

AGHA, SHAIKH AND STATE

on the social and political
organization of kurdistan



M.M.van Bruinessen



AGHA, SHAIKH AND STATE

ON THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF KURDISTAN

PROEFSCHRIFT

TER VERKRIJGING VAN DE GRAAD VAN DOCTOR IN DE SOCIALE
WETENSCHAPPEN AAN DE RIJKSUNIVERSITEIT TE UTRECHT,
OP GEZAG VAN DE RECTOR MAGNIFICUS PROF. DR. A. VERHOEFF,
VOLGENS BESLUIT VAN HET COLLEGE VAN DECANEN
IN HET OPENBAAR TE VERDEDIGEN OP VRIJDAG
6 OCTOBER 1978 DES NAMIDDAGS TE 4.15 UUR

DOOR

MAARTEN MARTINUS VAN BRUINESSEN
GEBOREN OP 10 JULI 1946 TE SCHOONHOVEN

PROMOTORES :

PROF. DR. J. VAN BAAL

PROF. DR. H.U.E. THODEN VAN VELZEN

ji dostên min ên kurde

بۆ دوستانه‌کو ده‌کانم

cover designed by Henk van Reeuwijk
the photographs represent Mistefa Paşa (of the Miran),
Şêx Ziyadîn (the Hezret of Nûrşîn), and a peshmerga
(Kurdish guerrilla fighter) from Iraq.

printed on recycled paper by Enroprint/Secondprint, Rijswijk.

C O N T E N T S

Preface	xi
Introduction	1
How this thesis came to be written	1
Subject of this study	9
A note on the written sources	12
A note on the transcription of oriental words	14
 Chapter I General information on Kurdistan	 16
I. a Geography	16
I. b Geopolitical situation	19
I. c Population	20
I. d Economies: peasant farming, transhumant semi-nomadism, pastoral nomadism	22
I. e Other economic activities: crafts/industries and trade; development and under-development	26
I. f Language	29
I. g Religion	31
I. h The nationalist war in Iraq	34
 Chapter II Tribes, chieftains and non-tribal groups	 39
II. a The tribe and its subdivisions	40
The household	42
The village	47
Corporate action on levels other than the village	48
II. b Kurdish terms	52
II. c Blood feuds and other conflicts	59
Ending feuds by mediation	63
Marriage type and tribal conflict	68
Other sorts of conflict	69
II. d Higher than the tribe ?	70
Units larger than the tribe	70
Dichotomy of the social universe	73
II. e Leadership and conflicts	78
Who becomes the leader ?	79
II. f Leadership: titles and functions	81
II. g The guest-house (dîwan, dîwanxane)	82
II. h Economic aspects: tribute to the agha	88
The Balik tribe as an example	89
II. i Leadership among a number of different tribes	91
Mengûr	92
Pijder	94
Hemewend	97
Dizeyf	99
II. j Power as a process: colonization of the northern Cezîre	102
The Hevêrkan confederation and Haco	110
II. k Subject "non-tribal" peasantry and their relations with tribal Kurds	117
Economic exploitation of peasantry by tribesmen	118
Ethnic differences	119
II. l The Gûran	122
Conclusion: Gûran and gûran	129
Intermezzo: religious peculiarities of the Gûran	130
How Kurdish are the Gûran ?	133
II. m Nomads and peasants: one or two peoples ?	135
Conclusion	144

III. a	Resumé of characteristics of the Kurdish tribe; introduction to the discussion in this chapter	145
III. b	Tribes of Kurdistan not autonomous units	148
III. c	Some recurring patterns: tribes and the government of states in the Middle East	150
III. d	Some recurring patterns: centre- periphery relations The Merwanids	153 156
III. e	The incorporation of Kurdistan into the Ottoman Empire Prelude: Qaraqoyunlu and Aqqoyunlu The Safavids The events as seen from below Ottoman-Safavid confrontation Ottoman policy vis-à-vis the Kurds	161 161 163 167 168 169
III. f	Political history of some Kurdish emirates 1. The meliks of Hisnkeyf 2. Hekarî and its mîrs 3. Çemişkezek	172 172 174 179
III. g	Administrative organization of (Ottoman) Kurdistan in the 16th century Land regime and administrative organization of the Ottoman Empire (15th - 16th centuries) The application of Ottoman administrative organization in Kurdistan	181 181 189
III. h	Internal organization of the Kurdish emirates 1. Bitlîs 2. Baban	194 195 208
III. i	Intermezzo: the emigration to northeastern Iran	215
III. j	Political changes in the 19th century	220
III. k	The rise of Bedr Xan Beg and the fall of the emirate of Botan Botan after the disappearance of the mîr Conclusion	222 227 228
III. l	The new land code and its effects Land policy of the British in Iraqi Kurdistan	229 232
III. m	The establishment of Kurdish tribal militias: Hamidiye	233
III. n	Changes in the early 20th century New borders: the further partitioning of Kurdistan Tribal policies of the successor states	239 240 241
III. o	A few remarks to conclude this chapter	244

Chapter IV Shaikhs: mystics, saints and politicians 249

IV. a	Introductory remarks	249
IV. b	The dervish and sufi orders	259
IV. c	Sufi and dervish orders: organized popular mysticism	262
IV. d	History of the Qadiri order as an example	269
IV. e	Other saints of Kurdistan	275
IV. f	Qadiri shaikhs in Kurdistan Şêx Mehmûd's revolts The Talebanî shaikhs	277 278 280
IV. g	The Naqshbandi tariqa and the Naqshbandi order	281
IV. h	Why did the Naqshbandi order spread so rapidly ?	284
IV. i	Rituals of the Qadiri order	296
IV. j	The Naqshbandi ritual The meditations in the Naqshbandi ritual Orthodoxy and heterodoxy	305 308 312
IV. k	Shaikh and khalifa; relations with other shaikhs	313
IV. l	The shaikh and his followers	315
IV. m	The economic power of shaikhs	318
IV. n	Two shaikhs: Şêx Osman of Durû and Şêx Saîda of Cezîre Şêx Osman Şêx Saîda	319 319 324
IV. o	Messianism	327
IV. p	Loss of influence of shaikhs	333
IV. q	Islamic revival: nurculuk	338

Appendix to Chapter IV	340
I. Branches of the Berzencî family	341
II. The Sadatê Nehrî and the Barzanî family	345
III. The shaikhs of Biyare/Tawêla and of Palû	348
IV. Other important Naqshbandi families	349
V. More influential Naqshbandi shaikhs	350
Chapter V Şêx Seîd's revolt	353
V. a Introduction	353
A note on the sources for this chapter	354
V. b History of Kurdish national consciousness	356
Periods in nationalism	357
Kurds: a nation ?	358
Nationalist currents in the Ottoman Empire	360
V. c End of the Ottoman Empire and birth of the Republic of Turkey	362
Armenian massacres and Russian invasion	362
Armistice and partition of the Empire	363
The Turkish War of Independence	364
The Republic of Turkey	367
The Mosul question	368
V. d The first Kurdish political organizations	369
Nationalist organizations after the war and the kemalists	373
Azadî	376
V. e Şêx Seîd's revolt	378
The religious factor	378
A contemporary view of the state of affairs in 1924	380
Ehsan Nûrf's mutiny and desertion	382
New plans for the revolt	383
Outbreak of the revolt	385
Suppression of the revolt	389
V. f External and internal support for the revolt	394
British aid ?	394
Arms	395
Turkish opposition	395
V. g Participation among the Kurds	397
Non-tribal Kurds	399
Urban notables	400
Urban lower classes	401
V. h The Naqshbandi order and the revolt	401
V. i Religious vs. nationalist character of the revolt	404
Chapter VI Concluding remarks	407
Some oriental terms occurring in this book	422
Notes	425
Bibliography	449
Index	460
Beknopte samenvatting (short summary in Dutch)	463

List of maps and figures

Map 1	(general map)	ix
Map 2	The Kurds in the Middle East	17
Map 3	Oil installations and international transport routes in Kurdistan	20
Map 4	Dialects spoken in Kurdistan	31
Map 5	Places and tribes mentioned in Chapter II	58
Map 6	The northern Cezîre	103
Map 7	Qaraqoyunlu and Safavid empires	165
Map 8	Location of the most important emirates	190
Map 9	Bitlîs and its surroundings	197
Map 10	Baban and its surroundings	209
Map 11	Khorasan	219
Map 12	The emirate of Botan at the period of greatest expansion (1846)	223
Map 13	Important centres of propagation of the Naqshbandi order	283
Map 14	The areas affected by Şêx Seîd's revolt	386
Map 15	The districts in revolt (after the daily Cumhuriyet, March 27, 1925)	388
Fig. 1	Segmentary lineage structure	42
Fig. 2	Consistent father's brother's daughter marriage	69
Fig. 3	Partial family tree of the Dûrikî aghas (mala Ebbas)	105
Fig. 4	Partial family tree of the Hevêrkan aghas (mala Osman)	112
Fig. 5	Social stratification of Kurdish society	143
Fig. 6	Growth of the administrative network and the breaking up of large autonomous units in the periphery	245
Fig. 7	As the administrative network is refined, local units become smaller and less complex	247
Fig. 8	Structure and phases of development of the Qadiri and Naqshbandi orders in Kurdistan	287

P R E F A C E

Research may be a solitary affair, and the book that results from it may bear the name of a single person, but there are many others who contribute to it in essential ways. It is a pleasure to think of all those who have helped me and to thank them at this place.

The research on which this thesis is based was made possible through a research fellowship of the Netherlands Organization for the Advancement of Pure Research (Z.W.O.), nr 52-120. I am grateful to this organization for the open-mindedness with which it continued to sponsor my research also when the original research proposal could not be carried through.

Many thanks are due to Professor van Baal, my first teacher in anthropology, who was a great support in all stages of the research and the writing. Although his and my theoretical interests and political attitudes diverge, he left me more freedom to pursue my research as I wished than many of his more congenial colleagues might have done. His critical discussion of my findings and of my analyses was often illuminating. Discussions with Professor Thoden van Velzen were also stimulating. He made several interesting suggestions and aided me in viewing my data from different angles.

