable to manipulation than in the non-tribal system, where most power is vested in the absentee landowner. At the same time, these power relations in the tribal village are defined in lineage and kinship terms. A man can only expect political support from his immediate agnatic relatives — those who by descent belong to his political sub-section — primarily brothers, sons, and brothers' sons, the relations to the latter being most critical. Political obligations can be reinforced in this group by giving them a daughter in marriage; conversely, the group would be alienated by being refused that daughter. The man who marries his daughter out of the lineage segment and takes a high bride-price for her thereby converts her into an economic asset, but also isolates himself from his agnatic relatives, his potential political supporters. He can then expect no support in a situation where actual *power* is important, such as in

factional disputes or feud, and his initial economic advantage gained from the daughter's marriage is thus abrogated. FaBrDa marriage thus reinforces the political implications of the lineage system. These relations might be summarized as follows:

TRIBAL:

power relations subject to manipulation	+	political units defined by agnatic kinship.	=	political emphasis to marriage — high freq. of FaBrDa marriage.

In the non-tribal village, on the other hand, the power relations are given to greater extent, in the sense that they are outside the control of most villagers. Furthermore, they are based on economic considerations more than on kinship. The political units are similarly not lineage segments, but defined purely in regional and residential terms. As a result, marriages are manipulated more for economic ends, wealth being the main criterion of village standing. In marrying off a daughter, a man therefore attempts either to take a high brideprice, or to create a link of kinship with an other family in the residential unit. Thus, in a circular way, FaBrDa marriage decreases and the importance of affinals in the endogamous community increases. This can be seen in the bilateral character of the kinship blocks that form the factions in a tenant village, as contrasted to the patrilineal lineage segments of the tribal village. For comparison with the tribal system, these relations might be summarized as follows:

NONTRIBAL:

power relations more given, economic in origin	+	political units geographically defined	=	economic emphasis to marriage — lower freq. of FaBrDa marriage.

The unity of the local group in the tribal system springs from an unquestioned solidarity; the leader of such a group has few if any coercive means at his disposal. His powers are of the patriarchal, informal, kinship-modeled type, and generally derive from the fact of kinship. This in conjunction with the marriage pattern tends to produce a rather small local group in the settled tribal areas. Lineage

segments which have become widely separated in terms of descent will continue as separate, endogamous segments, and in such a situation it is difficult for one segment to accept the informally enforced authority of the leader of another segment. Especially where the two segments interpret their relative status positions differently, conflict will result, and the group will split in two. Such ruptures, though they may to a certain extent harm the group, function at the same time to keep it of such a size that the «unquestioned» leader with no coercive mechanisms can indeed lead it. Furthermore, the wider tribal organization coordinates the small local groups, and thus enables a larger number of them to act as a body when such conserted action is necessary, e. g. in defence or feud. As suggested in the discussion of Hamawand formal organization, this process of segmentation and splitting has been clearly recognized in the political organization.

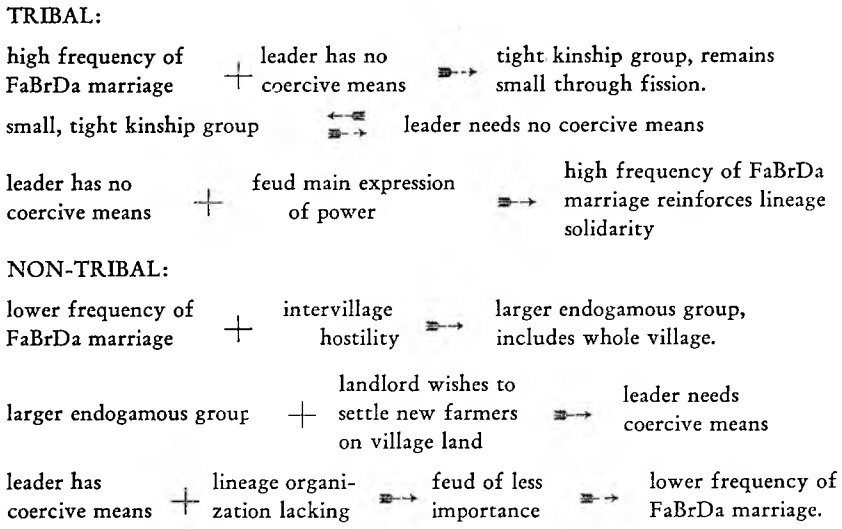
In the non-tribal, tenant, village, on the other hand, solidarity springs from the common subjection to a landowner. The status differences within the group become less elaborate, since the landowner is in a position to make or break any person's career, and inherited status thus becomes less significant. Hostilities tend to be channelized towards *other* villages (see below, p. 129), and village endogamy becomes more important than lineage unity. Even so, FaBrDa and other close kin marriage continues in a moderately high frequency, maybe primarily due to the traditional privilege of reduced brideprice.

At the same time, the difference in the political powers of the leader in the tribal as compared to the non-tribal village can be related to this. In the latter, unstructured kin groups (with agnatic bias) of varying size and relationship exist side by side, and the landowner will tend to perpetuate this condition, at times as a conscious policy, by alloting land to any competent farmer who desires it, no matter what his village of origin might be. The «unquestioned» type of leader found in the tribal local group, whose judgement carries authority in itself, could not even attempt to control such a group. Coercive means — here the implied powers as the agent

and advisor of the landowner, with the right to evict from land etc. — are necessary.

These interrelations might be represented diagrammatically as follows: (Diagram No. 7).

Diagram No. 7.



THE BLOOD FEUD

In the tribal political system, the localized, territorial groups occupying the separate villages are thus in effect lineage segments. Their corporate unity is expressed in communal ownership of land, cooperation and coordination in herding and irrigation, and political unity for purposes of defence and raiding. The present section will attempt to explore the extent to which these lineage segments operate as corporate entities in the field relating to homicide and law: whether the principle of collective responsibility is applied and a pattern of blood feud results. A discussion of these problems should contribute further to our understanding of the nature of Kurdish lineage organization.

The association of a lineage organization, small endogamous communities, and a weak development of governmental institutions in

the Kurdish tribal system poses some unusual problems in this field. In the travel literature, Kurdish tribes have a deserved reputation as warriors and bandits with little respect for human life, and without further analysis of the situation it has been assumed that much of their activities in this field is governed by a pattern of blood feuding. There is however good reason to analyse the situation more carefully, to discover just what patterns relating to homicide do in fact exist.

The material on which the following is based is, for obvious reasons, very incomplete. Today homicide is the matter with which the external administration is most concerned, and immediate intervention on its part tends to prevent other action from being taken, or fear of such intervention prevents actual case histories from being discussed. All the data that I do have, however, indicates the absence or very weak development of blood feuding patterns in Southern Kurdistan. This absence may seem surprising, and it is necessary to make clear just what is meant by the statement.

It seems useful in the analysis of this phenomenon to adhere to a fairly specific defintion of what is meant by institutionalized blood feud. In its most characteristic form, it has been described in numerous African societies, e. g. the Nuba (Nadel 1947): «In Heiban [homicide] entails blood feud, which is carried on until exact revenge has been achieved; a man must be killed for a man, a woman for a woman; even in their age the two must be as closely matched as possible. The duty to avenge devolves, not on an individual, but on the whole clan . . . . Again, the revenge is not directed against an individual — the murderer himself — but against any member of the enemy clan who satisfies the conditions of this law of revenge . . .», p. 151). The pattern is thus a special form of institutionalized revenge, whereby a whole group of persons is held collectively responsible for the behavior of one of its members, and where the wronged party is similarly not conceived as the individual or his close family, but as the whole larger group to which he belonged. The reaction is one of retaliation, governed by considerations of equality, and subsidiarily one of compensation by traditionally stipulated blood money (e. g. ibid. p. 251).

In this form, the blood feud is not found in Southern Kurdistan.

In fact, the basic principle underlying the institution, namely the collective responsibility of the members of the descent group, seems to be lacking. Where the descent group is in fact the local community, one is faced with the problem of deciding whether the group at any one time acts *qua* descent group or *qua* local, that is territorial, unit. To analyse the data relating to this, it is necessary to make a distinction between (1) such collective responsibiltiy relating to homicide, where a whole group is held responsible for the initial act of *one* member, and (2) the collective nature of other types of *feud and warfare,* where the whole group as a political unit is involved in the *initial* action — such as would be the case where a death resulted from any kind of organized and premeditated raid that one group might make upon another, with a primary interest in booty. If, in this latter case — though it might lead to retaliation — the retaliation were not governed by considerations of equality, it could not properly be called blood feud.

Incidents of type (2) have certainly been frequent in Southern Kurdistan. Incidents of type (1), on the other hand, did not come to my knowledge, either in historical material or on the contemporary scene. It would rather seem that a pattern of individual and particular *revenge* prevails, which extends only to very near kinsmen and accomplices. Certainly, the only case history which I can document fairly completely (see Appendix II) is appropriately described in such terms. In this pattern of revenge, the harm and retribution is definitely directed towards the person who committed the initial murder, only secondarily towards his nearest kinsmen, and that only if they have taken a clear stand in the conflict. There can be no feeling of collective responsibility within the whole descent group, since random retaliation within the lineage or even village of the offender is never considered. Conversely, only the very close kin of the deceased are motivated by the desire for revenge. The orphan would experience great difficulties in calling on lineage mates to assist him by virtue of their righteous indignation — he would do much better if he emphasized an economic motive, constituting himself as the leader of a small group of «bandits» in an attempt to rob his opponent. Thus, both in the case of homicide between

tiras and between sections of a single *tira*, the procedure seems to be one of personal revenge, and not retaliation within the whole group to which the offender belongs. It therefore seems useful to emphasize this difference by limiting the term blood feud to its typical form, as found e. g. among the Nuba, and to explore the possible reasons why the jural concepts of collective responsibility, on which the blood feud pattern is based, are *not* applied to a Kurdish lineage group or segment of such.

It is necessary to emphasize the unique situation, as compared to most societies described in the anthropological literature, in which these jural principles are to be applied. Kurdish lineages are not organized factions within a community, as is often the case in other societies; nor do they have the usual ramifying kinship connections with other groups. With a high frequency of close kin marriage, as described above, a Kurdish lineage, and even the lineage segments down to the village level, are endogamous, socially isolated units. They are, furthermore, geographically isolated. The *tira* as a whole occupies a large, contiguous territory; the members of the *tira* are essentially the sole residents of that territory. The local group, the village, is also the lineage segment. There is no indigenous political authority above the level of the maximal lineage; and such a maximal lineage has no vital relations with other groups (except a certain minimum of trade). The maximal lineage can therefore, in the autonomous Kurdish system, be regarded as «the society».

The concept of collective responsibility thus hardly applies in the usual sense in the relations between segments of *different* lineages —between groups in separate «societies». Jural principles of this type can only be applied *within* moderately homogeneous societies, where any individual as a sociological person is an approximate equivalent of his co-lineage mates. (Fortes 1953). With the geographical separation of Kurdish lineages, furthermore, feud between them would in fact necessitate aggression into «foreign» territory. The maximal lineage is a politically unified corporate group for purpose of defence, and thus conflicts on any scale between segments would lead directly to all-out war between the lineages to which they belonged. In such a situation, economic and other considerations favoring continued

peaceful relations would take precedence over the desire for personal revenge on the part of anyone but the most powerful leader. Personal conflicts between such leaders might well be patterned by the desire for revenge, and none the less involve whole groups in the conflict; but considerations of equality in retaliation would not be relevant on this «inter-societal» level, and blood feud is thus an inappropriate name for inter-tribal feuds, no matter what the immediate cause that ostensibly produced the feud were.

In a system with endogamous lineages, conflicts between subsections of a maximal lineage, of the type discussed in Appendix II, would seem to lend themselves more readily to solution by blood-feud. Whereas the individuals has few personal dealings with persons outside his *tira,* there is much room for disputes and conflicting claims *within* the endogamous, landholding *tira.* Such disputes would not immediately become «international» problems, subject to all the attendant tactical and practical considerations, but would create factions *within* the group, where concepts of justice and settlement be equality are more applicable. The only further prerequisite for a development of a blood feuding pattern is then a certain minimum strength of the kinship bonds, to ensure clear kinship alignment in the factions and near-universal identification with the kinship group and the action of kinsmen. This degree of development of the kinship bond seems to be lacking in Southern Kurdistan at the present time.

It should also be remembered that with the Kurdish type of lineage organization, the individual's loyalties are not to the descent group *in abstracto,* but are felt and expressed in terms of local groups, which very nearly correspond to the lineage segments. Because of this, any armed conflict between lineage segments will necessarily be in territoreal terms; it will be a feud between villages. Thus complicating factors enter, involving territorial interests in areas where there is no surplus of arable land (e. g. much Hamawand territory today), conquest and vassalization of villages, etc. The larger territorial organization of the whole lineage is directly endangered by such internal inter-*village* wars, and characteristically enough it is the function as arbitrator in intra-lineage conflicts that

the tribal leader retains longest in the face of breakdown of tribal organization (cf. Memni, p. 126). The ability to avoid or resolve such conflicts between villages is a prerequisite for the maintenance of lineage unity, and it is therefore essential that the principle of collective responsibility is *not* applied to the co-residents of the village community.

Leach (op. cit., pp. 56-7) discusses a feud between two competing lineages in the Rowanduz area. Though in effect a struggle for political supremacy between rival lineages, it appears to be governed by ideas of retaliation and equality. Hay (op. cit.) further lists the traditionally stipulated blood money to be paid for various classes of people. The Rowanduz area, as contrasted to Southern Kurdistan, is one where a number of well-organized lineages are in close contact. This is due in part to a difference in local history. Suleimani is an old center, and the whole territory was long subject to the feudal Baban administration, based on non-lineage principles. The Rowanduz mountain areas, on the other hand, retained a presumably characteristic tribal organization, with numerous territorially separate, independent lineages till quite late, when it was united by conquest in a larger state system under the Mir og Rowanduz around 1830. It is interesting to speculate whether the fusion of numerous lineages into a larger state may not have changed some of the factors outlined above in such a way as to permit the institutionalized extension of the South Kurdish pattern of personal revenge to a pattern of blood feud.

In Southern Kurdistan, it is difficult to see what sanctions would be brought to bear against homicide within the maximal lineage, other than this pattern of personal revenge. Other mechanisms, once existing, may however have been disguised by now through the activities of the external administration.

Chapter IV.

Non-political hierarchical organizations.

The theme of power is extremely important in Kurdish thinking, in the sense I have used the expression *de-facto* power: the actual, total extent to which a person is able to lead people or otherwise induce them to act according to his wishes. There does not seem to be any single word in Kurdish to cover this concept, but, though a blanket term, it is found very useful in an analysis of Kurdish social organization. The Kurdish villager seems in effect to feel that the total status position of a person, and the de-facto power that he controls, stand in a direct proportional relation to one another. At any rate, this is the manner in which status and prestige is described. The type of delegated power vested in the clerk of some large, bureaucratic department is not found in any local, autonomous hierarchy or organization.

Formal political organization constitutes the main hierarchy of institutionalized power relationships; but there are also other hierarchies of status positions, regulating other fields of activity. A high status position in these hierarchies affords the holder the right to apply certain sanctions, positive or negative, to persons inferior to him in the hierarchy. He is thus able to influence the actions of his fellow villagers in much the same way as a political office-holder; he has *power*. Thus his part-status in a hierarchy not formally political contributes to his total status, and to the power he controls, and thereby becomes a factor in deciding his position in the total power

hierarchy of his village and society. The formal political organization, discussed so far, is thus only one factor in the hierarchy of supra- and sub-ordination in the village, and it must be related to the other formal organizations or hierarchies that exist.