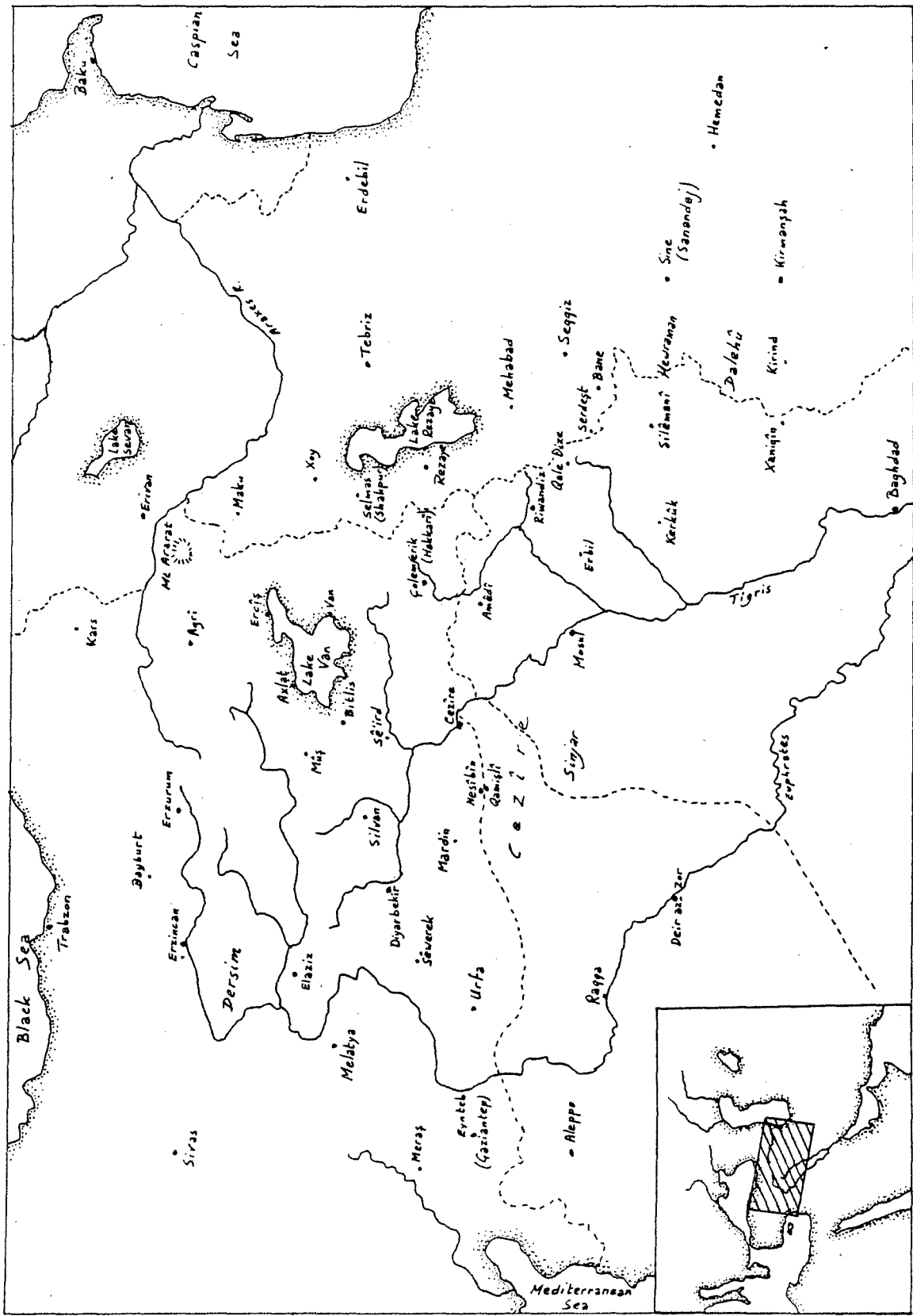
Many others have contributed in important ways to my research and to the book that grew ultimately out of it. First of all, of course, the Kurds themselves. If it were not for the proverbial Kurdish hospitality, I would not have been able even to visit many of the places I write about. The leadership of the Kurdish national movement in Iraq were the only authorities that gave me official permission to pursue my research. The freedom of movement they left me was remarkable under the circumstances. Many Kurdish friends went to great trouble in order to make my investigations possible. They took me to places where I would otherwise not have been able to go, introduced me to persons I wished to interview, and took care of my physical security. Discussion with them gave me many new ideas. It may be better

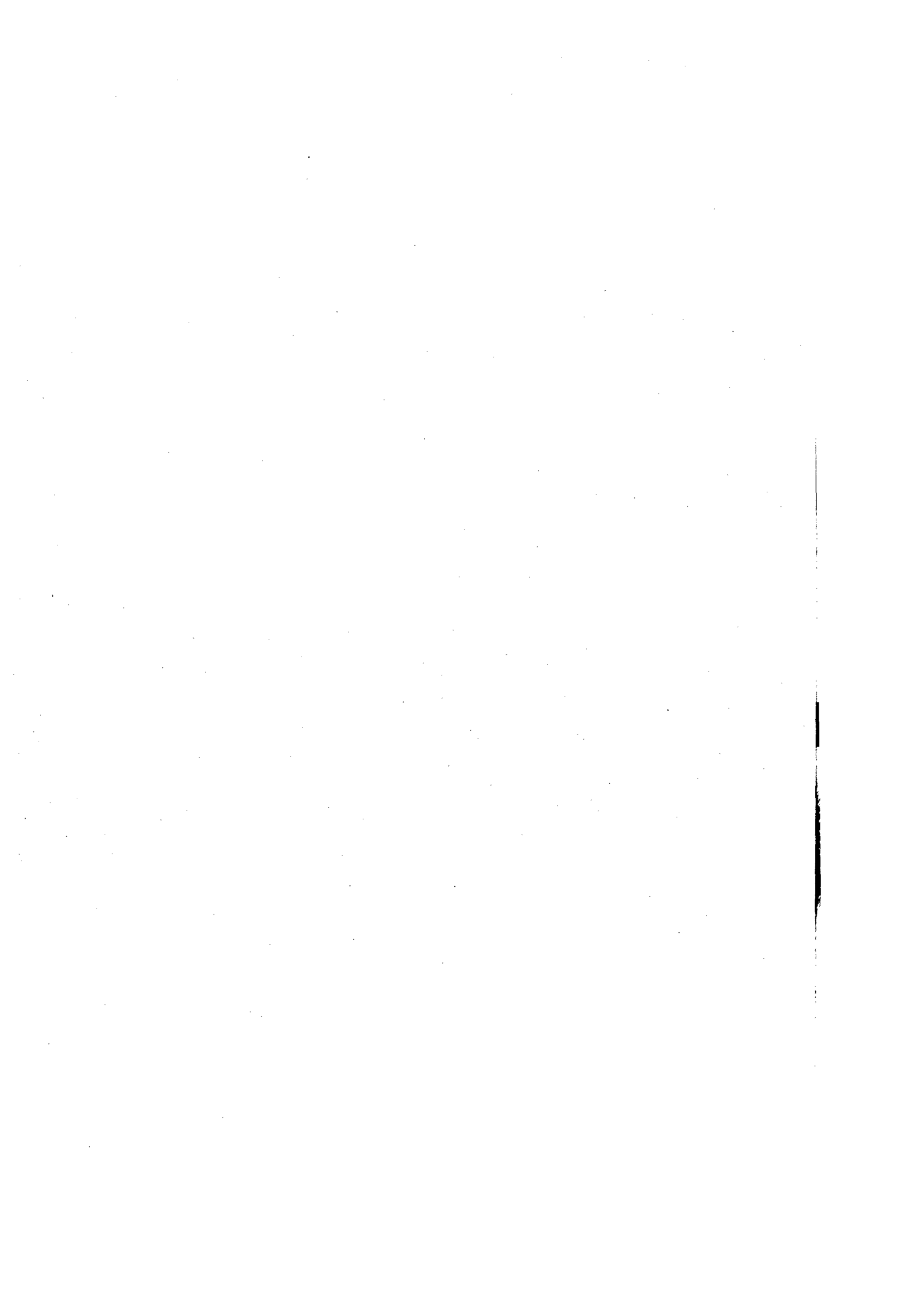
not to mention their names; let me thank them all anonymously here, and dedicate to them this book, that would not have been written without their help.

Thanks are due also to Sandy Morton, assistant-director of the British Institute of Persian Studies at Tehran, for his hospitality and help at essential moments; I have profitably made use of his great knowledge of things Persian. Each return to the Institute after a period in the field was like a home-coming, to which Margaret Karapetian, the secretary, greatly contributed.

Parts of the manuscript of this book were read and commented upon by Rik Boeschoten, Mark van Damme, Chiel Kiel, Jiya Nuri and J.D.J. Waardenburg. Mark Harvey, who applied himself to the arduous task of improving the English of my text, was also a critical reader and made many useful comments. Needless to say, the responsibility for all opinions expressed, as well as for all mistakes that remain in the text, is entirely mine.

Thanks, finally, to Sally Tenney and Annelies Bruin for patiently typing my difficult manuscript, and suffering the last-minute alterations I made.





Introduction

How this thesis came to be written

This book is not at all the kind of study I was intending to write before I started my field research. My original intention was to carry out a rather traditional social anthropological study, based on a prolonged stay (over a year) in a very limited area, in order to provide the sort of "hard" data that cannot be gathered during short field trips or casually observed by passers-by. In the vast literature on the Kurds vague impressions abound, while concrete facts and figures are rare. I intended to supply the latter, in order to make statements about de-tribalization, incorporation in the world-market, growth of nationalism, developing class contradictions, etc. more meaningful. This study, however, contains little quantitative data and has a survey-like character; it deals with material from different times and places, only part of which is based on my own observations and interviews. This complete change in research design makes some clarification necessary, the more so as several of the ideas basic to the present design occurred to me only during the first half of my stay in the field.

The Kurds have fascinated me since I first came into contact with them (which happened in 1967, on a holiday trip through the Middle East). There is something ill-definable in Kurdish culture and

"national character" that attracts me. Later reading revealed to me that many others who had had dealings with the Kurds were subject to a similar romantic attraction to them. Beside their amiability and independent-mindedness it is certainly the gallantry with which they have been fighting for national rights that lends them a special, romantic aura. In each of the countries among which Kurdistan is divided the Kurds are at odds with the government - which appealed to the anarchist in me. Later, when my theoretical interests revolved around the complex of related issues of peasant revolts, messianistic movements, nationalism and class consciousness, I turned naturally to the Kurds again. During this century Kurdistan has seen many risings of peasants, with both messianistic and nationalist overtones. In the Kurdish war in Iraq, which started in 1961, popular participation gradually increased, and in the late 1960's several thousands of Kurds, mainly peasants, took active part in guerrilla warfare against successive Iraqi governments. During the year 1974/75 their number was to exceed 50,000. And, as I noticed on several trips through Kurdistan, most Kurds who did not actively fight identified themselves in one way or another with those who did. This was true not only in Iraq, but also in other parts of Kurdistan. Thus, in terms of numbers this was certainly a people's war, a peasant war comparable to the six Wolf described in his major work on the subject (1969b).¹⁺ But whereas these six movements were progressive (the peasantry were mobilized, at least in part, on the basis of their class interests, against their exploiters; the movements were anti-imperialist and aimed at the abolition of social injustice), the Kurdish movement had, especially since 1966, a conservative, even reactionary appearance, in spite of the justness of its demands. The Kurdish leadership seemed to wish for more imperialist interference in the region rather than less; Mela Mistefa Barzanî repeatedly expressed his warm feelings for the United States, whom he wanted to join as the fifty-first state and to whom he wanted to give control of the oil in Kurdistan

⁺Notes are to be found at the end of the book.