However, this phrasing of the relationship makes use of distinctions foreign to Kurdish thinking. As stressed in the discussion of general features of formal political organizations, the concept of an *office* is undeveloped, and relations of super- and sub-ordination spring from differences in the *total* status of individuals. The Kurdish villager is not concerned with abstract features of village organization — he sees the organization of his own village, and other organizations affecting him, in terms of hierarchies of *individuals*, of named and familiar people, each with a familiar total status. But to analyse the relationships and clarify some of the principles operative in this type of organization, it is necessary to break down these total statuses into component elements. Previously, the formal political hierarchies have been discussed. In the present section, som other status positions and hierarchies will be divorced from their contexts in observed total statuses, and described. It is not implied that the total status of individuals is merely a sum-total of these part-statuses; the integration of such part-statuses into a total status will be discussed later, after the village scene, where such integration takes place, has been described. Our present concern is with the principles governing these various, analytically separable, hierarchies, and the part-statuses defined by these hierarchies.

There is a distinction to be made between these *hierarchies* of institutionalized positions of super- and sub-ordination in an organization — hierarchies of part-statuses — and a more general *scale* of prestige. A person's prestige depends on the degree to which he approaches certain ideals; and one may distinguish between various such scales, relating to degree of piety, age, wealth, etc. The prestige that accrues to the individual from high rating on such scales is convertible into influence and power; part-statuses in a hierarchy, on the other hand, give power directly. To complicate the situation further, high rating on a scale of power might also be said to contribute to a person's prestige. Several scales have been implied in the

previous discussion, and are indeed implicit in the systems of status hierarchies. An attempt will be made to relate the various status positions to ideals expressed on such scales, and in the final paragraphs of the section to outline the main scales on which individuals may be rated.

ECONOMIC CLASSES

The village hierarchy of class differences, based on division of labor and attendant differences in wealth, has been discussed above, pp. 20 ff. This hierarchy is, as we saw, produced primarily by the feudal principle of delegation of work on the land, and is conceptualized in terms of distinct social classes, each with traditionally defined rights and privileges in their relations to each other. Each class is thus a status category, and they are arranged in a hierarchy leading from *laborer* through *tenant farmer,* occasionally an *intermediary capitalist,* and culminating in the *landowner*. This is in itself a power hierarchy, since each superior status directly gives opportunity for control over persons of inferior status positions, within the traditional limits. The *freeholding farmer* class, on the other hand, occupies a status partly divorced from this immediate power hierarchy. Characteristically, where such freeholding farmers are found in a village partly controlled by a large landowner, every effort seems to be made on the part of the landowner to secure property rights also to the remaining fraction of land, and thus place all members of the community in the unambiguous hierarchy of control and power. Consequently freeholding farmers with property of any significance are generally found in tribally organized communities, and a dichotomy between only freeholding vs. only tenant communities generally holds true. *Freeholding farmers* as a class tend to be on a par with the *tenant farmer* class in the larger class system, and frequently control a small group of *laborers,* and in certain areas also the serf class, the *Meskjin.* The main features of the reciprocal relations between these classes have been sketched previously.

The special position of the *shepherd* remains to be discussed. He is essentially a laborer, working for a stipulated annual payment in kind (grain), but also receives a sheet of unleavened bread daily

from each household he serves. The status of the shepherd is rather low, and he is frequently a foreigner in the village. In point of fact, many of the field laborers are also of foreign origin, but they become more or less assimilated in the community, whereas the solitary occupation of the shepherd prevents or delays his complete assimilation. — In general, the sheep and goats tend to be herded by the small boys of the village — sons of laborers — and the adult shepherd or herdsman is put in charge only of the large cattle.

The position as mullah (roughly equivalent to priest), regarded as an occupational category in the economic scale, is of minor importance in the small Kurdish villages, and is generally supplemented by farming. Other resident occupational statuses are rarely found.

The following is an example of the class composition of a small tenant village:

	households	persons
absentee landowner	—	—
tenant farmers (incl. one mullah)	25	123
laborers	5	22
shepherd	1	3
widows with no near kin	2	4
total	33	152

RELIGIOUS CATEGORIES

We have so far distinguished two main hierarchies, one governing the field of political organization, and related to a scale of administrative authority, the second governing the economic field, and related to a scale of wealth. A remaining group of named status positions, less clearly hierarchically organized, governs the religious field. These are the positions of Derwish, *Shaikh, Sayyid,* Mullah, and *Hadji.*

Derwishes. The derwish religious fraternities illustrate, in their form and function, most clearly a general trend in the Kurdish villager's interpretation of Islam, and how the religious field may be brought into relation with the power hierarchy in the village community.

The Kurdish emphasis on power is in direct conflict with Moslem

ideals of scholarly sanctity, of meekness towards God, and the importance of good acts — ideals to which indeed all Kurds pay lipservice, and which certainly also have some influence upon Kurdish thinking and action. Where a world religion of foreign ethnic origin has been adopted, such discrepancies between the «ethos» of the religion and of the local culture would seem to be unavoidable, especially in the case of a religion as specifically concerned with social conditions and legislation as Islam. Certainly, the Kurdish villager attempts to the best of his ability to follow Islam, and these discrepancies are largely unexpressed and unrealized. Only among the more sophisticated tradesmen of the towns can one hear in part quite explicit statements such as: «Islam is a desert religion, belonging to the Arabs, and does not suit us Kurds of the mountains.»

It is in the local trend of interpretation of a world religion, in the aspects of the religion that are over-stressed, that local sentiments exert their pressure. The main expression of un-orthodox religiosity among Kurdish villagers is found in the development of the derwish sects or religious brotherhoods, widely spread in the rural districts, and generally characteristic of the less privileged sections of the population.

Such derwish brotherhoods are probably found in all Moslem countries, but seem to vary greatly in content between different ethnic groups. Everywhere, however, their basic dogmatic position in relation to the orthodox church of Islam is the same, and apparently reflects a need among the less educated classes. Islam, as propounded in the Mosque, is a formal, coldly intellectualized doctrine of the complete separation of God and Man, of God's supreme wisdom and power and Man's knowledge of it only through the Koran, accompanied by a scholarly legal and ritualistic interpretation of this basic text. Fundamental is the complete separate nature of God and Man, and man's inability to bridge this gap. The whole heterodox gamut from Sufi mystics to essentially shamanistic spirit-medium cults represent attempts at direct communication with God — at bridging this very un-bridgeable gap. The Kurdish derwish sects occupy a position towards the shamanistic pole of this continuum. Awareness of, or communication with God, is obtained by

rhythmic incantations, drumming and rhythmic movements of the body, and self mortification; weeping and seizures are frequent.

In the following short description of some aspects of these Kurdish derwish brotherhoods, I shall attempt to illustrate the great value attached to *power,* and how this invades even the religious field in the face of the basicly fatalistic doctrines of Islam. The derwish brotherhoods constitute hierarchies in which the attainment of power, though of a very special kind, is regarded as one of the ultimate goals. At present, however, recruitment to the brotherhoods seems to be essentially from the most underprivileged class, people with minimal power and prestige in the social system. The derwish brotherhoods would thus seem to be a type of «religion of the disinherited», in which a substitute for social power is offered. Rather than being of direct relevance to the power distribution in the Kurdish village and countryside, the following should show the relevance of a concept of *power* in all fields of Kurdish culture, and constitute a justification for regarding power distribution as an essential and subjectively highly valued aspect of all Kurdish institutions.

The derwish brotherhoods are basically associations of lay persons with religious inclinations, led by a holy man, a *Shaikh* (descendant of the Prophet). Most of the members are ordinary farmers who by a simple statement of purpose become members of the group, and thereby benefit from the holy powers vested in the *Shaikh.* Obviously, the greater the holy powers of the *Shaikh,* the more his derwish followers will benefit; and Leaders of Derwish of great repute are sought out by potential derwishes from a large neighboring area, and at times by people from very distant places.

A naive and direct statement of the fundamental idea and practice follows, being essentially a word-by-word translation of an explanation given by an ordinary village derwish, of no great standing or mystic reputation:

«There is a great man, a *Shaikh,* descendant of the Prophet. All descendants of Mohammed have some extra, religious power; this *Shaikh* has very much. Being close to that *Shaikh,* and doing as he wishes, makes a man near to God, makes his soul clearer.

[Hassan] decided to become a derwish, so as to be nearer to God.

In the next life, Mohammed will pray for all derwishes, ask God to give them pardon. To become a derwish you must renounce all the faults and evil thoughts and acts of men, and always be good. Anyone can become a derwish — young, old, man, woman. So he went to the great Shaikh Kader. And the *Shaikh* advised him to be good, always; he told him to protect Islam, follow all the ethical rules, etc. He stayed only five minutes the first time — the *Shaikh* only takes your hand in his, tells you all the rules of derwish, and blesses you. Then afterwards, you pay him regular visits, as often as you wish — once a month, or every two months, or even once a year. Sometimes you give gifts to the *Shaikh,* though you don't ever have to.»

There thus seem to be no elaborate, much less mystic, rites of initiation to membership, as reported from e. g. the Persian area. The only visible sign of derwish-hood among men (who in fact form the great majority of followers) is letting your hair grow long — though there are, incidentally, no special taboos or precautions connected with cutting it.

The explicit logic and ethical position of the group, and the motivation for persons to join it, thus seem quite simple. Between the various derwish groups there is little room for conflict, since their differences are not dogmatic, but merely a question of the efficacy and greatness of the holy powers of one holy man as compared to an other. Similarly, except for the fundamental approach, which would rarely be questioned by the uneducated villager, there is no dogmatic conflict with the official church — the same ethical and ritual rules are propounded by the Derwish Leader and the mullah, and any further admonishments and elaborations introduced by the one merely serve to support this fundamental body of ritual. The more heterodox interpretations attached to this common body of ritual are generally overlooked by the mullah as lying largely outside his domain.

But it would be overlooking a very important aspect of the derwish organization if these statements were taken at their face values, and it were seen merely as a more emotional and personal interpretation of Islamic doctrine; as being a religion of the disinherited

in the same way as are numerous of the smaller sects of the Christian church. On the contrary, the theme of *power* is stressed and eleborated, corresponding to its importance in the Kurdish value system, and the more conventional religious possibilities largely played down. Great religious fervor is generally lacking among the villagers, even among derwishes. Fraser (no date), an early traveller in the area, notes with disappointment the lack of superstitions, fear of ghosts, etc. among his Kurdish friends. In accord with this, the point that is stressed is not contemplative or mystic, but might be said to be the aspects of potential power resulting from closeness to God, with great interest in the *overt* signs of this potential, covert power. It seems to satisfy the subjective needs of the underprivileged group, not by being an escapist religion of the next life, but by offering its adherents a present substitute for the highly valued political and economic powers they can not attain. To demonstrate the efficacy of the great powers they control, the derwishes rely on certain signs, the most important being their ability to do wierd and amazing things, generally feats of the type one associates with Indian faqirs.

The pattern of the delegation of this power illustrates something of its nature. It all centers in the *Shaikh*, in the present example Shaikh Abdul Karim. He belongs to the same family as Shaikh Mahmud, and traces descent as well as the origins of his powers through the revered Kaka Hamma, from whom also Shaikh Mahmud has received his sacred powers. The immediate predecessor of Shaikh Abdul Karim was his father, Shaikh Kader — a man of considerable influence and intellect (he accompanied Shaikh Said on their so successful visit to the Sultan, cf. p. 62). Succession to the position as Leader of Derwish is by appointment by the *Shaikh* himself. No rule of primogeniture is observed (Shaikh Abdul Karim is the second of three brothers), the person showing the greatest ability is chosen. This need not be a son, though it usually is — naturally, it must be within the family, since descent from the Prophet is essential.

There seems to be an unresolved problem here, in that the sacred powers are part of the «biological» inheritance of the descendants of the Prophet, yet vary in strength between different lineages of them. And these lineages may increase or decline in power over a

period of time. The *Shaikh* may delegate power in his lifetime, but can not transfer it *en bloc* to his appointed successor. The relative powers of derwish leaders are evaluated, in part by the past exploits of their lineage, in part by their actual ability to demonstrate their sacred powers by «miracles» of standardized types.

The sacred powers, or «unseen power from Good forces», may be delegated to individuals for longer or shorter periods of time, so these can bless and initiate novices. Such intermediaries are often members of minor *shaikh* lineages and have some reputation and powers of their own. More important from the individual derwish's point of view however is the power of the *Shaikh* to bless his followers with the ability to perform certain feats, readily demonstrated to me, such as eating burning charcoal, extinguishing burning torches in their mouth, swallowing poisenous snakes, perforating the cheeks with pins, the abdomen with knives and spears, all without harm to the performer. According to rumor, these are only the more conservative of their activities, sessions with flying heads and strange incarnations being well within the ability of some derwishes. Characteristic of nearly all these special abilities is that they are non-instrumental, they are not directed towards any practical ends.

According to explanatory statements, the mechanics of this delegation of power is extremely simple. The faithful derwish who has shown his moral virtue and seriousness of purpose for some time by faithfully observing all the rules of derwish, may if he so wishes go to his *Shaikh* and ask to be given a specific skill or power, such as would enable him to eat burning charcoal, or perforate his abdomen without pain or harm. If the *Shaikh* deems this wise, he simply lays his hands on the derwish's head and blesses him, telling him that from now on he has that specific power. No period of training is necessary — the power has been delegated to him, and he may use this overt sign as a sign of the power vested in the *Shaikh* and his followers. — I was not able to ascertain wehther specific powers actually follow family lines among derwishes, or in fact tend to be delegated after a period of residence with the Shaikh. Obviously, the above statement can be regarded only as the «party line» on the subject.

The situations in which most demonstrations of these special powers take place are quite significant. There is rarely any attempt on the part of the derwish to show his control over mystic forces with his own fellow villagers as an audience (though one such case was observed, following derogatory remarks to the derwish in question). Usually, the feats are performed for a group of fellow derwishes, preferably during the celebration of Moslem festivals in the village of the Shaikh, when several hundred visitors, some non-derwish as well as derwish, may assemble there. Only a quite small group was observed in action, but in this case at least there was a lack of stageing and dramatic build up, a naive directness in the performance, a considerable un-rehearsed critical evalution of each performer by his colleagues, all of which incidentally contrasted sharply with the usual tone of the performance of a western stage hypnotist or «faqir». Any gross type of hoax would be out of the question, and in fact quite pointless, since the audience generally consists of fellow derwishes. The performance seems largely given for the satisfaction of the performer himself. The personal triumph was repeatedly expressed in the question: «Does your religion give you powers like these?».

The nature of controls within the derwish brotherhood is quite informal. There is vagueness as to what would happen if a person misuses these delegated powers. Derwishes, being good, simple people simply would not misuse them — in case this did happen, the *Shaikh* would revoke the powers, and other derwishes might give the culprit a thorough beating. What types of pressures and counterpressures might be brought to bear on individuals higher in the hierarchy — minor *Shaikhs* with a somewhat independent reputation — is difficult to say.

The *Shaikh* himself is today in a difficult position, and the extent of his actual powers difficult to evaluate. His followers being found almost wholly among the uneducated rural people, he is regarded by most persons in the landowning and educated class as a cynical opportunist, who traffics in poor peoples' ignorance. His mode of life being moderately austere, and his wealth considerably less than that of many of his critics, this does not sound altogether probable.