(in exchange for aid). The movement was gradually purged of leftist elements and it seemed that the traditional leaders, whose authority had at first been challenged by young urban nationalists, were able to consolidate or recuperate their positions as a consequence of their participation in the movement². The vast majority of Iraqi Kurds supported Barzanî in these attitudes. His more leftist rivals were followed by a small minority only. The Kurdish movement thus contrasts with another liberation movement of a largely tribal people, that of the Dhofaris in Oman. This movement had the reputation of being very revolutionary, it was one of the favourites of the leftist press, as the Kurdish movement was that of the conservative British and American press. There were (and are) two obvious reasons for this difference: the former movement fought a reactionary, oppressive, pro-western regime, the second an authoritarian, reformist, oppressive, pro-soviet regime, and the leadership in both movements had completely different backgrounds. But did these two factors alone explain the difference? It seemed to me that there must also be internal reasons why the Kurdish movement in Iraq became more openly conservative during the years 1964/66³. To what degree did tribal organization and other "primordial loyalties" (Alavi 1973) prevent poor peasants from defending their own rights against tribal chieftains and landlords, and make them fight for interests not their own? Were these loyalties breaking down, and if so, how and under which circumstances? What precisely was the impact of imperialism on "traditional" Kurdish society, and could this explain the nature of the Kurdish movement? These and similar questions were at the back of my mind when I started preparing fieldwork among the Kurds (1973). I decided to study ("traditional") power relations at the local level and to investigate how Kurdish society in general, and especially the middle and poor peasantry's class consciousness are affected by increasing state control and incorporation into the world market. I also thought that a particular kind of religious organization, the dervish order (see Ch IV), would be an interesting phenomenon to investigate.

Two such orders have a quite widespread influence in Kurdistan. From what I had read and seen myself during previous trips these orders attracted mainly lower class Kurds, while several shaikhs, the leaders of these orders, have played important parts as charismatic nationalist leaders. Besides, islamic mysticism, also in its popular manifestations, interests me for its own sake as well.

The choice of a part of Kurdistan to carry out field research was restricted. It was foreseeable that early in 1974 a new war would break out in Iraqi Kurdistan, and I did not expect to be welcome there. Similarly, Turkey seemed uninviting. The Turkish sociologist Beşikçi had (in 1972) been sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment for having published a (strongly pro-Kurdish) sociological/politicological study based on research in Kurdistan (Beşikçi 1969)⁴. Only Persian Kurdistan seemed feasible. I had been there twice before, on short trips, and had selected an area that appeared to promise good possibilities to study at least some of the phenomena I was interested in. It also seemed far enough away from the Iraqi border to avoid problems that would be caused by the war in Iraq (in which Iran was clearly going to be involved - but I did not yet know to what extent). Research permission from the Iranian government did not come easily, however, and I went to Tehran to press for it (July, 1974). The first application was after some time rejected, but I was asked to change the research proposal and apply again. I was to do that several times until the ultimate refusal, in Nov. 1974. I spent my time in Tehran improving my Persian and Kurdish (I had discovered a Kurdish teahouse), and reading travelogues on Kurdistan in the well-furnished library of the British Institute of Persian Studies. Being impatient, however, I made short trips between the successive research proposals I submitted. I made two visits to Khorasan (Iran's northeastern province) where there is also a sizeable Kurdish population, one to Kurdistan proper. I encountered there a problem that I was to face on many later occasions. If one stays at a place for a

short time, it is almost inevitable that one has intensive contact with only the locally powerful and sees but little of the others. In the first place this is for the simple reason that the powerful want to know the foreigner and understand what he is doing; also, tradition demands that they occupy themselves with visitors, and a commoner who does so trespasses on his chieftain's privileges. Secondly, I was always apprehensive that common people might run into trouble for talking to me as long as I did not have a research permit. In this respect, talking to foreigners is much more acceptable for the rich and educated than for the others. I was aware that too much contact with the top of the social pyramid and too little with the bottom may result in considerable misrepresentation or at least in exaggerating the importance of "entrepreneurs" and other "strong men"⁵ in society. I could not however avoid spending a large part of my time with village headmen, tribal chieftains and shaikhs. Later I found a way to broaden my social contacts: I visited preferably villages where I had an acquaintance whom I had met elsewhere, usually a village teacher or a son of the village who studied in town. Thus coming as someone's friend rather than as a complete stranger I had much greater freedom to talk to whom I wished. Also when I stayed with shaikhs it was generally possible to talk to many of the less privileged, for people of all ranks come to visit the shaikhs regularly. Nevertheless, in my field notes the powerful and their viewpoints are no doubt overrepresented, and that is reflected in this book.

My visits to the Kurds of Khorasan first made me aware of the narrow interrelation of tribal organization and administrative policies of the state: tribal confederations here appeared to be originally created by the state, and the paramount chieftains that were accepted by the tribes had (at least for the past century) received official title from the shahs (see Ch. III, sec. i). At first I thought that this was an atypical situation; I started to read historical source materials in order to find out how this had come about. Later I discovered that most Kurdish tribes have long been affected by

surrounding states in similar ways. I was more likely to hear this kind of information from chieftains than from commoners, and, in fact, I collected much of it in this way. I supplemented my field research with a critical reading of primary and secondary sources of the past four centuries, which gave form to Ch. III of the present book.

On my trip to Persian Kurdistan I spent much time with shaikhs and dervishes; I was to do the same when I visited it again in 1975. Somewhat to my astonishment I found that there were many other travelers on the road, Kurds from Iraq who had come to Iran as refugees or on mysterious duty for "the Revolution", as the nationalist movement was usually called. In Rezaye, over-zealous SAVAK officials had tried to prevent my seeing the Iraqi Kurds, but when I stayed in minor towns such as Serdeşt, Bane and Merîwan it was impossible not to meet them: we usually shared the same hotel rooms. Thus I received my first impressions (apart from newspaper reports) of what was happening in Iraqi Kurdistan since the outbreak of the war. I became aware also of the extent of Iran's involvement in it, which was even more considerable than I had expected it to be. Several of the Iraqi Kurds whom I met suggested to me that I might be able to do research in the liberated areas of Iraqi Kurdistan if I applied for permission to the Kurdish representation in Tehran. This I did as soon as it had become clear that I would not receive permission for research in Iran. The Kurdish representatives were very courteous and helpful, and within a few weeks I received a positive answer. On Feb. 6 (1975) I crossed the border into Iraqi Kurdistan, still intending to carry out research as originally planned. It is true that, due to the war, my freedom of movement was to be restricted; on the other hand, this seemed a unique opportunity to study Kurdish society under conditions of war, a situation almost more "normal" than that of peace. And these would also be "favourable" conditions to study the problem of national versus tribal or class loyalties. Six weeks after my arrival I had

to leave again, however, together with all Kurdish fighters and a large number of the remaining civilians, because the Kurdish movement had collapsed. The shah, on whom the Kurdish movement had made itself completely dependent, had reached an agreement with the Iraqi regime, his traditional enemies, (sealed on March 6) and immediately stopped all support to the Kurds - with dramatic consequences. The Kurds saw themselves forced to either surrender to Iraqi troops or take refuge in Iran. Some considered continuing partisan resistance; the Kurdish leadership forbade them to do so. Villages fled en masse to Iran; by March 20 almost the entire Balik area (where I stayed then) was evacuated.

The six weeks that I spent in Iraqi Kurdistan left a deeper impression on me than any other period of my fieldwork. Every day I was confronted with human misery, despair, sickness, death; when the collapse set in, many conflicts within Kurdish society and the Kurdish movement that had until then been carefully hidden came out into the open. It taught me much about Kurdish society, but it was a traumatic experience - I was emotionally strongly involved. After I had returned to Iran, too, I stayed in narrow contact with refugees, and had long interviews with dissidents who now were ready to tell me things about which they had previously kept silence.

As a consequence of these events I had to reconsider my plans for further research. It had become apparent that I would not be able to spend a considerable length of time at any one place, for want of proper permission. On the other hand, having spent short periods among different tribes in different parts of Kurdistan, I felt that my knowledge of the situation at one place enabled me to better understand that at other places. It seemed a logical decision therefore to visit a number of other parts of Kurdistan and survey the variety of forms of social organization and such processes of social change as I could detect. I would do that mainly in Turkish Kurdistan, both because it is the largest part of Kurdistan, and because of the relatively large freedom travellers have there: if local authorities permitted me to stay I would probably not run into

serious problems. My sponsors agreed to the idea, and I spent the following period (June 1975 - Aug. 1976), with one interruption because of a hepatitis I contracted, in different parts of Turkish, Syrian and Persian Kurdistan. At most places I could not observe directly many of the things that I was interested in. Interviews therefore constitute a larger proportion of my field material than, I think, is usual in anthropological fieldwork. As my interest is with social change, a large part of the interviews dealt with situations and events in the past. Most informants were, however, imprecise as to dates and concrete historical contexts. This is another reason why I felt it necessary to supplement my fieldwork with extensive reading of written sources. A third reason is that comparison of my own observations with those of previous visitors of the same districts might shed new light on both. An obvious problem in the approach I adopted is that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to find really comparable data from different times and/or places. Due to the short time I stayed in most places, I found it generally impossible to collect quantitative data. Similarly, the unstructured interviews that were part of my method gave me much material at each place, but never exactly parallel to that collected at other places. The interviews were guided by my informants' interests as well as by mine. On the other hand, it was precisely by not leading the interviews too strictly that I got really interesting, unexpected material. My own views were quite significantly changed by my informants (be it not always in the directions they wished). It does not need further explanation that all the things that I observed were even less comparable. It is rather unlikely to witness, for instance, conflicts of the same kind in more than one place. The same may be said for the historical sources. The many tomes that I read my way through contained many gems for the collector of curiosities, but relatively little that I could use. In many cases the kind of material that I was looking for, in order to compare a present state of affairs with that in the past, was lacking.

This study, then, is largely an exploratory one. Only a fraction of the material that I collected could be brought together in a more or less coherent framework, relevant to the questions that I started out with. I do not attempt yet to answer these questions, but offer material on the basis of which such questions may be better formulated.

Subject of this study

This book deals with what Alavi (1973) calls "primordial loyalties". Alavi introduced this term to describe group ties such as kinship and caste that prevent poor peasants perceiving class contradictions and that make them act against their objective interests. In the Pakistani case he describes these loyalties are those of kinship, caste, and especially patron-client ties. In Kurdistan other, but equally primordial loyalties profoundly affect politics. Primordial though these loyalties are, they operate within the context of the most important conflicts of modern world politics. The struggle between USA and USSR and the conflicts related to the "oil crisis" affected Kurdistan more directly than they affected my own country, the Netherlands. This is not a new situation, either. It would therefore be naive to study these primordial loyalties without reference to the external factors that influence and modify them.