The father of the present *Shaikh* is said to have used his influence with considerable effect — certainly, a very exhalted status is associated with the positions as Leader of Derwish, as far as the village population is concerned.

The individual derwish, on the other hand, has no recognized or defined status. The relative position of the derwish in the village community will be discussed more fully below, when it can be related to the other hierarchies of organization. Being largely recruited from the most underprivileged sections of the population, membership in the derwish group is often regarded as a badge of the lowest class. In face-to-face relations they are, on the other hand, afforded a certain respect, springing from an undeniable awe or fear of their strange powers.[1])

Where the service of a mullah is unobtainable, the local derwish tends to function in his place, by virtue of his assumed greater knowledge of religious ritual. Thus a derwish who is generally accepted as being knowledgable, may attain some status, but that primarily by virtue of his knowledge, and not qua derwish. Thus, the power obtainable through membership in the derwish brotherhood is mostly of a subjective and substitute kind. Their special powers are of a symbolic and expressive, not of an instrumental type. Strikingly, these special powers and strange feats are exhibited mostly in nearly exclusive derwish meetings, and are rarely directed outward, toward village spectators — though secrecy, on the other hand, is made no point of, and any one who wishes to be present may attend most

[1]) Something of the position of the derwish may most clearly be illustrated by a summary characterization of the derwishes with whom I came most into contact (not including those residing in the home village of the Leader of Derwish):

a) Slightly eccentric, with considerable temper. Officiated at occasional funerals etc. Rainmaker. Reputed to be able to perforate cheeks and abdomen with spear.
b) Rather inconsequential. Sacrificed a sheep when his watch (unique in the village) started showing discrepancy with the sun — was ridiculed for this by fellow villagers.
c) and d) Quiet, ordinary serfs in appearance. Accused of scheming against Hamawand landlords.
e) Unintelligent brother of village headman. No special accomplishments.
f) Ordinary farmer. No special accomplishments.

meetings. We are left with a religious brotherhood, vested with mystic powers, but where membership is regarded as a badge of low social status. The various overt signs of these mystic powers are not systematically manipulated in front of an un-initiated audience, to enhance the position of the performer; nor is the brotherhood developed into a secret society, the secrecy and exclusiveness of which might give status. The interpretation followed here, that membership in the brotherhood offers subjective statisfaction, giving the underprivileged person a field in which he feels that he too can manipulate and control power, seems the only constructive alternative.

Shaikhs and Sayyids. The category of persons called *Shaikhs* and *Sayyids* are, as the derwishes, in a somewhat ambiguous position, but they may, as we have seen in the case of Shaikh Mahmud, make use of their position to great advantage in the political field. Essentially, a *Shaikh* is in Kurdish a descendant of the Prophet Mohammed, reckoned patrilineally from Ali, Mohammed's son-in-law, and corresponding to the Arabic *Sayyid*. The general position of esteem in which such persons are held is indicated by the term itself, *Shaikh* in Kurdish being borrowed from the Arabic, where it is a political title for tribal chief or elder; *Sayyid* in the Arabic of pre-Islamic times having the similar meaning of elder. Actually, both the terms *Shaikh* and *Sayyid* are used today in Kurdish to indicate descent from the Prophet — a distinction between the two will be made later; the present discussion will concern the *Shaikhs,* who in Southern Kurdistan are by far the larger and more important of the two groups.

By virtue of their descent from the Prophet, *Shaikhs* rate high on a religious scale of sanctity, and it is believed that they embody a variable degree of unseen good power. This vague sanctity is however divorced from implications of greater piety; no significantly greater morality seems to be expected of the *Shaikhs,* and membership in the descent group does not automatically affect the social position of an individual.

To clarify the position of the *Shaikh* group, its distribution and internal structure should be examined. Logically enough, *Shaikhs* are not found among members of tribes *(tiras)*, since tribal groups constitute patrilineal maximal lineages, and no member of the *tira*

can trace patrilineal descent from Ali unless the *whole tira* claims such descent. None of the South Kurdish *tiras* attempt this, however. *Shaikhs* are consequently characteristic of the non-tribal areas, where they occupy the whole gamut of social positions from landless laborer to feudal lord.

In characteristic Kurdish fashion, *Shaikh* families tend to split up into small endogamous lineage segments, and, though the census materials gathered from a few villages is not statistically reliable in the matter, there is strong suggestion that FaBrDa or other close kin marriage reaches considerably higher frequency than usual in tenant villages, and approaches that found in the politically organized lineages, the *tiras*. However, any embracive *organization* uniting the whole *Shaikh* descent group, or major segments of it, such as would in fact convert it into a type of widely dispersed *tira*, is lacking. It would on the other hand be equally misleading to think of the *Shaikh* group as an endogamous caste, since extra-group marriages do in fact take place, and the emphasis is not on *Shaikh* endogamy but, in usual Kurdish fashion, on *local lineage* endogamy. It is convenient to think more in terms of these local endogamous *Shaikh* lineages, where they are found in the village community, and relate their comparatively higher endogamy to an effort to retain a special status in the *local* community by not dispersing kinship obligations too widely in that community. Where *Shaikh* families occupy higher social positions, this stress on lineage endogamy tends to disappear, or seems to reflect efforts to prevent the dispersal of family property through the multiple Koranic inheritance rights.

An example of a *Shaikh* lineage group of tenant farmers, residing in a small village community, might be given. Of 33 households in the village, 7 are of the *Shaikh* lineage, the remaining 26 belonging to various larger and smaller kin groups. Of the heads of these 7 *Shaikh* households, 4 have married a FaBrDa, 2 another close relative, and only 1 a non-relative from outside the community (the sister of a neighboring headman). At least in this generation, there is thus no intermarriage with other families in the local community.

The head of the *Shaikh* lineage is regarded as the most important man in the village, but he is not elected *kikha* (village headman).

The present *kikha,* whose father and grandfather held the post before him, belongs to another, slightly larger kin block, counting at least 9 households. Furthermore, the frequency of family endogamy in this family of which the *kikha* is the head is less than 50 %, which may account for his «wider appeal» in the community. Thus the emphasis on the special status of the *Shaikh* lineage also tends to isolate this lineage, in part to their disadvantage.

The majority of the *Shaikhs* in the village are tenant farmers, and tend to be among the better situated. One occupies the position as mullah, to which his son will clearly succeed him. However, one of the *Shaikh* household heads is a landless laborer, giving a class distribution in the *Shaikh* lineage of 5 farmers / 1 laborer, as compared to 18 farmers / 4 laborers in the remainder of the community. The class position of the *Shaikh* lineage as a whole is thus not significantly high.

The status of this small *Shaikh* lineage might be contrasted to that of the above mentioned Leaders of Derwish, or to that of Shaikh Mahmud, both of whom have achieved their high position in part by virtue of their descent from the Prophet. The most reasonable generalization seems to be that membership in the *Shaikh* descent group defines a type of position in the religious field which contributes to the general esteem in which a person is held, and which may, in certain situations, contribute to justify a high position of actual power, but which in no way automatically ascribes such power to the individual.

A category of travelling holy men, similarly claiming descent from Mohammed, are given the Arabic name *Sayyid* by Kurdish villagers. Whereas the Kurdish *Shaikhs* claim descent specifically from Hussein, one of Mohammed's two grandsons, through a medieval Persian theologian, the claims of the wandering *Sayyids* are more variable. On the other hand, this reference to religious sanctity forms the basis of their livelihood. The apellation *Shaikh* need only imply high rating on a purely religious scale of sanctity — *Sayyids* convert this into a definite status position, fundamental to their occupation. Preferably conspicuously clothed, and wearing green head-dress as a symbol of their status, they ride from village to village carrying old

holy books from which they can tell of the past and the future. They also sell good-luck charms, love-charms, charms against sickness, etc. Being residents of the larger towns, however, they only appear on the village scene as transients of rather low status.

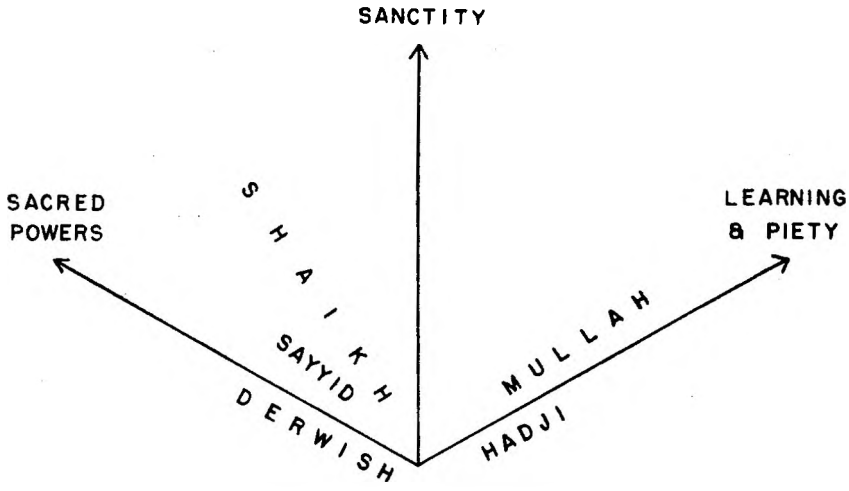


Diagram No. 8. The scales and statuses of the religious field.

The Mullah. Whereas the position of a *Shaikh* depends upon his rating on the scales of sanctity and sacred powers, the position of the mullah is related to the scale of sanctity, and to a scale of learning and piety. High rating on the scale of sanctity springs directly from the office, while the degree of learning and piety depends upon the individual's behavior, and is consequently variable.

The position as mullah is a true status position, since it defines a place in an institutional hierarchy — that of the larger church organization — but since it is related also to the scale of piety, the actual relative status ascribed to specific mullahs in their villages may vary considerably. Thus again, the lack of development of the concept of an *office* has its effect; any separation of the individual's official and private capacity is impossible, and no clear definition of the status of the mullah, as divorced from the individual achievements of a specific mullah, is possible. The very weak regional organization of the church is in part responsible for this — indeed, it is

misleading to speak of an inclusive church organization in the sense one knows it in the West. The actual qualifications of individual mullahs vary tremendously, and financial arrangements for the support of the Mosque are, as far as village mosques are concerned, entirely in the hands of the local community. Yet traditionalism and informal controls give a certain unity and enforce certain limits on deviations from a vague norm.

The position as mullah is an achieved status with completely open recruitment. Successful application to the study of the Koran leads eventually to initiation. There is a tendency for *Shaikhs* and *Sayyids* to be over-represented, but this seems primarily due to a higher frequency of religious inclinations, resulting from their automatic bias in orientation. Frequently a derwish will be willing to support his son through some or all of the necessary years of reading and study, and thus achieve for the son what was beyond the reach of the father. At times, through an early interest in the teachings of the village mullah, a boy in a secularly oriented family will find his way into the religious field. A striking number of the students are blind, and depend in their studies on the help of their friends.

The traditional pattern is for the student to spend an unspecified number of years roaming from mosque to mosque, seeking out the teachers of high repute and remaining with each for whatever length of time he wishes (see Appendix III). In this period, as well as studying the Koran and the legal interpretation of the text, the student should become familiar with other religious writing, in Persian as well as in Arabic. Finally, when the student and whatever teacher he happens to be with at the time feels he is prepared, he is made to give a sermon, and after a ritual is given the white headdress of the mullah, as well as a diploma confirming his status.

During his studies, the future mullah is dependent on his family or on individual charity for his subsistence. Later, as a full-fleged mullah, he must make whatever arrangements he can. The positions in the mosques of the towns are now government supported, but in the village the office is supported by local resources only. The community expresses its wish to have a mullah and the extent of its ability to pay — generally by revenue on dedicated land and a

minimal tax pr. head in the village, payable at the end of the holy month of Ramadan. This frequently must be augmented by agricultural work on the part of the mullah. It seems that the villagers are free to appoint any initiated mullah of their choice to office; once he is appointed, however, it is, at least in practice, impossible to dismiss him.

The actual role of the village mullah is evidently today in a state of rapid change, and considerably reduced as compared to Ottoman times. He has been relieved of a great number of his civil functions — e. g. marriages are not valid unless a license has been procured from the civil administration, and though the mullah still performs the ceremony, his importance is naturally reduced. The very dominant position as judge has also been greatly reduced by the secularization of the state and effective administration of Iraq's civil code.

A second role is that of the educator — the mullah will give rather ineffectual lessons in the Koran to the sons of important villagers — the only schooling they will ever have — and he may also have advanced students visiting him for a period. Except for spreading a certain knowledge of the religion, however, this school of the mullah's does not seem to be of any great consequence, and the mullah himself remains the only literate person in the village.

His main role at present parallels that of the priest in Western society, in that it is concerned predominantly with religious questions in a largely secular world. The mullah calls to morning and evening prayer, gives a sermon on Friday, is especially active in the holy month of Ramadan. In all his activities, he should set an example to his villagers. The weight given to his opinions thus depends on his learning and personal piety, but at the same time, if they are developed to any appreciable degree, these same traits will tend to separate him physically and emotionally from the community and place him in the position of a spectator.

Consequently, he does not achieve the power position in the village that one might have expected. The mullah with low rating on the scale of learning and piety will be disregarded by the villagers — they may not even attend his services, as in the case of one village studied, where the sermons had been largely discontinued and the

responsibility for religious education taken over by the leader of the local *Shaikh* family. On the other hand, an intelligent mullah, though often formalistic and introvert in his orientation, may play a considerable part in improving the intellectual and sanitary standard of the village (the subject of clean and unclean having importance in a religious context), but does not seem to attempt to extend his influence any wider. His high intellectual standard and foreign values tend to alienate him from the «petty squabbles» of the village; and an ambitious attitude has no real place in the piously fatalistic Islamic world view. To the extent he does not convert his status and prestige into a de-facto power position, the mullah might be said not to be fully integrated into the social structure of the village. He is similarly in no sense an indispensable resident in the village community — very frequently, he is called in only for funerals, naming ceremonies etc., or these functions may even be performed by a local derwish or *Shaikh*. The pattern of training blind boys, necessarily marginal to village society, as mullahs, may in part be related to an appreciation of this marginal position which the mullah occupies.

Hadji. The *Hadji,* on the other hand, is an ordinary member of the village community. His position is related to the scale of piety, and derives simply from having completed a pilgrimage to Mecca. The title, however, is one of considerable respect — in part because it also implicitly indicates high rating on the scale of wealth.

The whole institution of the pilgrimage is the result of the command by the Prophet Mohammed, that any man who has the necessary means to make the pilgrimage *and* support his family at home, or whose family is able to support itself without him, should once in his lifetime journey to the holy city of Mecca. Thus the title of *Hadji* indicates (a) a pious eagerness to follow the command of Mohammed, and (b) moderately prosperous circumstances. One rarely finds more than 3—4 *Hadjis* in any one village; these will tend to be at least *among* the leading members of their community.

Formerly, the initiative was individual and the journey hazardous, often achieved by relatively greater physical exertion and less expense, and the title of *Hadji* was thus less of a symbol of wealth

than at present. The route from the Suleimani area went by caravan to Basra in the Persian Gulf, by ship to Jiddah (or even by caravan across the Arabian peninsula) and on foot from Jiddah to Mecca — involving often more than a full year of travel. Today, the time expended is in the neighborhood of two months, travel being by bus to Baghdad and across to Beirut, ship through the Suez to Jiddah, and bus up to the walls of Mecca. Total expenses average some £ 200. The pattern is generally one of group travel — in 1948, a group of approximately 60 persons from the Suleimani area journeyed together.