The primordial loyalties of Kurdistan are firstly those to the family and tribe, and to the tribal chieftain (agha). Equally strong are religious loyalties, especially those to shaikhs, the popular mystics or saints who are also leaders of the religious brotherhoods (dervish orders). Strong efforts have been made to make a breach in these loyalties, but largely in vain. In Turkey it was at first Atatürk who tried to break the power of aghas and shaikhs by measures from above, while over the past decade a generation of young socialists attempted to mobilize the peasantry along class lines. Nevertheless, Kurdish peasants and herdsmen continue to follow their aghas and shaikhs. In elections the successful

candidates are almost always aghas and shaikhs or their men. Even where the relation between tribesmen and agha has become more openly exploitative, and the exploitation is no longer compensated for by the agha's usefulness, loyalty to him persists for a long time. Capitalism is often said to be the most powerful agent in the breaking up such ties of loyalty; but it certainly does not do so immediately upon emerging! On the other hand, it may be apt to stress the fact that the existence of primordial loyalties, and their apparent ubiquity, does not preclude the functioning of other loyalties. And conversely, when new loyalties such as those of nation and class, emerge, the primordial ones do not suddenly cease to function. Rather, these different loyalties interact with and mutually modify each other. It depends on the concrete situation which loyalty will be most forcefully asserted⁶.

At a political meeting of immigrant workers from Turkey I talked with a small group of people who were active in a socialist workers' union. They were quite class-conscious men. When I heard that they were from eastern Turkey I switched from Turkish to Kurdish. Immediately the discussion became more cordial; we were temporarily an in-group from which our Turkish friends were excluded. After some time I told them that I am friended with an influential shaikh from their district, expecting that this would provoke them. To my astonishment, however, my standing with them rose even more: although they were not very religious, they associated themselves emotionally with this shaikh.

Kurdish nationalism and the tribal and religious loyalties stand in an ambivalent relation to each other. On the one hand, the first Kurdish nationalists were from the ranks of the traditional authorities, shaikhs and aghas. It was, in fact, precisely because of the primordial loyalties to these leaders and to the values which they embodied that the nationalist movement acquired its mass character. On the other hand, the perpetual conflicts and rivalries between these traditional leaders prevented and still prevents the Kurds from really uniting. The very fact that a certain chieftain participated in the nationalist movement was often enough reason for his rivals to oppose it, and most commoners followed their chieftains without questioning. Even in Iraqi Kurdistan in 1974,

when nationalist sentiment was quite general, and when a decisive war between the Kurdish nationalist movement and the Iraqi regime broke out, it was in many cases the chieftains' position that decided whether a tribe would join the Kurdish movement, try to remain neutral, or actively oppose it.

This book, as I said, deals in the first place with the primordial loyalties. I describe tribes and dervish orders as I found them functioning in Kurdistan, or as I reconstructed their functioning in the past from interviews and literature and I try to explain some of their characteristics. Secondly, I try to establish how they were and are influenced by external factors, and to trace how Kurdish nationalism developed in interaction with these primordial loyalties. After a first chapter with some general information, in Chapter II the structure of the Kurdish tribe is described, at first in the abstract, then with descriptions of specific tribes of different degrees of complexity. The role of the chieftains is studied, and it is shown how leadership and conflicts are closely interrelated. The importance of shaikhs is also connected with tribal conflict: they are in an ideal position to mediate in such conflicts, and their role as conflict resolvers in turn increases their political powers. Ch. IV deals with the shaikhs and with the dervish orders of which they are leaders. Both because so little has been written about these orders and because of my own fascination with them, I describe much more than only those aspects that have political relevance: philosophy and ritual receive much attention. I propose an explanation for the rapid rise of one order in the past century, and the prominent role it has since played in Kurdish nationalism. The shaikhs' association with the Divine represents one external source of worldly power, another one is constituted by surrounding states. Many aspiring chieftains derived power in their society from alliance with or vassalage to a neighbouring state. In Chapter III I present historical material to illustrate my thesis that the present Kurdish tribes are not auto-

nomous units but are, in a way, creations of the surrounding states. Elements from these chapters are brought together in Chapter V, where an important Kurdish nationalist revolt is discussed. Primordial loyalties, loyalty to the nation (still an ambiguous concept at that time), opposition of peasants to economical exploitation by another tribe, and relations of the state (i.c. Turkey) with tribes are seen together in operation.

With its concentration on the primordial loyalties, this book cannot and does not pretend to give a comprehensive view of Kurdish society. Important aspects such as urbanization and migration, activities of political parties and trade unions, and what is even more important, economical relations are not discussed. The topics that are discussed here are not sufficient, but certainly necessary for an understanding of the political events in Kurdistan during the past decades.

A note on the written sources

For all chapters of this book I have made extensive use of written materials; the bibliography and the notes refer to these sources. A short remark might be apt on those that I frequently used. In the first place there are the primary historical sources written by oriental authors. Two very important ones are the *Sharafname* and Evliya Chelebi's book of travels (*Seyyahatname*). The *Sharafname* was written in the last decade of the 16th century, in Persian, by Şeref Xan, former ruler of the Kurdish emirate (princedom) of Bitlîs, after he had abdicated in favour of his son. It pretends to be a history of the Kurds; in fact, it is the history of their ruling families. It is an extremely erudite work, apparently Şeref Xan (who had travelled much) had spent a lifetime collecting the information for it. The detailed accounts give a vivid picture of the political activities of Kurdish rulers and of their dealing with the powerful states around them. A French translation (by F. B. Charmoy) was published in St. Petersburg in 1868-1875, with

a long introduction and critical notes by the translator. I did not have this edition at my disposal all the time, and used instead the text edition published in Tehran by M. Abbasi and/or the Turkish translation by M. Bozarslan. References are to Charmoy's translation (except where explicitly mentioned), quotations however are directly translated from the Persian edition.

The Seyyahatname is one of the major sources on the political, economical and cultural life in the Ottoman Empire of the 17th century. Evliya was a good observer and had wide interests. His travel notes on Kurdistan (in vols. 4 and 5) provide a wealth of information.

A first printed edition of the Seyyahatname appeared in Istanbul (1896 - 1938), 8 volumes in Arabic script, the last two in Latin script. The first volumes especially were seriously mutilated by Sultan Abdulhamid's censors. No better edition is yet available. Later two simplified editions in modernized Turkish appeared. One of these (edited by Z. Danişman) is extremely poor, the other one (edited by T. Temelkuran and N. Aktaş) follows the first printed edition closely. My references are to this edition; for quotations and the precise terms Evliya used I consulted the first edition.

An important secondary source on Ottoman history that contains relevant information on Kurdistan is Von Hammer's *Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches*. The author used a large corpus of primary sources that he had collected as manuscripts. In several respects it is still unsurpassed. There is a considerable number of scholarly studies dealing with Ottoman history, but surprisingly few refer to Kurdistan. Of outstanding quality is the article ("Kurden") that Minorsky contributed to the first edition of the *Encyclopedia of Islam*.

Another class of primary sources are travel reports. Of these, there are enough to fill a library, and I have not been able to read all of them. Most useful I found those by Rich, **Layard** and Fraser.

When, in the First World War, the British occupied Iraq, the task of setting up administration in the provinces and establishing and

maintaining the Pax Britannica fell into the hands of Political Officers and Assistant Political Officers, several of whom were orientalists. Some of them published books or articles about their experiences, which are interesting reading. Edmonds' book (1957) is by far the best of the genre; he was an able linguist and a competent observer, and he acquired a profound knowledge of Kurdistan. Raw material of a similar kind is contained in the British Foreign Office files at the Public Records Office: Consular dispatches, field reports from officials, etc. I consulted the FO 371 files for Turkey, Iraq and Persia for the years 1917 - 1938. The last category of useful written sources are the local histories (usually written by local people). The ones most frequently used are those of Firat (1970) and Dersimi (1952).

A note on transcription of Oriental words

Terms and proper names in four Middle Eastern Languages occur in this book. Trying to find a consistent and satisfactory transcription system for all of them is an unrewarding task. Northern Kurdish and modern Turkish are both written in the Latin alphabet, and I prefer to spell names and the Occasional quotation in these languages as the Kurds and Turks write them themselves. This transcription would however make many well-known Arabic or Persian words unrecognizable. I have therefore refrained from complete consistency: Arabic, Persian and Ottoman Turkish words are transcribed according to a system more "natural" to the English reader. Diacritical signs are omitted; three sounds not occurring in English are spelled q, gh and kh.

q represents an unvoiced guttural stop (resembling a /k/, but articulated far back, in the throat),
gh a voiced guttural fricative (resembling the French "rolled r"),
kh its unvoiced variant (as in the German or Dutch "acht").

The Kurdish alphabet consists of the following letters:

a, b, c, ç, d, e, ê, f, g, h, i, î, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s,
ş, t, u, û, v, w, x, x̣, y, z.

Some have an other pronunciation than in English:

a is always long (as in "father")

c is pronounced as the /j/ of "jam"

ç as the /ch/ of "cheese"

e represents several sounds: the /e/ of "bet", the /a/ of "bad"
and the short continental /a/, as in French "chat"

ê approximates the vowel in "rate", but more the French /é/

i is a neutral vowel, as the second vowel in "ample" or in "amber"

î is pronounced as the /ee/ of "beet"

j is pronounced as in French (the English /j/ is written as c)

ş is pronounced as /sh/

u is pronounced as a very short French /u/

û is pronounced as /oo/ of "boot"

x and x̣ represent the unvoiced and voiced guttural fricatives (the
/kh/ and /gh/ referred to above)

Kurdish terms are written according to Kurdish orthography, except
in the case of a few common terms that are well-known outside
specialist circles; thus I write "shaikh" instead of "şêx", "agha"
instead of "axa". With proper names, however, I maintain the Kurdish
spelling: "Şêx Seîd", "Hesen Ax̣a".