The moral-religious status connected with the title of *Hadji* is of negligible importance. There is some feeling that in situations of petty conflict, a *Hadji* should attempt to mediate, and that higher moral standards are to be expected from him. More important is its connections with wealth as a type of conspicuous consumption, and in this it parallels the widely distributed type of honorific title dependent on having gone through a «pot-latch» series of feasts[1]). However, in the competitive and informal Kurdish village organization, the honorific title of *Hadji* is not by itself of any appreciable consequence in the de-facto power hierarchy, and must be supported by a continued position of relative wealth.

KINSHIP

In addition to the formal hierarchies governing the political, the economic, and the religious fields, there remains the field of kinship. It might be pointed out that the household organization, and attendant kinship obligations, described above pp. 29 ff, represents a hierarchical organization of basicly the same type, but relating to a unit smaller than the village, in contrast with the other, more extensive organizations. Needless to say, the patriarch of a large household gains prestige and is vested with de-facto power by

[1]) An example from a culturally and geographically parallel area is offered by the Kafirs of Afghanistan, where the whole social structure of the village community is based on a hierarchy of such honorific titles, attained by giving stipulated numbers of feasts (cf. *G. S. Robertson, 1896, pp. 434 ff.)*.

Houses in a tenant village (three households).

A Hamawand village.

virtue of his position in the household — prestige and power that contributes very significantly to his total status in the village community.

SCALES

I have used the term office for an actual formal position in an organizational hierarchy; status and part-status for this position *and* the prestige that belongs with it. In a system where the rights and privileges connected with a political office are not clearly defined, and a separation of a person's private vs. official capacities is impossible, the power of a political official, or other person in a status hierarchy, will in large part depend on the particular person holding the position. In a sense, there is negligible prestige attached to the position itself; an individual must, in his private capacity, embody the prestige that is necessary to fill the position successfully. Thus the variegated sources of prestige *outside* the formal hierarchies become important to an understanding of how the formal structure functions in the village.

One may, as suggested above, profitably think in terms of certain *scales* by which persons are evaluated, high rating on these scales conferring prestige to the individual. Such scales are of several types, some connected with the life cycle of the individual, or related to the degree to which certain attributes are found in a person, others measuring the degree to which an individual approaches a certain ideal stereotype in his behavior. They may in part define conflicting or mutually exclusive ideals. — Put differently, this means that the prestige derived from high rating on one of these scales may be particularly relevant in a certain organization or role, as in the case of sanctity and its relation to the *Shaikh* status. Other scales are more universally applicable, as that of relative age. However, no matter what its sources may be, *the prestige of a person qualifies him for a certain relative power position in the village, potentially or actually formalized as a named status position.*

Obviously, any number of these scales may be constructed, and the present list pretends to do little more than summarize certain

important Kurdish values relating to individual prestige. On the other hand, they are not pure constructs of the investigator, since they do represent verbalized ideals which the Kurdish villager is aware of as alternative modes of behavior in situations. The following are some important scales on which the prestige of a Kurdish villager may be measured:

Family: (a) prestige derived from descent from a person or persons with high prestige, or (b) membership in a large effective kinship unit.

Age: prestige derived from experience and maturity, increasing up to the onset of senility.

Sex: dichotomy favoring the male and relations in the male line.

Wealth: prestige from capital, real or movable property, and occupations tending to produce such.

Sacred powers: the extent of «unseen powers from Good Forces» delegated to the person.

Sanctity: the actual embodyment of sacred powers, or sacred position achieved by personal suffering and renunciation of the world.

Learning and piety: prestige from knowledge of, and conformity to, Moslem religious and moral ideals.

Honor and Bravery: the degree of approach to the Kurdish «hero» — physical prowess, valor, a certain recklesness, respect for women, kindness to the poor, unending hospitality, etc.

THE VILLAGE HIERARCHY

The formal political structures, and certain subsidiary hierarchies have been outlined, and it was pointed out how the actual power connected with positions in these hierarchies is dependent upon the prestige of the persons occupying them. The organization of the village thus becomes one of super- and sub-ordination of individuals, and universal relevance of status differences in the relations of these individuals.

However, because of the presence of several separable hierarchies of organization, the village relations of super- and sub-ordination do

not have an opportunity to freeze and become converted into a formal structure (cf. the relations between Hamawand and *Meskjin,* and the latter's use of the derwish brotherhoods). Individuals are constantly aligning into factions, manipulating these hierarchies, and the superordination of any particular formal status position will constantly be questioned, and must therefore be supported by the necessary superordination in terms of actual prestige. Thus, if the village were left to itself, the formal village organization of super- and sub-ordination would at any time relate to the differences in total prestige between the individuals holding these formal positions.

An external factor does however enter in the autonomous Kurdish system, which tends to produce a de-facto power hierarchy more or less different from this «ideal» hierarchy. With the backing of an outside force, individuals may have powers vested in them out of proportion to their actual prestige in the local community. This type of outside force will usually be related to wealth — in effect, before the country was subjected to external administration, the economic ability to *buy* riflemen and thus tyranize a village or section, as in the case of many feudal lords, or on the other hand the ability of one tribe or group, from superior numbers or organization, to suppress other tribes or groups.

The de-facto power hierarchy will then be determined by the balance between the one faction's ability to *buy* or otherwise introduce power into the system, as compared to the other faction's ability to *rally* supporters, referring to the «ideal» hierarchy based on prestige. An important feature of this balance is the fact that the further the de-facto hierarchy differs from the «ideal» hierarchy, the relatively more external power is needed to maintain the position, since the opposing faction's ability to *rally* supporters increases rapidly with the extent of the abuse. — Obviously, the actual balance varies over the area and through time, and a diversity of types of village organization results.

We have thus arrived at some appreciation of the structural reasons for the confusing variety of types of formal organization in the South Kurdish area. At the moment, however, we are not concerned with the specific historic events in these factional con-

flicts, producing the present distribution of types, since these depend to considerable extent on variables outside the village system. More important in this connection is the structure of the «ideal» hierarchy, primarily how it develops and asserts itself in the village. For this purpose, the constitution of the village community and village life should be investigated further.

Chapter V.

The village scene

THE VILLAGE

The village, in its physical aspects, is fairly uniform over most of the South Kurdish area. The houses are built of mud, or rock in a mud mortar; the roofs are flat, held up by horizontal rafters — the most valuable item in the construction. Due to the nature of the architecture and the small size of available timber, the rooms of the houses tend to be quite small; pillars and posts are never used to support a longer span of roof. A second story on the building is rarely found. Frequently, there is no door with which to close the entrance, and never any glass in the windows. The windows are small and high up on the wall, the small room is always rather dark. There is no smoke-hole, the smoke from the fire on the hearth in the middle of the floor finds its way out through the entrance or the windows. The rooms are utterly devoid of furniture — the only contents of the room to which a visitor is shown is a tea samovar and some small glasses placed on an in-set shelf, and a roll of small rugs, mostly of felt, which are spread out on the floor to be sat on.

The number of rooms to a house varies, but is never very great, and must of course give accomodation to donkeys, cattle, and perhaps a horse, as well as to the people. To each house belongs a small courtyard, enclosed by a low wall. In winter, the house gives only

partial protection from the icy gales that sweep down from the Zagros mountains. In the warm weather, the family moves out on the flat rooftop after sundown, primarily to benefit from the cool breeze off the mountains.

Wherever a hill is available — which means nearly everywhere in Kurdish territory — the village is placed on a steep slope. That way, the flat rooftop of one house forms a kind of front terrace for the house above it in the hill, and the families tend to use the roof of the house below them for their own purposes, and so on down the line. As indicated by this, the village forms a very compact unit — maybe originally for defence purposes; certainly in part to save trouble by making double use of all walls and partitions in house construction. Frequently, the village is placed in the slope below a cool spring; only in the low country does it depend on wells for water. A common feature is a small pool, fed directly from the spring and protected from pollution by a low stone wall. Around the pool stand tall, shady trees, from which no branch must be broken, and in it one frequently finds large fish, fed by the villagers, which similarly must not be molested. The pool serves as a place for ritual washing and a favorite place of prayer.

Although considerable respect is shown for the sanctity of the home, many household activities must necessarily become public, especially in the half-year when they center around the rooftops. A certain everyday pattern of community life thus emerges in the cool of the evening. It requires much cooperation and bustle to direct the returning animals to their respective homes in the evening, with shouting and chasing of stray goats over rooftops and along partitions, away from the grainbins and waterskins and infants. Later, each family gathers around the evening meal, and then there is visiting back and forth, news being swapped, a glow in the dark from the fires where the tea is brewing, and a steady murmur of conversation. All through the night, the clamor and activity continues, with braying donkeys, crying babies, dogs chasing cats, cows shifting and groaning.

Though the patterns of each village differ, and any one of them may appear to be only utter confusion, there are, of course, regulari-

ties that may be discerned. The village, in all its confusion, sets the scene on which the competing factions act out their parts; over faintly glowing fires of cowdung individuals are discussed and appraised in terms of the ideals expressed in the above outlined scales; control is attempted and leadership emerges. All these activities take place at more or less standardized occasions — and it is these occasions that will be described in the present chapter. In effect, any type of community or group activity gives an opportunity for status and competition to express itself, and a description of these occasions thus becomes virtually a description of community life.

INFORMAL GROUP FORMATION

Claudius James Rich, visiting Suleimani in the 1820's, was surprised at the regularities of the patterns of visiting, at the large groups that would congregate in the house of some «nobleman» or in the open, and spend their time smoking and drinking tea, while talking way into the small hours (Rich, op. cit.). This pattern is also found strongly developed in Suleimani today.

In the village, the farmer must of course keep rather different hours, and he invariably rises with the sun; but the same pattern is discernable. In the summer nights, visitors may be received on the rooftops; in the daytime, or when the weather is colder, any important visitor is showed to a special room, and a more or less standard group will quickly congregate. In the hot weather, other kinds of groups will congregate during the day in any bit of shade — under the trees by the pool, or on the roof-tops that are shaded by trees. These informal groups seem essentially of two types, one the group of village leaders in «the smokefilled room» to borrow an idiom from American politics, the other a less clearly defined «rooftop society» of persons of lower status.

«*The smokefilled room*». In the traditional tribal system, the *Agha* of the village should keep a *guesthouse,* in which the heads of families, all kinsmen of the *Agha,* and any visitor have a right to sit. In the area around Rowanduz, this seems to be an institution of

considerable economic importance, and a source of much prestige for the hospitable *Agha* (Leach op. cit., pp. 28—33).

The practice in South Kurdish area differs somewhat from this ideal — it would be a very important man who went to the expence of keeping an «open house» in a special room; men of such importance and means are no longer found as residents in the villages. The typical *Agha* among the Hamawands will receive visitors in a small room, kept clean and reasonably empty for the purpose; the hospitality extended to the visitor is out of all proportion to the means of the host, but is not normally extended to all persons who would have a «right» to sit in the guesthouse. Similarly, from being the common center of the village, to which *all* the important men repair, it has become in fact the center of only a faction in the village, though admittedly the most important one. This development is of course carried further in the non-tribal villages, where every man of any importance attempts to utilize a certain room as «guesthouse», playing the role of host and senior member among the individuals who normally congregate there.

No matter what time of day a visitor arrives, he should at least be served tea. There is a formal pattern of etiquette attached to this, which unfortunately for the visitor who tries to be polite varies between different areas — some places, one is expected to leave after the third glass, other places they insist that the only polite thing is to drink seven or even eleven glasses in a sitting. The act of distributing of the tea gives an opportunity to express the prestige scale by the sequence in which people are served; also, in the presence of a visitor, everyone is careful to use the proper honorific titles to one another. All the time, cigarettes of dry Kurdish tobacco are smoked, the men crowd together in the half darkness and argue agitatedly, the fire smolders and smokes, and the atmosphere quickly becomes extremely heavy.

The persons assembling normally in «the smokefilled room» are the policy makers of the village or a main faction of it. In this forum, all matters of common interest ase discussed, the actions of the various members of the group coordinated, and opinions and plans crystallized. Within the group, of course, relative prestige is

constantly measured, and rivalry between members is directed towards out-doing each other in the eyes of the group as a whole.

«*Rooftop society*». An other imediately apparent type of informal group which is constantly formed is that of rooftop society. The smokefilled room houses a more polite and essentially closed society; rooftop society includes more diverse persons, and emerges from practically any aggregation of individuals who are not engaged in productive pursuits. There is a tendency for the individuals of the highest prestige to stay away from such groups, since the joking and horse-play may be rather personal and quite free, and the rules of «proper» behavior easily forgotten. Thus, though formed from an open aggregation of individuals, which any male transient as well as villager may join, it developes in practice into a gang of village youths and men, primarily the younger and more irresponsible, and the men of lower class status.

The same problems that are debated in the «smokefilled room» may also be discussed here, but with less stress on policy forming and more stress on the anecdotal. Prestige differences in the group emerge very clearly from who is made fun of and who feels in a position to mediate. At the same time, the group serves as a forum for complaints against abuses. Here the attitudes of the less privileged sections of the village to specific issues become coordinated; pressures are applied and excitement created that may lead to concerted action where persons feel they have been badly wronged.

Women's groups. Women are excluded from both these types of groups, as well as from «political» activities in general. Though they prepare the food that may be consumed in the «smokefilled room», they should not show themselves there, and, for example, tea-brewing, which should be done on the spot, is in the hands of a younger male kinsman of the host. In fact, when a visitor arrives in whom they take an interest, they may find domestic work to do within earshot though out of sight, or a small son of the house is slipped in as informant. The actual extent to which women contribute in shaping the opinions of their men is difficult to evaluate, and surely varies tremendously, but is usually probably slight. On the other hand, they have access to information, especially gossip,

which the head of the family has not, and may thus be of some importance. The main aggregations of women where such gossip is exchanged are found around the water-hole, where water for the house is fetched, and clothes washed and beaten. The actual visiting between women seems predominantly to be limited by kinship, most frequent are the daughter's visits to her mother. Such visiting is concentrated in the hours just before noon, when the men are occupied and there are no pressing household duties.

In everyday life, there are thus three types of larger groupings that provide a forum for factionalism and leadership: (a) the men of high prestige congregate in «the smokefilled room», (b) the man of less prestige get together in an informal «rooftop soiety», and (c) the women of the community meet and gossip by the village water-hole. None of these groupings, however, pretend to be representative of the community as a whole, and none of them are primarily integrative in their function.

RITUAL UNITY OF THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY

Mosque. The complete status hierarchy of individuals in the village only emerges clearly, and the effective integration of the community is only achieved, through the truly communal village activities. These will tend to be of a more formal and ritual type, and are more or less closely related to religion. In the villages in which a mosque is found, the most obvious occasion is the Friday sermon. However, the position of the mullah varies considerably, as indicated above; and many village mullahs find it difficult to make the occasion truly communal, to induce their villagers to attend sermons at the mosque — «they come home from the fields very tired, and would rather sit at home». Where a mullah of high prestige is found, he will manage to collect a considerable fraction of the village around him on such occasions, and by religious teaching raise the standard of the population, as measured on the scale of learning and piety. This in turn reflects on the village as a whole, the pressure to attend Friday sermons increases, and a unity and

intensity of village loyalty is produced that is rarely found in other tenant villages.