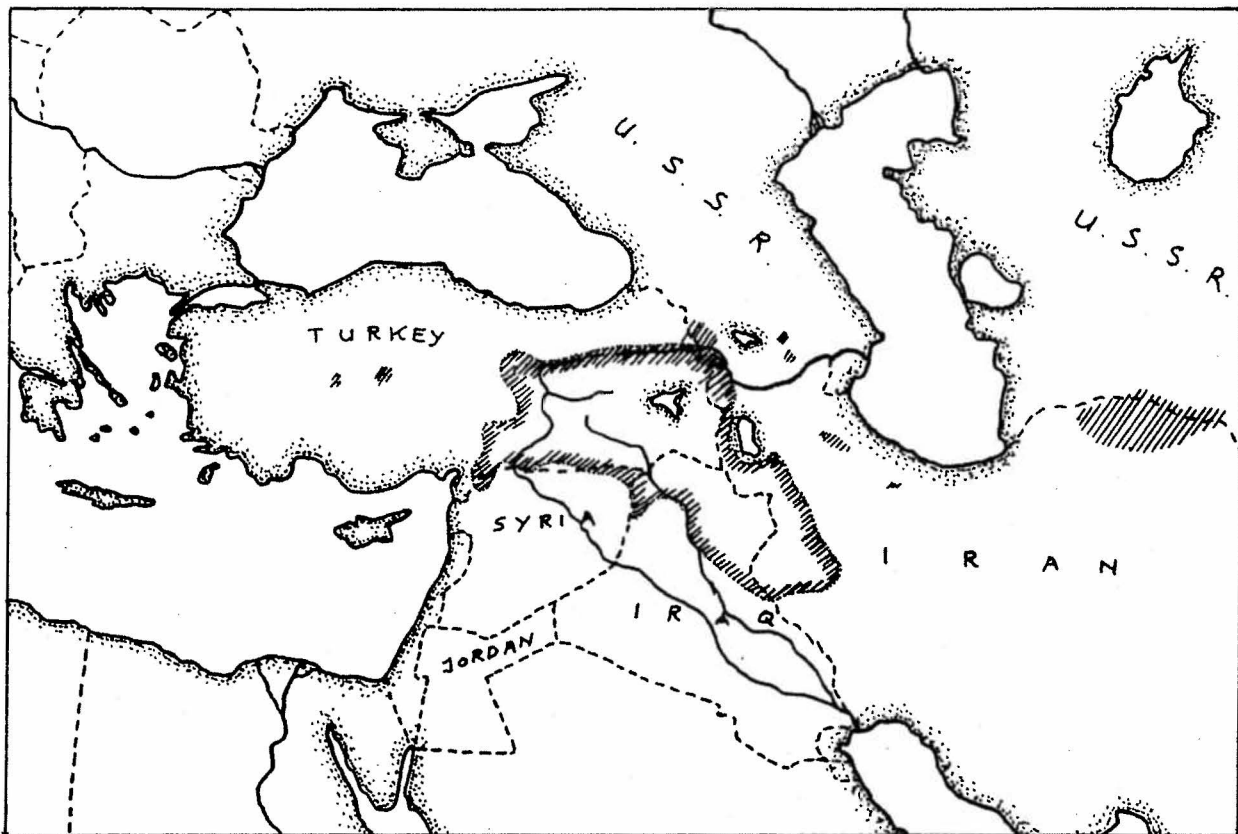
CHAPTER I

General Information on Kurdistan



I. a

Geography

Kurdistan (i.e. "the land of the Kurds") is a strategically located region of the Middle East, comprising important parts of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. There has never been a state of that name. In the Ottoman Empire the name of Kurdistan was used to denote only a part of the entire territory inhabited by Kurds (the province of Diyarbekir); similarly Iran has a province called Kordestan, which comprises approximately a third of the Kurdish-inhabited territories of that country. Map 2 gives a delimitation of the area where Kurds constitute a majority of the population. It is based on a map presented to the United Nations by Kurdish nationalists in 1948. I found this map correct wherever I had the opportunity to check it¹. When I speak of Kurdistan in this book I mean the territory thus delimited. Many Kurds live outside Kurdistan thus defined. There is a large Kurdish enclave in Iran's northeastern province of Khorasan (several hundreds of thousands) and the contiguous parts of Soviet Turkestan; there are other important enclaves in Soviet Armenia and



Map 2. The Kurds in the Middle East

----- international boundaries
 area inhabited by a Kurdish majority
 sizeable Kurdish enclaves outside Kurdistan proper

Azerbaijan, and in western Turkey.

The heart of Kurdistan consists of forbidding mountains that have always deterred invading armies and provided a refuge to the persecuted and to bandits. The eastern or Kurdish Taurus and the Zagros chain form its backbone, having a northwest-southeastern direction. On the southwestern flank a large number of parallel, often very high and steep folds gradually lower toward the Mesopotamian plains. To the north and northeast the landscape changes into a steppe-like plateau and highlands. The high plateau north of the gigantic Lake Van, where Euphrat and Tigris have their sources, used to be called the Armenian plateau because the population used to be largely Armenian; Kurds have lived there only the last few centuries. Since the deportation and murdering of many Armenians (in the First World War), and the escape of most others, this

plateau too is mainly inhabited by Kurds. The lowland plains in the south, and the highland plateaus in the east form a natural boundary of Kurdistan. This reflects the fact that the Kurds are superior mountain warriors, whilst their Arab neighbours in the south and the Azeri Turks in the east are masters of war in the plains. In the northwest there is no such sharp boundary: Kurdish and Turkish groups merge gradually. The southeastern boundary of Kurdistan is rather arbitrary: the Lur and Bakhtiyari tribes that live there share many cultural traits with the Kurds, and many Kurdish nationalists consider them as Kurds. I include only those Lur tribes that speak the Lekî dialect, who generally consider themselves as Kurds, while the others do not.

Due to the continental climate and the high elevation, Kurdistan has extremely cold winters. Much snow falls in December through February, isolating many mountain villages. As late as April, communications may be seriously hampered by heavy snowfall. It is these severe winters that are in part to blame for the rapid deforestation of Kurdistan: every winter many trees are cut down and burnt for heating (kerosene is cheaply available in Iran and Iraq only; but even there, wood is still much used as fuel). Another evil-doer is the goat, who kills shrub and young trees by eating their green parts. From travellers' reports it is clear that a century ago much of Kurdistan's mountainous core was forest-clad. Little of these woods remains. The results are obvious: erosion and loss of fertility of the valleys because the water is no longer retained and then more evenly distributed by forests.

Kurdistan lies in the earthquake belt, every year parts of Kurdistan are struck by earthquakes. Recent serious quakes occurred at Lice (NE of Diyarbakir) in July 1975, and at Muradiye (north of Van) in November 1976; both caused many deaths, numbers of 4,000 and 10,000 resp. circulated in the press. In many cases, poor communications and political factors prevent aid from reaching the stricken areas

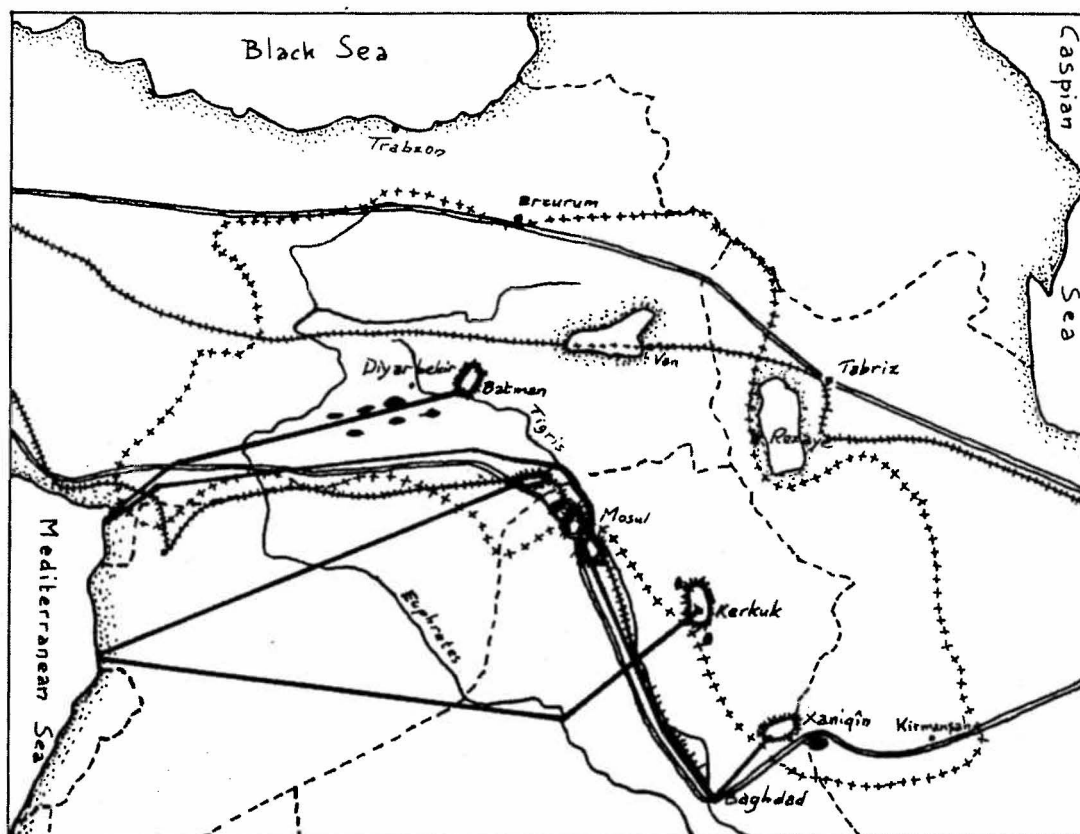
in time or at all, which increases the number of victims dramatically.

Thus, in Muradiye, many more people died after the quake than in it. Forced to stay out in the open because the tents that were sent did not reach their destination. many literally froze to death. Foodstuff and other aid goods that were sent "disappeared" before they reached the earthquake area. Villagers saw themselves forced to sell their animals because they could not feed them, so that many survivors of the catastrophe were economically ruined.

I. b Geopolitical situation

The inaccessibility of Kurdistan and the fierce warring capacities of its inhabitants have always made it a natural frontier of the empires that emerged around it (see Ch. III). None of these empires could maintain its sovereignty in more than a part of Kurdistan only. As a consequence, Kurdistan became divided by the political borderlines of surrounding states. Wars between the Ottoman and Persian Empires fixed the present boundary of Iran with Turkey and Iraq. British and French conquests in the First World War cut Syria and Iraq away from the Ottoman Empire (see Ch. V). These inter-state boundaries cut Kurdistan into four parts, often cross-cutting tribal territories. I shall refer to these parts as Turkish, Persian, Iraqi and Syrian Kurdistan. Another important borderline, which does not cut through Kurdistan proper but touches on it, is that of the USSR. The nearness of this border made Kurdistan an object of concern to both Soviet leaders and those of the capitalist world - a fact which had important consequences for the history of Kurdistan in this century. A country that does not have a direct border with Kurdistan, but has an obvious and great interest in it, is Israel. In times of Kurdish-Arabic confrontation the Kurds seem a natural ally for it. From 1967, maybe earlier still, Iraqi Kurdish leader Barzanî received financial aid from Israel.

There are two overland (car) routes from Europe into Asia (apart from those through the USSR). Both pass through Kurdistan. Also the important rail routes Istanbul-Tehran and Istanbul-Baghdad pass through Kurdistan (see map 3).



- producing oil field
- proven oil reserves
- oil pipe lines
- international roads
- international rail routes
- inter-state borders
- boundary of Kurdistan

Map 3 Oil installations and international transport routes in Kurdistan

Very important oil deposits are exploited in Mosul, Kerkûk and Xaniqîn (it is not accidental that all three are in Iraq: they were the very reason why Great Britain created the political entity Iraq). Minor deposits are exploited in Rumeylan (NE Syria) and Batman (Turkey) (see map 3). Other minerals found in Kurdistan in significant quantities are chrome, copper, iron, coal and lignite.

I. c Population

Estimates of the total number of Kurds vary widely. In population censuses Kurds are either not counted separately, or a very narrow definition of "Kurd" is employed, so that only a fraction of the Kurds are counted as such (e.g. only those who do not speak Turkish at all, but only Kurdish). Thus, the 1955 census in Turkey found 1.5 million Kurdish speakers on a total of 24 million inhabitants²,

which was less than half the number of Kurds living in Turkey then. Later statistics made no mention of Kurds. In the other countries the situation is similar. It is therefore not possible to give more or less accurate figures. The following estimates seem to be the most reasonable.

Turkey: From detailed census results (per sub-province) for 1970

I calculated that there were 5.7 million Kurds living in Turkish Kurdistan. As the population of Turkey had in 1975 increased by 13%, that number may have increased to 6.5 million³.

This is the lower limit of the total number of Kurds in Turkey. Many Kurds of Turkey live outside Kurdistan. Vanli (n.d.) estimated their number as 1.5 million in 1965 (corresponding to 2.2 millions in 1975). Moreover, Kurds claim that many people in Kurdistan remain uncounted in these censuses, which is not unlikely, given the census method⁴. 7.5 million Kurds in Turkey in 1975 may be a reasonable, even a somewhat conservative estimate.

Iraq: I do not know of recent reliable statistics. In the censuses of 1922-24 and 1935, when the number of Kurds was probably counted reliably, they constituted c. 23% of Iraq's total population⁵. This percentage may have somewhat decreased as a result of many years of war in Iraqi Kurdistan. As Iraq's total population numbered ca. 10.5 million in 1975, I estimate the number of Kurds - reluctantly - at 2 to 2.5 million.

Iran: The censuses of 1956 and 1966 did not count Kurds separately.

However, some 10% of the population were registered as sunni muslims⁶; this implies that Kurds constitute over 10% of the population. For, apart from the Kurds, only the not very numerous Turkomans and a few even smaller minority groups in eastern Iran are sunnis, while on the other hand, many Kurds of Kirmanşah province, and all Kurds of Khorasan are Shiites. The estimate of 3 million Kurds, as made in the semi-official Almanac of Iran⁷ (or 3.5 million in 1975, due to natural increase) thus is acceptable as a lower limit of the total number. The real number is probably higher. Vanli (n.d.) puts forward the number of 4.5 million for

1965 (corresponding to 5.8 million in 1975).

Syria: Most sources agree that there are approximately a half million Kurds in Syria.

USSR: Estimates vary from 60,000 to 100,000.

These numbers may be summarized in the following table:

Population estimates for 1975

	total population	Kurds	%
Turkey	40.2 million	7.5 million	19%
Iraq	10.5 million	2 to 2.5 million	23%
Iran	34.0 million	3.5 million	10%
Syria	ca. 6 million	0.5 million	8%
USSR		<u>0.1 million</u>	
Total		13.5 to 14 million	

I. d Economies: peasant farming, transhumant semi-nomadism, pastoral nomadism

In contrast to the image many people have of the Kurds, only a very small fraction of their number are nomads. The majority are cultivators, although many also keep a few animals. Common crops are wheat, barley and lentils (staple food), tomatoes, melons, cucumbers and onions; greens and fruits differ from area to area. In the mountains, only little is produced above subsistence level; in the plains, a surplus of cereals is produced. The plains of Iraqi and Syrian Kurdistan are the granaries of Iraq and Syria, respectively. Important cash crops are tobacco (especially east of Diyarbekir and in northern Iraq), and cotton (introduced only recently in some parts of Turkish Kurdistan).

As a general rule (but one with many exceptions) it may be stated that peasants in the mountains own the land on which they work, while in the plains the land is owned by someone else, often a town-dwelling absentee landlord. The peasants of the plains were until recently (the 1950's or 1960's) often share-croppers, i.e. they cultivated independently and paid the landowner a fixed share of

the crop (varying from 10 to 80%, depending on circumstances). Others were agricultural workers, who received a small fee for working under supervision of the landlord or his bailiff. With the gradual introduction of agricultural machinery (which started in the 1950's), there is a tendency to revoke share-cropping arrangements. Share-croppers thus become agricultural workers, who can find employment for a fraction of the year only. This encourages seasonal or permanent migration. Other factors lead to the same consequence in mountain villages. Land is scarce here, and as a result of islamic inheritance rules (which give all sons an equal share in their father's possessions) it is broken up into many tiny plots, too small to support a family. Deteriorating terms of trade further aggravate the peasants' lot: for their necessities (clothing, tools) or desirable items (a rifle, a radio) they have to pay ever more in terms of produce. Lack of work and need of cash compel many families to send one or more members to areas of intensive cultivation or to industrial growth centres, as seasonal workers or permanent migrants. Both are situated outside Kurdistan. Prospects for improving the mountain villages' economy are as yet not very hopeful. Most cash crops can only be sold on regional markets. Poor communications make transportation costs relatively high, so that they cannot compete in other markets. There are no local processing plants. One crop, tobacco, could be an exception. Soil and climate conditions are favourable, and Kurdish tobacco is much in demand. However, tobacco is a state monopoly in the countries concerned, and it is permitted to cultivate it in a few areas only.

In the mountain and hill villages ploughing is still done with the wooden plough (with iron ploughshare), drawn by oxen (or, occasionally, a mule) and reaping with sickle or scythe. In the plains, tractors and harvesters are almost everywhere in use. Their arrival has changed the relations of production considerably. Small and middle landowners generally cannot afford to buy them. Big landowners can, but a typical phenomenon is the urban entrepreneur who buys the machinery and hires it out to landowners in exchange for a percentage (8 or 10%) of the crop. Frequently such an entrepreneur

is also a money-lender and obliges the landowner who borrows money from him to rent out his land to him (in return for 50% of the crop) until the debt has been paid back. The work that remains for the former share-croppers is little indeed.

The villagers' animals (mainly sheep, also goats, occasionally cattle) are herded by young children or by paid shepherds. The fully sedentary villages have only small flocks, as there is not enough pasture for large ones.

There are, however, villages where a more truly mixed economy is practised. The flocks are larger, and in spring the entire village (or a large part) sets off, with the sheep, for summer pastures, higher in the mountains, where they live under the tent. The distance from village to summer pastures varies from a few hours to a few days. When work has to be done on the village lands, the men return to the village, but rejoin the tents with their families as soon as possible. This restricted form of (semi-) nomadism is called transhumance. When in this book I speak of semi-nomads, I mean people who practice this transhumance⁸. Typically, villages with this economy lie rather low, in the foothills or the flatter mountains (not in the plains). Summers can be oppressively hot there, and people say that they go to the mountain pastures (called zozan in the northern, kûhistan in southern dialects) not only for the animals but also because of the freshness and cleanness of the air. Also villagers who do not own any sheep prefer to accompany the others to the zozan. In former days also the inhabitants of towns such as Cezîre and Amêdî used to spend the hot summer months in higher lying camps where they erected tents or huts made of foliage. Fully nomadic tribes are becoming rare. Many formerly nomadic tribes have settled (voluntarily or under government compulsion⁹), while of the tribes that are still nomadic many individual members have become sedentary. In Iraq only some Herkî (winter pastures in the plain of Erbil) are still nomadic, in Iran the Qelxanî and sections of a few other tribes of the same district (west of Kirmanşah, near the Iraqi border). In Turkey there are several nomadic

tribes; one group of tribes have their winter quarters in the district of Cezîre (Cizre), another in that of Urfa-Viranşehir. Their summer pastures are in the Kurdish Taurus (south of Lake Van) and in the mountainous districts NE of Diyarbekir¹⁰.

These tribes' nomadism is rather restricted: they spend all winter at one place and move in spring to the first summer pastures. Apparently the majority of tribes have two or at most three mountain pastures, which they use consecutively. The nomads whom I visited had two different tents: a heavy, warm and luxurious one on the winter pastures (which remained standing there around the year) and a lighter tent for travelling. Both are of the same black tent type encountered throughout the Middle East - with one minor difference¹¹. Some nomads have built a house on or near the winter pastures. Thus the difference between nomads and semi-nomads is not a very sharp one. However, nomads do not, in general, condescend to agriculture unless forced to. The tribe I visited (the Teyyan) owns arable land near their winter quarters, but this is cultivated by share-cropping peasants who do not belong to the tribe. Nomads also migrate over larger distances than the semi-nomads, and own much larger flocks. Semi-nomadism, due to the restricted area of pasture land, apparently does not allow large flocks. On the other hand, pastoral nomadism is only a viable economy when the household owns more than a minimal number of sheep (estimated as 80 - 200, depending on other conditions).

Nomads have frequent trading contacts with villagers and urban merchants. In the past these were supplemented by raiding, a cheaper way of acquiring desired goods. They may sell some cheese and butter locally, but these are not much in demand and prices are low. The important cash earners are wool and animals sold for slaughter. They sell both to middlemen, who give them only a fraction of the prices paid in town.

I. e Other economic activities: crafts/industries and trade.

Development and underdevelopment

Even under the most primitive conditions people use artifacts that they cannot (or at least do not) produce themselves: some of the clothes, parts of the house, agricultural tools, kitchen utensils, luxury items, etc. Until the beginning of this century Kurdish villages were self-sufficient in most artifacts: they were produced either in every household or by economic specialists in the village (or in a nearby village). Most of the specialized crafts were practised by the christian and jewish minorities in Kurdistan. The self-sufficiency of the villages was never complete, there was always a certain degree of trade contact with the towns of Kurdistan, and through these with a world-wide system of trade. Diyarbekir, Bitlîs, Van, Erbil, Mosul, Sine and many minor towns were centres of craftsmanship and trade (see for example the description of Bitlîs in the 17th century, Ch. III, section h). As a rule, the population of these towns was largely non-Kurdish. Beside being centres of such economic activities, the towns were (and are) also the seats of government (governors, law-courts, police and army) and centres of religious learning. Typical urban crafts were those of the weaponsmith, the jeweller, the tanner. Until the beginning of this century, however, contacts between village and town were relatively unimportant, and most artifacts were locally made. Two factors contributed to the rapid decay or even disappearance of crafts in this century. The first of these is the disappearance of many (if not most) craftsmen. As said above, many of the crafts were practised by the christian and jewish minorities. During the First World War, mass deportation and massacres of the Armenians, which were the official policy of the Ottoman government, resulted in the general persecution of all christians and their evacuation from Kurdistan. Especially in Turkish Kurdistan, very few christians remain. Most jews left Kurdistan for Israel soon after its establishment. There were only few Kurds who possessed the skills necessary to take the place of these craftsmen who had disappeared.

The fine-woven woollen material out of which the traditional

costume of central Kurdistan is made (şal û şapik) is still produced exclusively by the few remaining Armenian communities. The christian minorities also possessed superior agricultural skills. Kurds who have taken their villages are often not capable of maintaining or repairing their terraced mountain plots and complicated irrigation systems. This strikes the eye especially in central Kurdistan.