Ritual homage. Whereas many villages lack the central focus of a mosque, religious activities still have considerable integrative functions, especially the standardized prayers, or, more properly, the ritual homage paid to Allah five times daily, facing Mecca, as the Prophet Mohammed commanded. This homage being of a standardized type and involving a stereotyped series of postures, supposedly performed simultaneously by all the villagers, it symbolizes a solidarity and *gemeinschaft* that must be re-inforced, shall the community persist. The personal prayer occasionally appended is unimportant; the emphasis is on the *common* ritual.

The time for prayer is specified in relation to sunrise and sundown, e. g. one two hours preceeding, another one and a half hours after sundown. Since no clocks or watches are commonly available in the village, «calling to prayer» gives opportunity for controlling behavior in the religious field, and thus for the emergence of a type of leadership. Where a mullah is present, he naturally performs the function; where there is no mullah, the local derwish or head of the local derwishes tries to assume this responsibility. His melodious chant certainly thrills a Western ear in the quiet evening; but the call is not necessarily responded to very quickly; furthermore, *Hadjis* and other important persons will tend to take an autonomous view of the proper time for prayers. Thus, unless a mullah of some importance is present, the degree of *leadership* implied in calling to prayer is rather slight. However, this fact would not seem to detract significantly from the integrative symbolism of the simultaneous ritual homage to God.

Communal magic. The only cases of communal magic which I became aware of are concerned with the most critical and unpredictable question in Kurdish subsistence: rain. The other examples of magic are of different types: The ordinary derwish antics, performed in public, are not instrumental in the sense that they are directed towards achieving some practical and generally coveted end; the magic connected with amulets for protection etc. are of a personal and private kind. The art of rainmaking, on the other hand, is still

practiced as a communal rite in cases of need, and gives the competent derwish an opportunity to reinforce his special position and demonstrate his control of power.

The actual rite is in rough outline quite simple. After an all-night session of prayer and purification on the part of the derwish, he is taken to a pool in the near-by, dwindling stream, and submerged in the water.

It is difficult to say just what degree of emotional intensity is involved in the rite as far as a majority of the participants is concerned. In the special case in question, they did not seem particularly impressed — the derwish involved was one who was frequently the object of mild horseplay, and the actual act of ducking him might have some appeal to the less serious minded. However this may be, the gravity of drought should not be underestimated, and would hardly be condusive to horseplay. The winter rains seemed to have stopped much too early, and the rite was a response to this serious situation. Considering this, the preformance was probably more emotionally charged than some of the superficial comments might suggest, and certainly served to emphasize the unity and solidarity of the group. — It might incidentally be noted that this specific rite also was successful, in that fairly heavy rains followed shortly.

Thus, this ritual of rainmaking is concerned with a very critical communal problem, and enables the derwish to assume a momentary position of dominant importance in his community. An interesting deviation from the stated norm was also observed in this case: the young son of the village *Agha* was submerged alongside with the derwish[1]). This equivalence may be significant in several respects. From the point of view of the derwish, it indicates the considerable extent of his momentary prestige — from a normal status of laborer he is elevated to temporary equivalence with the heir apparent of the village *Agha*. It may also illustrate something in the Kurdish conception of power: there is no really clear distinction made between the

[1]) The fact that the son rather than the *Agha* himself was chosen is best understood in terms of the slightly ambivalent situation, and the rather undignified appearance of the actor following immersion.

sacred powers of the derwish and the practical powers of the political leader; both are equally potent in the ritual situation, and their character may be covered best by the concept of personal charisma.

THE FEAST

The feast occupies a very prominent place in the communal life of the village, and is regarded as an active agent in producing solidarity and unity, as well as being a symbol of such unity. The fact of eating together in itself produces certain mutual obligations and solemnizes feelings of sympathy. The Bedouin ideal, that any person with whom you have eaten is inviolable for a minimum period of time, is not actually applied in Kurdish territory, but is well known and approved of as being highly ethical. Essentially similar, though less formal, obligations are implied in the Kurdish concept of sharing the bread.

Furthermore, the feast is a forum for conspicuous consumption, and thus gives the host an opportunity to display his wealth, and to create and re-affirm ties of friendship by generosity. Thus the person who gives the feast can enhance his prestige in the village considerably; hospitality is an integral aspect of the Kurdish ideal of a *man,* conversely, a person with a reputation for miserliness suffers corresponding loss of prestige.

A feast in one form or another is thus a fairly frequent occurrance in the village. Since it will involve at least a major part and usually the whole of the village, it provides one of the major occasions in which leadership and moderate rivalry is expressed, and in which the relative prestige and resultant total status positions become systematized. Essentially, these feasts are of two major types, (1) connected with religious festivals, or (2) marking transitions of status in the life cycle of members of the society.

Religious festivals. In some villages, the whole of the holy month of Ramadan is celebrated by regular communal evening meals at the mosque or in the village square. In this arrangement, either each household may in turn serve as hosts for the whole village, or each family brings its own food. Only the men partake in the meal; for them, it becomes a social occasion of major importance. The feast

takes place after sundown, since there should be a fast observed during the day in Ramadan month — as a matter of fact, this fast is observed by very few. However, this degree of Ramadan celebration is not usual. The last three days of that month, on the other hand, are universally regarded as holidays, and serve as formal occasion for forgiving enemies, affirming village loyalties, and reinforcing ties of friendship.

Ramadan is defined in terms of a year of lunar months, and thus falls some days earlier in relation to the seasons for every year. At the time of the present fieldwork, the end of Ramadan coincided roughly with the completion of the harvest; it is difficult to say which aspects of the proceedings were connected with the one, as distinct from the other event. The celebration on the main, first day consisted of four major phases: (1) religious service (2) formal communal meal (3) payment of tax to the mosque (4) informal social celebrations.

The religious service was led by the son of the mullah of the neighboring village, since the village in which I was staying at the time had no mullah of its own. It was held in the house of the *Hadji,* the actual leader and *kikha* of the village. The local derwish, reacting to the presence of only an un-ordained officiator, tried to assert himself by interjecting loud and pious exclamations, but was soon quieted down as the mullah's son speeded on through the text.

After the ritual followed the communal meal, supplied by the *Hadji,* and his prestige profited by a subtle balance between the conspicuous exhibition of plenty tempered with a pious avoidance of over-indulgence. Two of the lower-class laborers, who had been figeting and feeling out of place, took the opportunity to busy themselves by serving the tea; but the *Hadji* insisted upon their status as guests, and they were quickly relieved by a young son, whom he called in for the purpose. Before the meal, hands were kissed (with a tendency towards reciprocity only between social equals or very close kin), misunderstandings forgotten and grudges forgiven. After the meal, some small boys appeared and kissed the hands of all the men present.

This being completed, the heads of village households each pledged

a tax of three kg. of grain to the mosque for each household member. This is done by each of the men in turn seating himself before the mullah, with a symbolic tray of grain between them. The men follow one another in a descending order of prestige, involving public acceptance and confirmation of the actual hierarchy of individuals in the village. At one or two points there was some hesitation, and very elusive momentary pressures were brought to bear by the group on the actors to assure the «right» sequence. This occasion also gave the *Hadji* an opportunity to affirm his leading position in the village by pledging 3.5 kg. pr. person to the mosque, and with a grand gesture paying for a poor widow in the village, not represented by any male, as well as for my interpreter, who, not being of the village, did not dispose of any grain.

At the completion of this, the group dispersed. Later in the day, the landowner appeared, and people also from the neighboring villages drifted in in informal groups and congregated in a large circle in the courtyard of the house in which he was staying. For the remaining period, celebrations involved only smaller, informal groups and individual visiting.

— I have chosen to describe this occasion in some detail, since it was observed under favorable conditions and illustrates the situation in which the hierarchy of individuals in the village is expressed, and how the individual's rating of himself is confirmed or contradicted by the group. Other religious festivals serve an essentially similar function, though they may in part be more amenable to manipulation and «social climbing». For example, two months ten days after Ramadan follows *Qorbani*, the feast of sacrifice, lasting four days, and centering around the killing of a large animal — sheep or preferably cow. Any person may volunteer to do Qorbani, and offer his cow up — though there are probably informal controls on who may in fact presume to that extent. *Maolud*, Mohammed's birthday, is similarly celebrated by a semi-communal feast and conspicuous consumption; the various other holidays are of a more private kind.

Rites de passage. The various rites marking transitions in the status position of individuals through their life cycle are less formally controlled. They are communal in a different sense from the ritual-

religious festivals; though such transitions are of importance to the group as a whole, they concern one family more than other families in the village. There are no age-grades or similar organizations, and the celebrations thus remain more of a family affair. The scale of the celebrations is then determined by the means of the family, and the event is simply one more opportunity for conspicuous consumption and for re-affirming friendship ties. The celebrations and rites are concerned with birth and naming, circumcision, teething, tattooing, marriage, and death. Rites marking puberty are lacking. — Since it serves no purpose in the present context to describe the various rites in any detail, the following discussion will deal only with some more general aspects of the proceedings.

Before the birth of the child, the parents, to the extent they can afford it, prepare clothes for it. During labor, neighboring women or a kind of specialist midwife may assist. The placenta is secretly buried. Certain precautions connected with the newborn infant are interesting, in that they emphasize the importance attached to sons, and the woman's fear of being barren: When a boy is born, the relatives guard him day and night for seven days, and may further protect him by laying a knife, large needle, or onionleaf beside his crib. This is so that the *shaoa,* a form of *djinn* or supernatural being, will not be able to harm him. The shaoa is said to be an old childless woman who becomes envious to see a child born. The shaoa is not so interested in girl children, so there is no need to guard a girl baby, though a knife or onion-leaf may be placed beside her.

On the seventh or thirteenth day after birth, relatives and friends are called in, and a mullah is asked to officiate at the *naming ceremony.* On this occasion, the throat of a sheep is cut and a feast is given, if the parents can so afford.

Circumcision of boys is done any time before the age of puberty, and is usually performed simultaneously on a large number of boys. Islamic doctrine stipulates that it should never be done on less than three boys at a time — if there are only two boys present, it may in fact still be done, the neck of a rooster being cut off to substitute for the third boy. The officiator is a barber from some larger town, usually Suleimani. It is customary on this occasion for the village

Hamma, an old Kurdish retainer.

Shaikh Mahmud.

Derwish Hassan.

leader, if he has a son who is being circumcised, to pay for the sons of poor people, and to give the feast. There is thus a tendency for the headman's sons to be circumcised in a common ritual with a large number of boys. This might be thought of as reminiscent of some form of age-grades, and may be vaguely symbolic of loyalty ties within such generations of village boys.

When a child loses his first *deciduous tooth,* a special dish is commonly prepared and given to the neighbors «because the parents are very proud that their child has become so big».

When a girl feels she is growing up, she may, with a few friends, decide she wishes to be *tattooed,* usually only moderate small designs on face or hands. This is performed by an old woman specialist rarely a resident of the village, but is, everyone insisted, now going out of use as a practice. There is no formal rule as to the age at which this is done, but a girl presuming at too early and age would probably be ridiculed. The controls seem essentially the the same as those on the use of cosmetics in Western society, and the time of tattooing does not correspond to puberty in any one-to-one relation as a rite de passage.

Marriage is one of the most exciting festivals of the village, and usually takes place in the autumn after the harvest, to ensure plentiful supplies. The process of choosing a spouse has been discussed above (pp. 26 ff.) — the ceremony itself is most colorful in the case of marriages that connect two villages, since then the aspect of conspicuous exhibition of wealth is most stressed, and the bridal procession from the girl's to the husband's home most impressive. The celebrations should traditionally last three days, and involve all one would expect of eating, smoking, and dancing, offering opportunities for all kinds of informal social activities. Unless excessive factionalism interferes, the whole village takes part in the festivities.

Death. After a death, the members of the bereaved household remain at home for three days, and friends and relations come visiting, express their sympathy, and are served food and tea. After three days, the throats of two or three sheep are cut, in honor of the deceased, and the meat is «given to the poor» — that is, distributed

in the village as a whole[1]). Any conspicuous excesses in celebration are however tempered by pious ideals of moderation.

To summarize: the *feast,* in its various religious and personal applications, offers a forum for competition and rivalry between persons, especially in the field of wealth, but this aspect is somewhat tempered by ideals of moderation and control inherent in the other scales by which individuals are evaluated. Furthermore, these communal or semi-communal occasions formalize the relative prestige positions of individuals, as seen by other individuals, and by the group as a whole. These prestige hierarchies find expression especially in situations where a regular order of serving or acting is observed. When all the tea comes out of the host's one samovar, individuals must necessarily be served in a sequence. In Kurdish culture, as in most other cultures, the *first* position in a sequence, and in fact precedence in general, is regarded as symbolic of status. These occasions thus necessarily come to express a status hierarchy, and that in a familiar context where the symbolism is clear and rivalry for relative places conscious. In seating, in serving, and in any sequence of appearance, this rule is followed. In the fluid type of hierarchy found in the Kurdish villages, where status positions are not crystallized in a formal structure, but are constantly being re-evaluated in terms, in the final instance, of the common denominator of *power,* it is essential that some mechanism is found whereby relative status and power can be compared and made public by non-violent means. Characteristically, practically all the major communal occasions in the villages of Southern Kurdistan involve several instances where this hierarchy can become expressed.

RAIDING AND WARFARE

The final and most spectacular occasion for the emergence of leadership and the expression of a status hierarchy is offered by the

[1]) This ritual slaughter of animals has a general significance as a sign of respect — when an important visitor arrives, the throat of a sheep is cut just before the visitor approaches, so that the blood may flow across the road just as he passes over.

situation of armed conflict. The conceptual separation of peace chief and war chief, frequently found in other societies, is lacking in the Kurdish area; thus the leader in war is also the leader in peace, and differences in total status organize the men of a local community in a single, universally relevant hierarchy of individuals. The pertinent questions in the present connection regarding armed conflict are then concerned with who initiates it, and what the extent and nature of his following is.

At present, of course, external administration prevents large scale conflicts of any kind, and this kind of leadership is rarely expressed, and then only in a limited field. In the autonomous Kurdish system, on the other hand, conflicts of all kinds were endemic, and the following discussion relates primarily to the patterns as freely expressed up till the nineteen twenties.

In the tribal political systems, political office directly involved leadership in war, and each *Agha* and *Raiz* in the hierarchy was responsible for mustering, and vested with the command of, a specified number of rifle-men. The same correspondence between civil and military command was characteristic of the feudal organizations of the non-tribal areas, and e. g. of the temporary organization established by Shaikh Mahmud.

The *Aghas* of villages could also independently initiate war parties — a development carried to the extreme in the case of the Hamawands. Such war or raiding parties also served as steppingstones for political advancement — the Hamawand who conquered a village would sooner or later break loose from the *Agha* that backed him, and constitute himself as an *Agha* on his own right. In the non-tribal areas, this was more easily done, and the successful warleader might carve out a small domain for himself. In the tribal system, the raiding parties directed towards the conquest of land were generally composed of near kin, who were, in fact, relieving local village population pressure and looking for a new place to settle down. The feudal lord, on the other hand, recruited his soldiers where he could, though there was a conscious attempt, as pointed out in the discussion of *Baban* organization to utilize tribal solidarity and use smaller groups of tribesmen to control larger groups of non-tribal peasants. Thus,

leadership in war parties, and resultant conquest, was a major path of status mobility.