A second contributing factor is improved (international) communications. As early as the 1830's steam transportation was opened on the Black sea, and cheap European products started to flood the Anatolian markets. Late in the 19th century German companies started the construction of the Istanbul-Baghdad railroad, which greatly facilitated transportation from and to western Kurdistan (which was reached early this century). The cheap foreign goods that became available - at first in the large Anatolian towns, and from there gradually penetrating Kurdistan - started to replace locally made ones¹². The construction of motorable roads accelerated this process, the arrival of synthetic materials (after W. W. II) speeded it even further up. Earthenware was replaced by metal, this in turn by plastic; handwoven materials made place for cheap mechanical weaves, etc. Moreover, many new items were introduced that came to be considered necessities.

Thus, crafts and craftsmanship gradually disappeared from the villages. In the towns of Kurdistan too, some crafts have disappeared or are disappearing, while others were modified and turned into simple mechanized industries (textiles, leather, metalwork). Even these industries, however, find it increasingly difficult to compete with more advanced industries in western Turkey, Baghdad, Tehran or abroad. Lack of infrastructure, high transportation costs and other factors discriminate against them. In the struggle for survival these industries are compelled to exploit the workers even more severely than happens in the centre. Social legislation is evaded on a large scale.

These developments led to a proliferation of middlemen. Itinerant merchants bring razor blades from Germany, small gadgets from China, Hongkong, Japan or India, textiles from India, Japan or England, oil lamps from China, soap, biscuits and sweets made in the capital

and many other products to the villages. Usually they have bought these from an urban shopkeeper, who bought them from a big merchant, who bought them wholesale in the capital from an importer, who ordered them from abroad. Sometimes even more middlemen are involved. Products from the villages reach the large towns through a similar chain of middlemen, each of whom takes a high percentage as his profit. Another type of middleman often seen in provincial capitals (in Turkey and Iran) is the agent of a foreign company. He opens a shop with the company's aid (co-financing, expertise, etc.) and undertakes to sell only that company's products. For the agent, it is a safe and profitable investment, for the company a good method of eliminating (local as well as foreign) competition. Trade is by and large replacing these towns' previous industrial function.

These are aspects of a process that deserves the name of underdevelopment rather than that of development. Industrial progress is blocked. Kurdistan has become strongly dependent on the centres of the states that have incorporated it, and through these on the industrial centres of the world.

The structure of the communication network clearly illustrates this. It is not a network grown out of economic contacts, but an unnatural one, constructed by the administrative needs of centralizing governments. Villages are not connected with each other (except by foot-paths) but with district capitals and through these with provincial capitals and the state capitals. From any given village in Kurdistan it is easier to reach Amsterdam than most other Kurdish villages.

Villagers who want to visit relatives in another village some 100 km distant have often to travel to their district and provincial capital, then to another provincial and another district capital before reaching the village, thus covering 200 or 300 km.

This network made communications very cumbersome for the Kurdish nationalist forces in Iraq, as provincial capitals remained in the hands of the Iraqi government. Thus Badînan was virtually isolated in winter, resulting in famine. Similarly, guerrilla fighters moving from the Silêmanî

district to the Balik district further north passed through Iranian territory (district and provincial capitals!) because there were no good tracks by-passing the district capitals of Iraqi Kurdistan.

Thus the situation arose that many Kurds who had never seen more than a few neighbouring villages are working in Istanbul, Germany and Holland now. They left their villages because of land scarcity and lack of work. In Kurdistan itself there is no industry capable of employing them, therefore they went (and many want to follow them) to the industrial centres and contribute to their development. Ironically, some Kurdish capital goes the same way. Rich people invest their money in land (if they can get it, but it is scarce), agricultural machinery, commerce, or in industrial capital in the centre. Thus, there is both a Kurdish proletariat and a Kurdish industrial capital, but both are outside Kurdistan. This has, of course, its effects on Kurdish nationalism. Kurdish workers in Istanbul, for instance, are more likely to unite with Turkish workers on a class-based platform than rally to vague nationalist appeals. On the other hand, the underdevelopment of Kurdistan makes the "primordial loyalties" more enduring, so that these continue to affect the Kurdish nationalist movement.

Not only the industrial growth centres (outside Kurdistan), also the towns of Kurdistan have grown. Whereas formerly their population was in majority non-Kurdish, Kurds now nearly everywhere exceed other ethnic groups in numbers. Most immigrants attempt to earn a living in the "informal" sector: as hawkers, shoeshiners, petty traders, etc. Others, with a school diploma, found employ as (ill-paid) petty officials. The rate of unemployment is high, and these towns attract few new migrants, while others leave, so that in most the population is becoming fairly stable.

I. f

Language

Kurdish is an Iranian language, belonging to the northwestern or southwestern group within that family¹³. There are a large number of different dialects that may be classified into a number of more

or less distinct groups that are mutually not or incompletely understandable:

1. the northern/northwestern dialects. These are usually called Kurmancî (a complication is that also some southern tribes call themselves Kurmanc and their language therefore Kurmancî, although it is very different from the northern dialects).
2. the southern dialects, often called Soranî dialects (properly speaking, Soranî is only one of the many dialects of this group).

These dialects have retained a peculiar construction of the past tenses of transitive verbs also occurring in Middle Persian¹⁴.

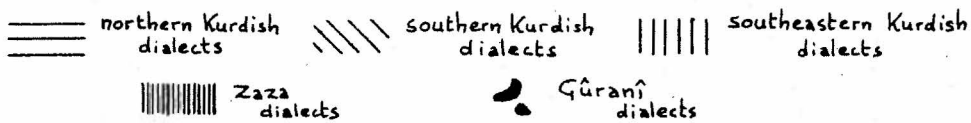
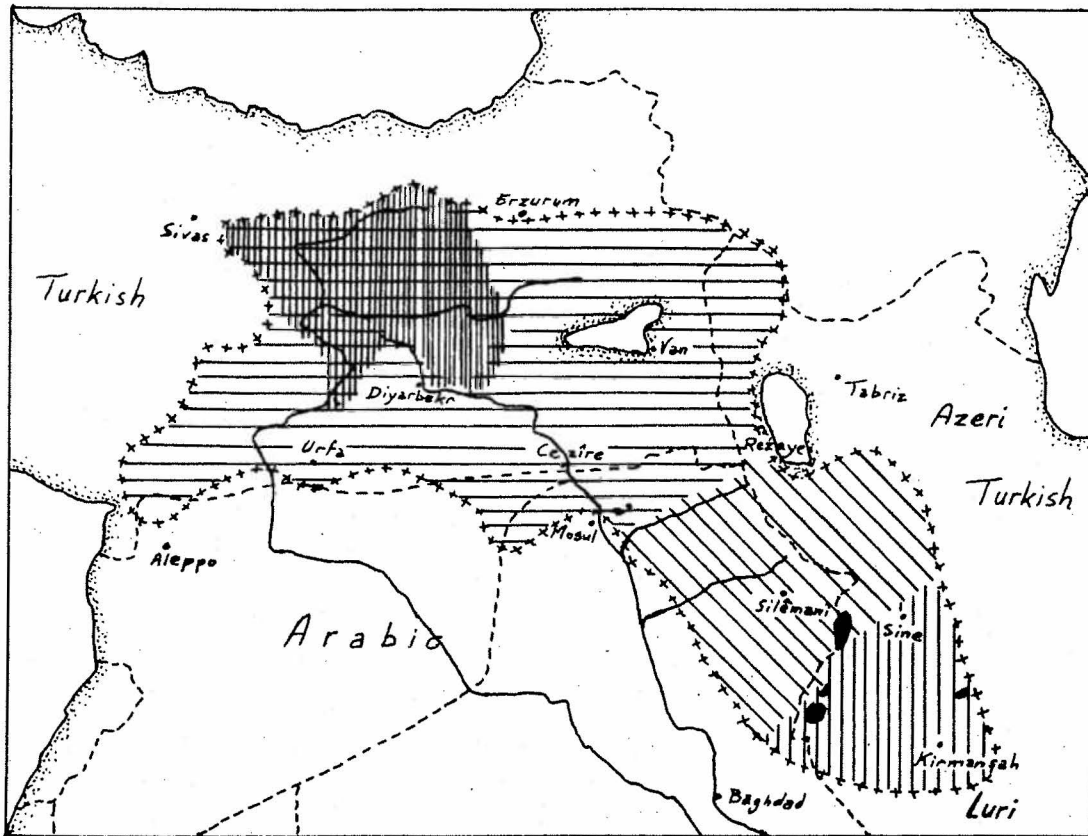
Moreover there exists a separate passive form of transitive verbs (while the other dialects employ auxiliary verbs). To outsiders, the frequent occurring of the suffix *-ewe* is a particularly striking characteristic of these dialects.

3. the southeastern dialects (Sineî, Kirmanşahî, Lekî). These dialects are closer to modern Persian than the others.

Beside these dialect groups of ("real") Kurdish, two other groups of dialects are spoken that belong to another branch of the Iranian family (central Iranian). In northern Kurdistan a large number of tribes (in Dersim, Erzincan, Bingöl, Sêwrek) speak Zaza dialects (also called Dimilî). Native speakers of Zaza learn Kurmancî rather easily, whereas Zaza is extremely difficult for native Kurmancî speakers.

In southern/southeastern Kurdistan a few communities speak dialects that are collectively called Gûranî or "maşû" (the word for "he says" in these dialects). In the past this language was probably widely spoken, now these dialects persist only in Hewraman and in Dalehû (a mountainous district west of Kirmanşah), and a few tiny enclaves elsewhere. On the basis of tenuous evidence it has been assumed that Zaza and Gûranî are closely related. This may be a too hasty and incorrect conclusion, there are many differences. There is, however, too little material, especially of Zaza dialects, for a more definitive statement¹⁵.

Map 4 shows approximately the areas where the dialect groups



Map 4 Dialects spoken in Kurdistan

mentioned are spoken. It should be noted however, that no strict boundaries exist. Dialects merge gradually; groups speaking one dialect may live among a majority of speakers of another one. At many places tribes speaking Zaza and Kurmancî inhabit the same territory.

I. 9 Religion

Most Kurds are orthodox sunni muslims, of the four systematizations of islamic law they follow the shafeite school. Thus they distinguish themselves from their non-Kurdish neighbours: the Turks of Turkey and the Arabs that live to the immediate south of Kurdistan are in majority also sunni muslims, but follow the hanefite doctrine of law; Azeri Turks, Persians and Lurs are shiites.

Not all Kurds, however, are sunnites and shafeites. In northwestern Kurdistan many adhere to an unorthodox form of shiism, they are called alevîs (after Ali, Muhammad's son-in-law, who is the central saint of shiism). Many of these alevîs speak Zaza dialects, but by no means all: there are Kurmancî speaking alevîs as well, and maybe the majority of alevîs are not Kurds but Turks. Conversely, only a fraction of the Zaza speakers are Alevîs.