Raiding parties, not aimed at conquest, but merely at the looting of caravans or bazaars, tended to be more open in composition. Competent riflemen-adventurers from various villages would congregate under the command of some «brigand leader» in the terminology of the external administration, and follow him as long as his luck lasted. Characteristically enough, the Hamawands form an exception to this usual pattern. Adapting their whole society to an economy based on war and looting, they also developed a singular form of professional ethics connected with these activities. Not only were even the incidental raiding parties apparently organized in the same pattern as village administration; rules of fair play were also developed. According to the accounts of their opponents as well as their own lore, women were never harmed or even searched in the raids on caravans — if you were able to slip your money-bag to a woman without the Hamawands noticing it, your money was safe — if the woman was honest! Moreover, if the hour for prayer found them in the middle of battle, they would each in turn get off their horse and go through the complete ritual, after which they would again charge into the turmoil!

The ordinary brigand, apart from this Hamawand development, qualified himself in the eyes of the villagers by a high rating on the scale of honor and bravery, as well as a fairly consistent run of good luck. In spite of persistent efforts on the part of the external administration, brigandage and raiding continues — though on a greatly reduced scale — and this must primarily be due to the positive value given to this type of bravery. The ideal which the brigand should approach is closely similar to our conception of Robin Hood. At the time of my visit, a certain bandit and murderer by the name Kulla Piza was active in the area. For all practical purposes he seemed to regard himself as involved in a blood feud with the police — and the stories circulating about him had a familiar Robin Hood ring. They involved stealing from the rich and giving to the poor, miraculous feats such as visiting the police inspector's home and forcing him to serve up a luxurious dinner, being gallant to the ladies, etc. etc.

A person exhibiting similar virtues to a lesser degree will naturally tend to lead the local «rooftop society» of his own village, and is the type of person who frequently makes his career as the retainer of a feudal lord, thereby attaining elusive but probably considerable powers.

An occasional legitimate expression for this type of leadership today is the «posse», organized on a village level e. g. when cattle is stolen, on a larger scale when cooperating with the police in tracking a brigand. It should be noted, incidentally, that such assistance on the part of a whole district or tribe is only extended to the police when the outlaw has made himself obnoxious to the villagers of the area in question.

Chapter VI

Integration of part-statuses

Such then is the «scene» on which most social activities take place, and where control and organization emerges. This organization however, as has repeatedly been pointed out, is one of supra- and subordination of individuals, and not a formal hierarchy of offices, divorced from the persons filling them. The actual position of the individual thus derives from all of his part-statuses, from his prestige, as derived from his rating on the suggested scales, and from his ability to exploit the possibilities offered by these factors and by chance occasions.

The integration of all these analytically separable factors into a final position in the local group hierarchy poses a problem, and in this problem the familiar anthropoligical techniques and concepts can offer little help. In a traditional system, where individuals are permitted to make political demands on their followers, not by virtue of being vested with an abstract office, but as *individuals* by virtue of their higher status, there must be a single, unitary hierarchy of individuals. In Kurdish society, status is derived from a number of separate and in part mutually exclusive hierarchies and contexts; these elements of status, or part-statuses, must needs be added up somehow — some common denominator must exist by which the elements are given relative values. This common denominator is locally spoken of, and it has seemed analytically convenient to regard it as, a wide concept of *power*. But it is fruitless to attempt to con-

struct a formula for the addition of these part-statuses. Their relative weights are revealed only in very few contexts of real life, since such a tremendous number of variables combine in the relations between any two individuals.

At least in certain situations, some qualifications to leadership take precedence over others, and impediments in one field can be overcome or outweighed by advantages in other fields. With respect to the part-status positions, some of these seem to be mutually incompatible, in that they can not easily be occupied by the same individual; others are mutually exclusive to the extent of not coexisting in the same local community. Finally, there are conflicts of loyalties: which units of reference take precedence over others in a situation of choice.

The culture of the Kurdish villager is not an integrated culture, in the sense that there are no discrepancies and conflicts between norms. Various rules and values may in certain situations come into clear opposition. Though for some such conflicts, standardized solutions or circumlocutions have been developed, this is most clearly not true of all. Such unresolved problems are the fields where change and adaptation take place. But by virtue of the lack of consistent logic and a minimum of agreement, these are fields that can not readily be described, much less analysed, by the anthropologist. The following section contains a discussion, based on my own and some secondary material, of some of the more crude and obvious aspects of this situation. All I can attempt to do is demonstrate a few clearer cases of precedence and incompatibility, and suggest certain systematic distinctions between questions of (a) impediments to leadership, (b) general incompatibility of part-statuses, and (c) precedence of loyalties to alternative groups and identifications.

IMPEDIMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS TO LEADERSHIP

The order of importance of the various qualifications to high positions are most clearly revealed in the emergence of formally recognized leadership. In certain situations, impediments to leadership may be overcome by the posession of other qualifications that take precedence. Since autonomous Kurdish institutions are only partially

functioning in these fields, the data is incomplete; moreover, the relative importance of various qualifications seem to differ somewhat between the infra-village and supra-village levels, and between the tribal and feudal organizations.

The impediment of female sex. The clearest case, illustrating the type of problem I am concerned with, relates to the position of the *woman* who, except for her sex, fulfills all the requirements of a leader. I have previously stated that the woman plays no active part in political life in the widest sense. On the village level, that seems to be invariably true. But on the supra-village level, there are some exceptions. The problem, in the Kurdish system, amounts to what should take precedence, the impediment of female sex, or the qualifications of high family status, wealth, etc. In the village, the differences in family status and wealth are not great enough to counterbalance an obverse difference in sex; among the leading families of Southern Kurdistan, these differences in status and wealth as compared to the general population become great enough to override the impediment of female sex, and in several cases women have emerged as leaders of considerable consequence.

The most spectatcular case was that of *Adela Khanem,* leader of the Jaf confederacy around the time of the First World War. She belonged to the ruling lineage of Ardalan princes in the southern provinces of Persian Kurdistan, and married Osman Pasha, the leader of the sedentary section of the Jaf. To him, she was of assistance in administration etc., and upon his death she retained or assumed the position as leader of the Jaf *Begzada.* Soane (op. cit.) after his visit with her before Osman Pasha's death, speaks very highly of her, both as a person and as a ruler. In 1919, she is described as «. . . about 60 years of age, but, thanks to the skillful, though liberal, use of artificial aids, she did not look a day over 40». (Lees, 1928, p. 257). In the conflicts following the war, she pursued an independent policy of cooperation with the British and opposition to Shaikh Mahmud.

A contemporary example is *Hafsakhan,* cousin and sister-in-law of Shaikh Mahmud. As a young girl, in the critical period of Shaikh Mahmud's rebellion, she assumed the responsibility for a handful of imprisoned British officers, in order to protect them from Kurdish

irregulars. The just treatment extended to these prisoners was later the official British grounds for commuting Shaikh Mahmud's death sentence to life-long exile (later commuted further).

Hafsakhan has since retained a prominent position in Suleimani, and today receives visitors of both sexes in her own gardens, independent of her husband, Shaikh Kader. A small, darkhaired, attractive woman, she shows a social grace and intelligence that fully justifies her reputation.

Women who are active in the political field remain the exceptions, however, even among the most prominent families. It would seem that in addition to exceptional ability as well as interest — and the latter is probably fairly rare too — somewhat unusual circumstances are required to give a woman the opportunity to enter publicly into political life. Adela Khanem did so as the trusted representative and later widow of Osman Pasha, and surely gained popularity in Ottoman times from her Persian origin; Hafsakhan showed wise resolution in a situation for which there was no clear precedence. But the mere fact that such women are found at all in Moslem Kurdistan indicates the very great prestige attached to their other qualifications, primarily the fact of membership in the prominent families to which they belong.

The impediment of low birth. A second impediment to leadership is that of low birth, or, in the tribal system, descent from a non-lineage member. This, just as female sex, does not seem ever to be an absolute impediment that can not be out-weighed by qualifications in other fields. Status in Kurdish society is certainly in part inherited, and descent from prominent persons is a contributary qualification to leadership, but does not seem in any political context to be an absolute *requirement*.

Before external administration «froze» the formerly fluid feudal hierarchies of Southern Kurdistan, there were constant changes in personnel and organization of territories. Political power was roughly related to land ownership — obviously, since land was passed on in family lines, political hierarchies may be spoken of in terms of «dynasties». But there were only practical, no fundamental, difficulties preventing a laborer's son from working his way up

through a feudal hierarchy, and eventually be rewarded with a feudal fief, or alternatively to become a leader of a war party large enough to conquer a domain. Both these paths of upward mobility were in fact in constant use, and the problem facing the ambitious youth was simply that of how best to become qualified, in terms of wealth and prestige, to assume leadership. This wealth and prestige could be achieved through luck in small raids, bravery and self-assertion, ability to handle people, wide extension of ties of friendship, and the impediment of low birth could thus be out-weighed.

There is, however, an aristocratic undertone to much Kurdish political thinking, and especially members of the highest leading families of the area are ascribed charisma by virtue of their descent, on the same pattern as are the descendants of the Prophet. Thus, what is passed on in the families of high status is more than mere wealth; and the fact of low birth, quite apart from its disadvantage in terms of initial poverty, would create considerable difficulty if the person were pretending for the very highest status positions. This aspect is clearly expressed in several traditional accounts from Baban times, where the brave hero of modest birth in the critical moment, when he could have achieved the highest position, «knows his place» and is later rewarded by the Baban Pasha. (E. g. a story of Salim Beg, who was offered the position as ruler of Southern Kurdistan by the Persian Nadir Shah). But the Baban family itself is said to be descended from Fakka Hamma Derishman, who owned no more than one small village in Pushdir.

In the tribal system, there enters the additional factor that descent from the apical ancestor of the lineage is a theoretical prerequisite for membership in the group, and thus for political power in it. Even this basic principle of organization can be circumvented, however, if a person appears who by high status or de-facto power can control the group.

An obvious example is the Jaf confederacy, where the *Begzada* do not claim common descent with all the *tiras* in the confederacy, but none the less occupy a position of unquestioned authority. Other examples are found in the recent history of the Hamawands, who for a while followed the Jaf *Begzada,* later the Berezinje Shaikhs at

the time of Shaikh Said and Shaikh Mahmud. Thus, while no one who is not a member of the lineage can achieve a position *within* the segmentary lineage system, the lineage group as a whole, or even a section of it, temporarily broken away from the remainder of the descent group, can join a larger confederacy under a «foreign» leader.

In summary, one might say that there are no *absolute* impediments, or, inversely, necessary requirements, relating to leadership in any of the Southern Kurdish political systems; that persons theoretically may qualify for leadership by any combination of part-statuses, so long as they add up to a total status position sufficiently exhalted to correspond to, or «justify», the political and other demands involved in leading the group in question.

INCOMPATIBILITY OF PART-STATUSES

Clearly, only ascribed status positions, based on sex and birth, could function as true impediments to leadership. Various achieved status positions may be incompatible with high political positions, but since such status positions can be changed, they are at most temporary impediments, and can better be discussed under the present heading.

Most of these incompatibilities have been suggested above. Of the part-statuses in the religious field, the *mullah* will tend to be rather separated from the general village commuity — he is frequently a tenant farmer, but rarely occupies any other part-status position, with the occasional exception of *Hadji*. Membership in a *derwish* brotherhood is clearly a badge of low class, and the derwish will not occupy any of the higher status positions. Conversely, the title of *Hadji* is a badge of high status, and is combined with any of the higher part-status positions, including that of the mullah. A *woman* can not be a mullah.

The hierarchy of class, as implied in the discussion, seems to divide the local community into separable categories that do not significantly overlap in terms of prestige or general position in the village and supra-village hierarchy.

In summary, the following diagram (No. 9) suggests the relative positions of various social categories in the village hierarchy, and their approximate spread on an ordinate of «low-high» — obviously a very impressionistic diagram, for illustrative purposes only. Different part-statuses that do not overlap in their spread on the low-high

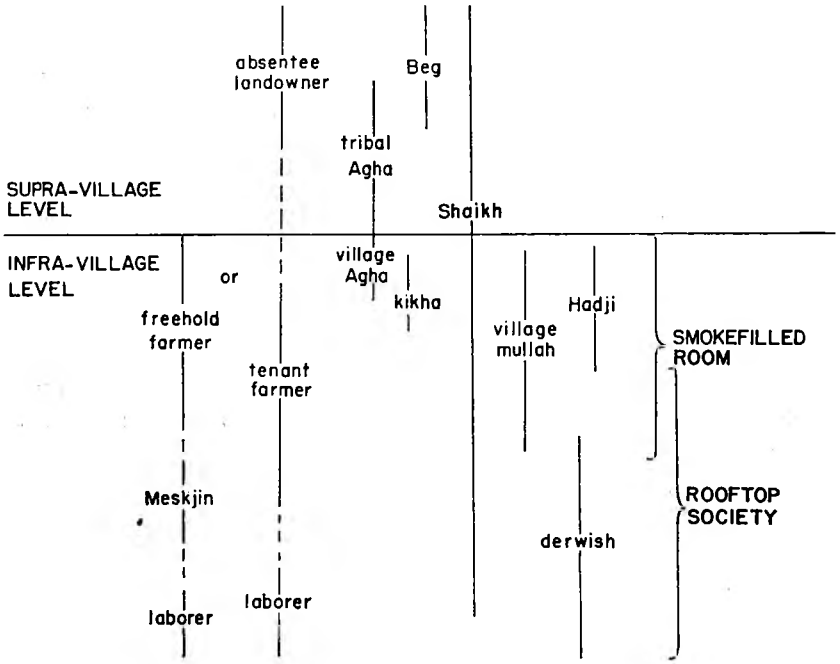


Diagram No. 9. Relative status of some social categories.

axis are incompatible; furthermore, the mullah often not being fully integrated in the community, there will be a lower frequency of combination of the status of mullah with the other, theoretically compatible, part-statuses.

PRECEDENCE IN LOYALTIES

In some conflict situations, any specific individual may be faced with a choice as to which group or person he should support — primarily the alternatives of lineage group vs. lord, lineage group

vs. local community, and questions of kin loyalties and loyalty to the person of the leader. This precedence in loyalties, that is, the relative degree of identification with various categories or groups, clearly demonstrates the fluidity of the Kurdish village hierarchy. The group or institution embodying the most power seems invariably to be adhered to, and loyalties shifted accordingly. This in no way means that the Kurdish villager may not be fired with idealism, and take to arms for such ideals or for individuals in the face of great odds. The generalization is concerned with a much more fundamental level. The usual anthropological model of society hypothecates a tendency to restore social equilibrium, and pictures social action as brought to bear on any disturbance so as to compensate for its effect and remove it. In the Kurdish system, this would not always seem to be the case. If a social relation breaks down, there is no systematic or communal effort to restore the former status quo. When the breakdown is within the village community, the factions involved will tend to avoid contacts, and struggle till a new balance is established, or till the smaller group or group in opposition breaks out, migrates or forms a new village. If the breakdown were between villages, social relations would be completely severed, feud or at least considerable talk of feud would ensue, smaller incidents might continue for a long period of time. Trade would take a different course, and new contacts be established.

A disturbance that causes a change in some factor thus leads to an adaptation of the whole system to the new situation. There seems, in the autonomous Kurdish system, to be no conception of the need for conserted communal action to restore a normatively or legally defined «right» state; in that sense, all persons with power are usurpers, on all levels. There are no unquestioned normative, much less supernatural sanctions defining rights and privileges; the situation is much more one of a *modus vivendi,* where every person is given an area of «free grace» in Max Weber's terms (cf. p. 50), in proportion to his power position in the village hierarchy. The rebellion or conflict results where either the subject individuals do not recognize or are suspicious of the actual status and powers of the supraordinated person, or where the latter incites a person or group against

him by overstepping his «reasonable» area of free grace in his relation to them .

In thinking about social relations, this essentially involves substituting the word «reasonable» for «right» — the latter being rigid and absolute, the former being defined in terms of numerous considerations of the specific situation. Obviously, different individuals with different temperament, experience, and values will have various ideas of what is «reasonable» — consequently, any type of superordination that does not involve constant face-to-face relations with the subordinates must be an uneasy one — hence the importance of the bodyguard, even for the more minor Kurdish leaders.

In the case of conflicting loyalties, the specific situation in the village and area concerned decides which group identification takes precedence. This is clearly illustrated in choices between identification with, or loyalties to, the landlord, the lineage or kin group, and the village community. How completely considerations of power override general rules of loyalty is finally illustrated by conflicts within the family of the old Baban Pashas.

Lineage group vs. lord. In the Kurdish tribal system, genealogical and local groups coincide, and these groups are also the organizational units in a formal political sense. A somewhat similar correspondance is characteristic of the non-tribal tenant villages. Thus, since they coincide, the relative importance of the identification with the kin group and with the political unit, as personified by the political officeholder or lord, can not easily be determined. Only in the rather unusual cases where the two are different, do problems of identification and precedence arise.

An example of the relative powers of the landowner vs. the lineage leader is offered by the *Baroi Gawra* group, settled on the land of Shaikh Mahmud as tenant farmers. The Baroi Gawra are one of ten branches of the *Memni tira*, the *Raiz* of which is Said Ali Khobat of Suleimani.

Formally, the position of the *Raiz* is quite similar to that in other *tiras,* though more directly dependent on «democratic» approval. Succession is decided by a council of the important men of the ten villages. This council is limited by informal controls, being open to

any one of the *tira* who «feels important enough». The qualifications of the *Raiz* are that he must be experienced, old, and rich (receiving no remuneration for his services), and in fact be acclaimed by a majority of his followers. His field of power, on the other hand, is minimal, and concerns only the relations between the various Memni villages. Considering that these are spread over a large area, and that the *Raiz* has no way of enforcing his decisions, he constitutes little more than a mediator in intra-tribal affairs.

Two of the Memni villages lie on the land of Shaikh Mahmud, and are as completely under his control as are his non-tribal tenants. Shaikh Mahmud freely appoints the village headman himself, and collects the normal shares in tax — according to one critical old woman of the village, he frequently takes considerably more too! In the rather inconceivable case of conflict between the *Raiz*, with no formal powers, and Shaikh Mahmud, with the power to evict and fine the villagers, there is little doubt whose orders would be followed. The Shaikh even has the primary loyalties of many of the Baroi — the most succinct statement of the Kurd's attitude to his leader was made by the farmer-mullah of the village: «When Shaikh Mahmud was a religious leader, I was a mullah. He became King, I became a rifleman. Now he is a landowner, I am a farmer.» This does not leave very much to the *Raiz*.

There is thus a contradiction between the feudal hierarchy of which Shaikh Mahmud is the head, based on considerations of locality and economic relations, and the geneologically defined tribal organization, relating these two villages to the other Memni villages. This lineage organization is still retained, and headed by the *Raiz*. But the extent of the *Raiz's* power is minimal, whereas the landowner's *de facto* power is necessarily considerable; the presence of these de facto powers has been fully recognized, and loyalties shifted accordingly. Because of the rigidity of the Kurdish lineage system, no modification of its form has been possible; the field in which it is relevant has simply been reduced.

In effect, this may also be seen as a situation of conflict between two *leaders*, each heading an organization. Since organizational hierarchies are in terms of individuals and not abstract offices, the

position of the leader becomes crucial. In the present case, the one leader clearly has more status and power that the other, and identification is with the leader with the highest status.

Within the tribal lineage groups, examples of such identification with *leaders* rather than genealogical groups in abstracto can be multiplied. In various conflicts, tribes will split and align in terms of outstanding leaders, disregarding the genealogical ties. The *Hamawands* after the First World War partly sided with Shaikh Mahmud, partly with the British; the same conflict found the leaders of the Jaf confederacy, the *Begzada*, divided into two factions, each with their following (Lees, op. cit). In the non-tribal areas, larger scale kin organizations are lacking, and such choices do not arise in the same way. In summary, it seems that in situations of choice, any actual organization, as personified in the leader, takes precedence over abstract genealogical alignments. Where also these genealogical alignments are systematized into an actual organization, a lineage, the choice seems to be made on the basis of a relative evaluation of the status and power of the two competing leaders.

Lineage group vs. village community. In certain situations, the lineage or kin group and the village do not coincide, and a conflict of loyalties may result. In such cases, the village community seems to take precedence. From the tribal system, the case of feud summarized in Appendix II may serve as an example. The originator of the feud is genealogically more closely tied to the village of his victims than to that in which he is residing; yet, he can count on his village of residence for tacit support. In the archaeological excavations, where workmen from several villages were brought together, the various cleavages would follow community lines; and laborers, genealogically unconnected with the Hamawand freeholding farmers who dominated the villages, would invariably side with the village in which they resided.

In the non-tribal, tenant villages, kinship tends to set the factional patterns of alignment *within* the community; but in no case would it seem possible for kinship ties crossing village boundaries to override village identification in a situation of conflict. Where the two differ, the community factor takes precedence over the genealogical factor

in determining loyalties. This, it should be emphasized, is true of the village, but does not apply to the absentee landowner class, who, in an urban or semiurban setting and with widely dispersed property, have nothing corresponding to the unequivocal community membership of a villager.

This primary identification with the village community is utilized for integrative purposes in the non-tribal tenant villages, where kinship-patterned factionalism would otherwise be rabid. It is a very characteristic pattern, noticed by numerous travellers, that every Kurdish village has one or more special «enemy» villages, towards which considerable hostility is expressed — quite out of proportion to the actual grievances between the two communities. The tenant villages lie in the zone where external administration is most completely established, and consequently village unity, for defence or other purposes, is rarely called for. This standardized hostility towards an «opposing» community undoubtedly serves as a mechanism to mobilize the primary *village* identification, and thus overrule or limit kin group factionalism.

Close kin loyalties. Identification and loyalty would thus seem to follow the patterns of power distribution fairly closely, and be adapted or transferred when changes in the power distribution require. This follows from the general climate of fluidity and adaptability in the whole village structure. Rigid and absolute identification and loyalty to abstract categories could not fit such a fluid system; identification must be with an actual, existing organization of individuals, and loyalties have to be adjusted according to the changing constellations of these individuals.

In a situation of stress, therefore, even the closest kinship ties may be superceded by considerations of power alignments — among the most graphic examples are the conflicts between close relatives in the family of the old *Baban* Pashas. Here struggle and bloodshed between brothers was endemic, and a history of the administration becomes a chronicle of constant battles between competing pretenders.

Rich (op. cit., pp. 306—362) gives an extremely illuminating day-by-day account of the rupture between Mahmood Pasha and his brother Osman Bey — easily produced by Turkish intrigue, in spite

of the unquestionable integrity of both brothers, and their desperate efforts to resist. The account follows the development from Osman Bey dissuading his brother from abdicating in his favor, through his efforts later to resist Turkish pressures, when he «had a kind of determination and fierceness, like a man who has set his back against the wall» (p. 313) till finally open conflict resulted between the brothers, and Osman Bey was reduced to a pawn in the hands of the Ottoman Pasha of Baghdad. Rich describes his last conversation with Mahmood Pasha: «I told him . . . that nevertheless I prayed God for the prosperity and strength of his family and country. He said neither could ever be strong, while so many powerful members of the family existed. I insisted that it might be. 'Yes' said he, 'if God sent a plague among us and only left one alive'» (p. 323).

Loyalty to leader. In spite of what has been said, loyalties may remain with a leader after his defeat, when the actual organization of which he is the head is greatly reduced in power, and he himself, as was frequently the case, in exile across the border. This relates to the distinction made between the «ideal» and «de-facto» hierarchy (p. 98 ff). For example in Baban times, one Pasha might be dethroned in favor of an other through the intervention of Ottoman or Persian armies. In such cases, the old leader would often retain his high prestige and status in the ideal hierarchy, though he controlled little de-facto power at the moment; once the external force were removed, he would then be able to regain ascendancy.

In a wider application, this means that the relative power by which competing leaders are evaluated, and which forms the basis for transfer of loyalties, is to considerable extent what I have called the person's ability to *rally* supporters, i. e. his individual status in the *ideal* hierarchy, not the de-facto power he controls qua *office*-holder. The apparent contradiction between the above pattern of transfer of loyalties, and the at times heroic loyalty to a leader in the face of great adversity, stressed in Kurdish tales and chronicles, thus disappears. Such examples of stubborn loyalties indicate situations of wide discrepancy between the «ideal» and the «de-facto» power hierarchies.

Chapter VII.

The detribalization process.

In the same way as certain part-statuses are incompatible with others in combination in a single person, certain of these statuses are incompatible in a single village community. Where two part-status positions imply conflicting interests in the same field of activity, the part-status that controls most de-facto power will dominate the scene, and sooner or later replace the other or re-define its field of relevance. A unified discussion of these aspects of incompatibility should contribute to our understanding of social change in the South Kurdish countryside.

The mechanics of such redefinition and replacement of part-status categories should be clear from the previous discussion. From the supra-village level, a new factor is introduced, modifying the power or prestige connected with a certain part-status position — e. g. the introduction of a civil code that robs the *mullah* of much of his power, a serious defeat reduces the prestige of a previously dominant *tira*, or land registration settles property disputes in the favor of certain persons. The individual occupying a relative position in the total hierarchy of supra- and sub-ordination may then find one of two things to have happened: (a) his power, and thus his de-facto position in the hierarchy, has been modified, in which case a fluid adjustment and transfer of loyalties will tend to follow in the village community, or (b) his de-facto power, in itself unchanged, is in time modified by changes in the relative prestige attached to his

part-status — his ability to *rally* persons is improved or impaired, with direct results on his position in the power hierarchy. Either or both of these reactions may result — i. e. primary changes in either or both the de-facto (a) and the «ideal» (b) hierarchy may be produced. In certain cases the change produced by the same factor in these two hierarchies may be in contradiction, and the final adjustment is then dependent on the degree of external interference.

The patterns of these reactions and changes are set by the precedence of loyalties in conflict situations, crudely sketched above. It should then be theoretically possible to correlate the nature and form of social change in Southern Kurdistan with the factors. The assumption is generally, and I think legitimately, made that all non-tribal groups of Kurds are ultimately to be derived from one or more tribal groups. At present, at any rate, the direction of change between the two poles, from *tribal* to non-tribal or *feudal,* is very evident, and some of the factors resulting in such a detribalization process clearly follow from the above discussion. There is further considerable indication that only the two poles themselves, described as *tribal* and *feudal,* are moderately stable, and that change from the one to the other, once initiated, is a moderately rapid process. This is e. g. indicated by the numerical preponderance of villages of the polar types as compared to intermediary types. It also follows logically from the concept of incompatibilty of certain part-statuses in a single village: many of the tribal and non-tribal formal categories or part-statuses overlap in their fields of relevance, and this results in competition, and elimination or re-definition, where they are combined in one local community. Once the process of un-ravelling is under way, the complete set of non-tribal categories will thus tend to replace its tribal counterparts.

Probably the most potent agents of social change, with a very direct relation to the power hierarchy in the village, are changes in the pattern of land tenure. Ottoman land codes and taxation policy, corrupt administration, and the increasing emphasis in Kurdish culture on leisure and real property have all encouraged the concentration of land in few hands, and the establishment of feudal patterns of delegation of usifruct rights on land. The resulting class hierarchy

laborer-tenant-intermediary-absentee landowner, differs radically from that generally associated with tribal organization, which includes relatively few laborers and/or *Meskjin*, and a majority of freeholding farmers.

The incompatibility of categories from these two class hierarchies is evident, as is the tendency for the hierarchy embodying most power — i. e. the more highly centralized organization headed by the landowner — to replace the other. The absentee landowner who owns only part of the land of a village, will find his powers greatly impaired by the co-existance of freeholding farmers with his tenants in the local community. The sanctions by which he disciplines his tenants are reduced in effect — eviction from land is less serious, eviction from the village dependent on the vote of villagers outside his control. Similarly, he would be limited in his freedom to settle new farmers on the land by a veto on the part of the freeholding farmers, who could refuse the newcomer village membership. The village headman would almost certainly be elected from among the freeholding farmers, and serve as a coordinator of opposition to the landowner, etc. etc. The landowner, occupying the part-status that embodies most power in this situation of conflicting interests will tend to apply his powers to eliminate the incompatible status category — in this case by buying or forcibly taking over the proprietary rights on the remaining land, and giving the formerly freeholding farmers tenant status.

Where the right to eviction, and in fact the final powers of decision in all village matters, are taken away from the formerly freeholding farmer group, it becomes impossible for it to control a class of *Meskjin* serfs, and this status group is similarly eliminated, and presumably assimilated as tenant farmers of lower status, following from their lower wealth.

A second major agent of change, or at times a concomitant of these economic changes, is the factor of modification of the administrative system by external administration. The tribal administrative mechanism, based on «unquestioned» kinship-patterned loyalties, has been discussed above (pp. 69 ff). Where external administration — large absentee landowner or central government alike — enters and

enforces its decisions by coercive means, the pattern of tribal administration breaks down, and a transfer of loyalties will tend to result — e. g. as in the case of the Memni *tira,* cf. p. 126.

At the time of the Baban Pashalik, the capitalist landowner was of less importance, and external administration was along traditional lines. The Baban Pashas utilized the principles of indirect rule, essential in the application of a feudal system to an area of ethnic mixture. Though external administration thus was a less active agent in producing detribalization, it was still operative. The Baban Pashas lent power to the traditional leaders in their hierarchy, and supported many of their decisions by coercive means. In the nomadic groups, this was less necessary, since the necessity and functions of an organizing leader are obvious to all members of the community. In the settled communities, the need for a coordinator is less obvious to the individual member of the group, and the leader's authority will be more readily questioned. Either a constant process of segmentation must be operative, as among the Hamawands, or the «kinship head» type of leader can not retain control. External administration, however, has vested interests in retaining status quo and avoiding conflicts, and therefore applies its powers to resist fission of groups. Thus the close kinship unity of the local group is lost, and tribal organization is weakened. At the same time, external administration wishes to have a clear and moderately constant leader to deal with, and will thus attempt to strengthen the power of the leader and stabilize his position, to counteract these disorganizing tendencies. Thus it becomes necessary to vest the leader with coercive means, and this leads to the complete breakdown of the traditional tribal lineage organization.

The predominance of non-tribal communities in the area under closest Baban control must be seen as the cumulative effect of centuries of centralized rule, where such factors would be operative. It should also be remembered that any movement of people — except where it occurs in larger blocks — alienates the migrant from his hereditary *tira* group, and places him in a non-tribal system of administration wherever he choses to settle, since there is no mechanism by which he may be adopted into a new lineage.

Thus a fairly clear dichotomy can be made in Kurdish territory between tribal areas, in which lineages form the bases for the political structures, and lineage groups correspond directly to territorial groups, and on the other hand non-tribal areas, where the territorial group forms the sole basis of organization in a semi-feudal system, and, though descent and kinship are important, any type of lineage organization is absent.

Though this change from tribal to non-tribal organization seems, as far as any specific community is concerned, to be a road of no return, and there has been a constant detribalization process going on through time, the actual border between the areas where tribal vs. feudal organizations predominate has remained moderately constant for many generations, with apparently only minor ossilations. This must be seen as a steady state, where the rate of population movement — in tribal blocks or segments of such — from the mountains towards and into the plains roughly compensated for the formerly slow rate of breakdown in tribal organization along the zone of contact with external administration.

This rough balance has been completely upset by the changes following the First World War. The rate of detribalization has been tremendously speeded up by modern communications, reaching into the mountain fastness and most distant valleys; external administration has pacified all the old tribal strongholds; and movements of groups across the border from Persia are prevented or at least seriously hampered. It is thus only a question of time, probably less than a generation, till the segmentary lineage type of tribal organization is completely replaced by the non-tribal type in Southern Kurdistan.

Chapter VIII.

Conclusion

The types of Kurdish social organization described above seem, even apart from their local cultural dress, somewhat different from those usually reported by anthropologists. Especially the combination in the «tribal» organization of a lineage system, close family endogamy, and a kinship terminology without unilineal emphasis poses some interesting problems.

It has been suggested (e. g. Murdock 1949, p. 234) that this Kurdish situation reflects the breakdown of a previous organization based on exogamous sib groups, following the introduction of Islam, with the Koranic permission, or even encouragement, to marry close kin. Clearly, this explanation is not sufficient, considering how fundamental the pattern seems in the Kurdish tribal organization, and the unusually high incidence of FaBrDa marriage as compared to other Moslem communities.

As far as the historical and comparative material goes, there is little reason to believe that the tendency towards close family endogamy is an Islamic innovation in the area. In appraising the historical material, it is important, as Luzbetak (1951) emphasizes, to distinguish between (a) classical centers of endogamy with examples of brother-sister marriage in royal lineages (Egypt, Sumer, Elam, Arabia, Persia), connected with a tremendous elaboration and emphasis on hereditary prestige, and (b) areas where close family endogamy was a basic feature of the social organization, and operated

on a village level. Eliminating the cases of type (a), there is still ample evidence of endogamous patterns of non-Islamic or pre-Islamic origin, especially in the Caucasus-Armenian area, of which the Kurdish mountains are geographically an extension. The customary law of Daghestan prescribes close kin marriage, and explicitly forbids the marriage with an outsider (ibid). The early ecclasiastical laws of Armenia attack next-of-kin marriages with great vehemence (ibid, p. 54), and such practices caused great concern among the early Christian missionaries, till they were eventually rooted out. Thus, rather than regard the Kurdish combination of patterns as a labile state produced by cross-cultural mixture, it would seem reasonable to grant the Kurdish «tribal» organization considerable antiquity as a stable variant or *type* of lineage organization, of some theoretical interest.

On a structural level, it can be argued that a pattern of FaBrDa marriage serves to reinforce the political implications of the lineage system. Solidarity to the patrilineal descent group in abstracto is minimal. Close family endogamy results in a direct correspondance between lineage segments and local groups, giving the descent groups a clear territorial framework in which the lineage organization can function. On the individual level, a man's political position and power depends in the last instance on the number of riflemen he can muster. However, only co-lineage males can be expected to give such political support. A pattern of FaBrDa marriage contributes to prevent alienation of immediate collateral lines, and re-affirms the old man's leading position in relation to his agnatic nephews, thereby vesting him with control over a larger agnatic group of males.

Where the lineage is found in other areas as a corporate group, it is usually connected with a kinship terminology of the «lineage» type, which, through unilineal emphasis and classificatory extensions contributes in defining and delimiting these corporate groups. Kurdish kinship terms, on the other hand, are purely «descriptive» in that they measure geneological distance between near kin. Nor do they show any unilineal emphasis. In other words, they do not contribute in any way to the definition of unilineal corporate groups. However, when this terminology is seen in combination with the

FaBrDa marriage pattern, the characteristics become meaningful, and the different function of kinship terminology in the Kurdish type of lineage organization and other types of lineages emerges:

Where a moderately consistent pattern of FaBrDa marriage and other close family endogamy is followed, the local, endogamous community becomes in fact the descent group. In the Kurdish system, these local descent groups are given names — in effect *village* names, which thus indicate both residence and descent, and thereby political affiliation. The corporate framework of the lineage is thus given directly in the named residence units, and kinship terms are unneccessary to further emphasize this corporate character. On the contrary, the terminology measures collateral distance, of considerable importance where relatives beyond a certain degree tend to form separate, endogamous sub-sections, disruptive to village unity and ultimately conducive to fission. Essentially, however, the kinship terminology is liberated from its functions in defining political units in the lineage system, and is utilized simply to describe relationship, possibly with a primary interest in inheritance. Here the effect of the complex Islamic law of inheritance may have been considerable — if it has in fact been applied to sufficient extent in its more subtle ramifications.

A second modification of the usual pattern, concerned with law and the blood feud, would seem to follow from the combination of a lineage organization and preferential FaBrDa marriage. Fortes (1953) summarizes: «where the lineage is found as a corporate group, all the members of a lineage are to outsiders jurally equal and represent the lineage when they exercise legal and political rights and duties in relation to society at large. This is what underlies so-called collective responsibility in blood vengance and self-help as among the Nuer (Evans-Pritchard 1940) and the Bedouin (Peters 1951).» On the background of this, the probable absence of weak development of collective responsibilty and blood feud in Kurdish society might seem puzzling.

Where the lineage system is associated with a pattern of village endogamy, however, as in the Kurdish system, the maximal lineage becomes in effect «the society», not merely one organized group

within it. Thus the whole situation in which jural concepts are to be applied changes radically. No supra-lineage political authority is developed, and no interaction between a lineage and other groups is necessary, except for a certain minimum of trade. At the time of the present fieldwork, of course, and probably for most tribes in the area at most times in the last 300 years, the maximal lineages were in fact not totally independent. They were, however, subject to *external* administration, and that not consistently; and the indigenous social organization does not call for or lead to any supra-lineage integration. The concept of jural equivalence is thus meaningless as applied to a Kurdish maximal lineage; such a concept could only be relevant as applied *within* the lineage, between groups of recognized blood relatives within the political unit. In this case, the disruptive effects of conflicts between what are in fact territorial groups within the unit prevent the extension of patterns of revenge to include larger collectivities than the immediate family, or a group of accomplices.

However, the lineage organization is only one type of social organization prevalent in the Kurdish area. With the breakdown of this regional organization based on politically autonomous, endogamous descent groups, the integration of the separate, endogamous villages into larger political units poses a new problem. Non-tribal Kurdish social organization might be summarized as a system of hierarchical statuses, identified with particular individuals, and sanctioned by force more than anything else. This organization is then expanded into a larger, regional, semi-feudal system. This was at best a very labile structure, until frozen by the intervention of effective external administration which favored status quo. In the place of the regional deplacement of lineage groups in large «tribal» districts, one finds an open web of relations between separate, endogamous, socially quite autonomous small villages. These form no natural larger units, except in purely physiographic or dialect terms. In this open web, feudal hierarchies might establish areas of influence, but until external administration imposed an arbitrary regional classification in terms of counties and districts, any areal units tended to be extremely fluid.

Parsons (1952) states the problem in general terms: «There seem to be certain elements of inherent instability in societies where the overwhelming bulk of the population is organized on the basis of peasant village communities. One of the reasons for this is the fact that the village community as a primary focus of solidarity can only within very narrow limits be an effective unit for the organization of the use of force. It is, in the face of any more extensive organization, not a defensible unit. Hence there must always be a 'superstructure' over a peasant society, which, among other things, organizes and stabilizes the use of force. The queston is how far such a superstructure is, as it were, 'organically' integrated with the self-contained village communities and often the level of integration is not high.» (pp. 162-3).

This problem of *integration* the local non-tribal political institutions were unable to solve satisfactorily; and the secondary role played by the quite large Kurdish population in the history of the Middle East may to considerable extent be related to this failure.

APPENDIX I: Land use.

According to the Kurdish farmers, there are three classes of land for wheat and barley crops; the same field, differently treated, belonging in any of these three classes:

(1) *Wushka ward* (dry land). Old fields or new land is plowed once in the winter, while it is raining. In the middle of the spring it is plowed again, after which it is left fallow all summer, during which time it grows over with a scatter of weeds. When the farm work is finished in the fall, the field is plowed again, the seed is spread by hand, and the field is cross-plowed. Ideally, it should be plowed over even once more, but few farmers have the time and animals to invest in that. This is the best kind of land, and gives by far the best yield. The work should be finished before the winter rains set in, so the fields get the full benefit from them. In the spring, the crops also resist the locust better, since the plants have grown relatively large before the locusts appear.

(2) *Meo ward*. A simplified form of *wushka ward*, in which the farmer for some reason has not done spring plowing (the farmer was sick, his oxen sick, occupied with too much other work, too little winter rains, etc.). The fields are thus plowed once in the winter, and then left fallow till next autumn. When the rains set in, the seed is spread (in spite of a considerable stand of grass and weeds in the field), and the field is plowed once over, in consequence of which most of the weeds die. This is not as good as *wushka ward*, but better than

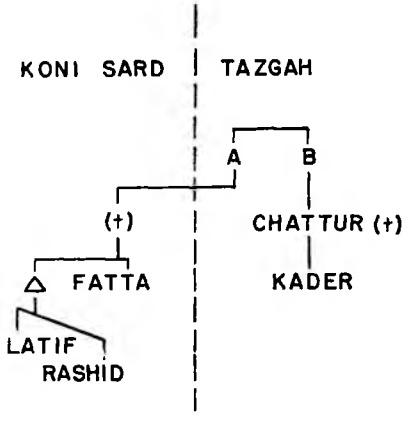
(3) *Terra kal* (wet, immature), in which the field is *not* given a fallow year. The farmer waits for the first winter rains. After the earth is soaked, the field is plowed once. Some times the seed is spread and the field is cross-plowed as soon as possible. A better procedure is to wait for more rains, some 20 days or so, and then seed and cross-plow. In the meantime, some of the grasses and other wild plants will have revied and resumed growing; these now become weeded out. Most of the work connected with *terra kal* is done in the middle of the winter, in rain, sleet, or even snow, and involves considerable discomfort. Furthermore, the plants being later to develop, they suffer more from locusts; and the fertility of the land

is reduced from not being given a fallow year. The same field can not be used as *terra kal* for any longer period of time.

Essentially, then, the pattern is one of alternate year fallow and alternate year grain crop. Since no other major crop is raised on this type of dry, un-irrigated land, any pattern of rotation is impossible. Cow dung, being a major source of fuel, is not available as fertilizer. The constant plowing, in addition to making the land able to absorb and retain the moisture of the winter rains, should also be useful in building up the humus by burying the weeds that develop.

APPENDIX II: A conflict involving revenge.

The closest approximation to an actual bloodfeud which I observed in progress was concerned with the rights to land, and involved a small lineage which finds itself split between the two villages Tazgah and Koni Sard, in Hamawand territory. The wronged party being considerably more willing to discuss the situation, the following account may be slightly biased in their favor.



Two brothers, A and B, grandfathers of the present contestants, and both residents of the village of Tazgah, divided their father's land between them. A sold his field to a third person; B's son, Chattur, later bought it. A's son moved to the neighboring village of Koni Sard, where he worked as a landless laborer. Finally, A's grandson, Fatta, claimed the land back. Chattur, in posession of the land, expressed his willingness to sell; Fatta countered, saying that the crops of the past years were sufficient payment — a not uncommon argument. In the resulting quarrel, Fatta shot Chattur dead.

Kader, the son of Chattur, was then a very small boy, and Fatta was widely known as a competent rifleman, so nothing was done. After killing one more person, unconnected with the present conflict, Fatta became an outlaw.

In the rather unusual setting of an archaeological excavation, the orphaned Kader found himself working beside Latif and Rashid from Koni Sard, the nephews and nearest relatives of Fatta. This precipitated action on his part. Nothing was noticed for a brief period of work in the area belonging to the village of Koni Sard. When operations were transferred to Tazgah's territory, Kader swore he would not stand for it, and promised to revenge his father. The two boys Latif and Rashid were extremely afraid, and were, upon their request, immeditaely removed from the site, and a settlement with the group of workmen from Tazgah was later achieved, with some difficulty.

Later, Fatta, who being on outlaw had little to lose, attempted to intimidate the villagers of Tazgah by a further murder (a woman unrelated to Chattur and Kader), and by setting fire to their grainfields, in spite of the armed sentries the Tazgahns had posted there. The people of Koni Sard, Fatta's village, discovered the fire, and disassociated themselves with the action by assisting in putting it out. None the less, they are accused of continually housing him in secret. Kader is still a young boy, and has sworn to revenge his father by killing Fatta.

The essential points seem to be (1) Kader's revenge was transferred to the nephews of his father's murderer only because the murderer himself was out of reach, and because Kader, due to unprecedented circumstances, found himself working beside the nephews on the land of his own village — all a strong implied insult to his honor. (2) Kader did not receive active support in avenging his father, even though the father was, at the time of the murder, the *Agha* of Tazgah village. (3) The village of Koni Sard was able to disassociate itself from the acts of Fatta — possibly because he did not belong to the major lineage group of that village.

These points would indicate that no developed pattern of blood feud, as defined in the main body of the text, is operative; and where patterns superficially similar to blood feud are found, these can better be explained as a slight extension of a strong pattern of individual revenge, or, in certain cases, a struggle between two lineages for political supremacy.

APPENDIX III: The education of a mullah.

The scholarly standards of the best village mullahs might be exemplified by a listing of the teachers and course of study of Mullah Said Mohammed, now of the village of Djeshana. He was born in Sharbasher, and grew up in the village of Tepeshwankara in the Bazian valley between Suleimani and Chemchemal. No religious traditions in the family, his interests were stimulated by the older mullah brother of an agemate. After having finished reading the Koran at the age of 9, and then forgotten it again, he decided to become a mullah at the age of 12. He finished the Koran again at 14, under the direction of his village mullah. He then travelled to Suleimani, and studied

1 year with Shaikh Mohammed Ikhal, now a religious judge,
3 years with Abdullah Chorostani, teacher in Qanaka mosque in Suleimani,
2 » » Aziz Effendi, religious judge,
1 » » Hussein Piskenni,
1 » » Shaikh Baba Ali,
1 » » Shaikh Nuri, son of Baba Ali,
1 » » Hamma Said.
Travelled to Warmawa near Halebja, studied
2 » » Abdul Kader Sufi,
travelled to Biara, in the Hauramani mountains, studied
½ » » Abdul Karim,
travelled to Halebja, studied
½ » » Shaikh Rasul,
travelled to Galala in the Pushdir mountains, studied
1 » » Hadji Mohammed Raiz.
Returned to Suleimani, studied
½ » » Shaikh Omar in Qanaka mosque,
returned to Halebja, studied
½ » » Shaikh Omar in Qanaka mosque,
Education completed A. H. 1355 (A. D. 1935), certificate issued by Shaikh Baba Rasul and Mullah Abdul Kader after 15 years of wandering and studies.

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