In southeastern and extremely southern Kurdistan (Kirmanşah and Xaniqîn provinces) several Kurdish tribes are shiites (of the "ordinary" twelver form of shiism which is Iran's official religion). In three districts of southern/southeastern Kurdistan people adhere to a peculiar, heterodox religion called ahl-e haqq ("people of the Truth"): in the Kirind/Dalehû district (west of Kirmanşah), around Sahne (between Kirmanşah and Hemedan) and near Kerkûk (in the last district they call themselves Kakaî). This religion probably developed out of Isma'ili ("sevener") shiism, and has, especially as it is practised in Dalehû, little in common with official Islam. (On this sect and its relations with the alevîs of northwestern Kurdistan, see Ch. II, sec. m).

The ahl-e haqq of Dalehû are called by their neighbours Şeytanperest, "Devil-worshippers". The same term of abuse is used for another peculiar sect, the yezidis (Êzîdî, in Kurdish). Yezidism is another syncretistic religion with many Isma'ili influences. So much nonsense has been said and written about them that it would require much space to correct¹⁶. It is a religion that occurs only among Kurds. Yezidis have always been severely persecuted by muslims. Many have therefore left their native soil, many others were converted.

It is interesting to note that the relations of yezidis with the local christians were and are better than those with muslims, and that they apparently prefer conversion to Christianity to that to Islam (if conversion is necessary at all). I met one former yezidi who was first converted to Christianity and later, under pressure, to Islam, and several muslim converts whose parents had been yezidis turned christians.

Yezidis were concentrated especially in the Sinjar mountains (SW of Mosul, astride the Iraqi-Syrian border) and the Şêxan district (E of Mosul), where the important sanctuary of Şêx Adî is. In the 1830's and 1840's many yezidis left the latter district because of persecution, and established themselves in the Caucasus, in Russian territory. Sinjar, Şêxan and the Caucasus are still the major centres of Yezidism. There are also yezidi villages in Turkish Kurdistan (in the Tor Abdîn mountains and near Batman). Many yezidis from there migrated to Germany as immigrant workers, in order to escape continuing oppression by muslims.

Christian and jewish communities have always lived among the Kurds, frequently performing specialized economic tasks. In most cases they had politically and economically subservient positions; many Kurdish chieftains considered the christian peasants and craftsmen of their villages their private property (even now, some still speak of "filehên min", "my christians"). The "protection" which Russia and Britain offered these groups, for not unselfish reasons, was used as a pretext for a number of bloody massacres of these christians. Very few members of these groups remain, for many of those who survived the massacres fled to safer regions.

Originally, there were three ethnic groups, belonging to three different churches present in Kurdistan: Sûriyanî (Syrians) lived in Tor Abdîn and the Cezîre, and in many towns of northern Kurdistan, they were jacobites; Aşûrî (Assyrians) lived in central Kurdistan (Badînan and Hekarî) and in the plains around Rezaye (Urûmiye), they were nestorians. The Armenians, who were probably the largest group of christians, lived all over northern Kurdistan and beyond its northern and western boundaries, they were Gregorians. As early as the seventeenth century French catholic missionaries began conversions among these christian groups; they owed their success to the French king's negotiating the right to protect the Sultan's catholic subjects. Many Armenians were converted, and the westernmost half of the Assyrians. The latter were called Keldanî

(Chaldaeans) after that conversion. In the 1830's British and American missionaries started to work among the Assyrians that had remained Nestorians. This contributed to the exacerbation of tension between christians and muslims and was not unrelated to the massacres of Nestorians a few years later, as will be related in Ch III¹⁷.

In the Tör Abdîn catholic and protestant missionaries were active also, but with less result: the majority of the sûriyanî continue to adhere to their jacobite confession. Large-scale massacres did not take place there, until the First World War. In 1915 a general deportation of Armenians from eastern Anatolia was ordered. Armenians were outlawed, large numbers were massacred by Turkish soldiers and Kurds. Persecution was soon extended to the other christian communities. After the war Iraq and Syria were created as British and French mandated territories; many surviving christians (especially from Tör Abdîn and central Kurdistan) fled there. The British and French authorities further exacerbated tensions between these christians and the Kurds by levying from the former police forces to keep the latter in check.

Surviving Armenians went to the southern Caucasus, where an Armenian republic was founded (see also Ch V). Many others remain in Syria and Iraq (where they or their parents were sent by the Turks during the war), while again others have swarmed out over the world. Very few remain in eastern Turkey.

I. h The nationalist war in Iraq

Early phases of Kurdish nationalism will be discussed in Ch IV, in connection with the role of shaikhs (nearly all early nationalist leaders were shaikhs), and in Ch V, where an important revolt is studied in detail. Throughout the text there are occasional references to the Kurdish revolt in Iraq, about which some general information must be given here. As this book does not pretend to be a history of Kurdish nationalism, I shall trace the bare outline

of events only and for further information refer to selected books and articles.

On July 14, 1958 a military coup, led by Abdalkerim Qassem, overthrew the Iraqi monarchy and the pro-western government headed by Nuri Said (who was, by the way, a Kurd). Formerly illegal parties such as the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) and the Democratic Party of Kurdistan (DPK) were allowed to come out into the open. Kurdish leader Mela Mistefa Barzanî, who lived in exile in the USSR (his militant nationalist activities in 1944-46 had made him one of the most wanted persons in Iraq, Iran and Turkey) was invited to return. Qassem tried to base his regime on a coalition of Arab nationalist, communist and Kurdish elements - a very unstable one. The Provisional Constitution reveals the internal contradiction in what have remained basic principles of the Republic of Iraq. On the one hand, Arabs and Kurds are associated in Iraqi society, and their national rights within the entity of Iraq are guaranteed by the Constitution (art 3); on the other, the Iraqi state is an integral part of the Arab Nation (art 2)¹⁸. In other words: all Iraqis are equal, but the Arabs are more equal than the Kurds. Among the Kurds (as among the Arabs) there were many conflicts and rivalries. Barzanî had his traditional tribal rivals in northern Iraq, while he competed with the political bureau of the DPK (mainly urban intellectuals and, at least verbally, socialists) for leadership of the Kurdish nationalist movement. Qassem apparently stimulated these conflicts, in order to prevent Barzanî and the DPK from becoming too powerful. Relations between him and the Kurds gradually deteriorated, until there was no mutual trust left. When the first clashes between Kurds and Iraqi troops (Sep. 1961) were severely retaliated by Qassem, war could no longer be avoided. A similar chain of events repeated itself a few times: Iraqi governments were weakened by war against the Kurds, and then overthrown by coups. Abdassalam Aref (Feb 1963) and Hasan al-Bakr (July 1968) both started with friendly gestures and promises to the Kurds, but were soon to send their air force and armies to

northern Iraq because they could not or would not agree to Kurdish demands. With but a few interruptions war continued until early 1970. On March 11 of that year an agreement was reached between the Kurds and the al-Bakr regime, promising autonomy for Kurdistan, and representative participation of Kurds in the affairs of the state.

Over the years, the war had increased in vehemence and in number of participants. The involvement of the neighbouring country Iran, too, had increased. Iran and Iraq were traditional enemies: they had disagreements on the demarcation of their border (especially the southernmost section, where the Shatt al-Arab formed the border, and Iran's right to use it for navigation was contested), and on the control of the Persian Gulf (which the Arabs call "Arab Gulf"). For Iran the Kurds appeared a useful means of putting pressure on the Iraqi regime and compelling it to concessions.

In the course of these years of war Barzanî became victorious in his rivalry with the original DPK leadership. He appointed a new political bureau, loyal to him personally (1964). The old political bureau, led by Celal Talebanî, did not recognize the new one and continued to oppose Barzanî, from 1966 they even fought him actively. This group claimed to be socialist, and had contacts with the leftist anti-shah opposition in Iran. They had but a limited following, in southern Kurdistan only. The fact that from late 1968 they were virtually fighting on the side of the new government did not help to make them more popular with the Kurdish masses¹⁹. After the 1970 agreement Barzanî's and Talebanî's factions were reconciled, and Barzanî remained unchallenged as leader number one.

In the agreement a period of 4 years was set in which the promises were to be executed. Some were: a landreform was carried out (affecting especially, I gather, those landowners who had been collaborating with Baghdad!), Kurdish education made rapid progress (new schools, curriculum in Kurdish; Kurdish studies in academia), health care was extended to the most distant districts. Other

promises were not carried out, but this may in part be due to international developments. The Iraqi-Iranian conflict was exacerbated when Iran filled the power vacuum left by the departure of British troops from the Gulf (1971: Iran occupied the islands in the Strait of Hormuz which control access to the Gulf). In 1971 Iraq nationalized the installations of the Iraq Petroleum Company (British/Dutch/French/American). A western boycott made it more dependent on the Soviet Union, with whom it signed a Treaty of Friendship (1972). The regime did not want to lose direct control of the oil it had just nationalized. In order to prevent inclusion of the oil-rich districts in the autonomous Kurdish region to be formed it started to "arabize" those districts, forcibly replacing Kurds with Arabs. Meanwhile the shah of Iran, who could well use a new Kurdish-Arab confrontation in Iraq, secured US support for the Kurds (1972). The Americans made the Kurds many promises, but when Barzanî wanted to attack during the Israel-Arab war of October 1973, they held him back. In March 1974 the Iraqi government unilaterally proclaimed a mutilated autonomy law. Serious cases of repression of Kurds had preceded it. War was inevitable, and broke out that very month. The scale of warfare was unprecedented. This was by no means a guerrilla war, but a conventional one. Wide fronts shielded the "liberated areas". In September 1974 Iranian artillery entered Iraqi Kurdistan to reinforce the Kurdish fronts. Target-seeking missiles kept the Iraqi air force at safe distance from the Kurdish headquarters. Ordinary economic life was seriously disturbed in most areas: peasants were afraid to work on the field because of the air raids. Hundreds of thousands became refugees in the liberated areas and Iran. Secret negotiations between Iraq and Iran took place several times in 1974. On March 6, 1975 the shah theatrically embraced Iraqi strong man Saddam Husain at an OPEC conference in Algiers, and signed an agreement with him. The next day Iranian troops and heavy arms were withdrawn from Kurdistan, and on March 8 a heavy Iraqi offensive started. The Kurds stopped the offensive, but prospects for continuing resistance

were bleak. The population of entire districts fled to Iran. The Kurdish movement collapsed, not militarily but politically defeated. The leadership also took refuge in Iran.

Since then, Kurdish resistance in Iraq has flamed up again, as a reaction to the severe measures of "normalization" by the regime, including mass deportations of Kurdish villagers²⁰.

CHAPTER II

Tribes, Chieftains and Non-tribal Groups

Due to its size, the variety of its natural habitats and the range of economies, and as a consequence of the fact that historical events have affected its regions in quite different ways, Kurdistan has given rise to a wide range of forms of social and political organization.

The relevant anthropological studies¹ are different in approach and vary in depth, reflecting the authors' differing preoccupations as well as the limitations imposed on fieldwork in a politically sensitive area. However, the differences in the descriptions are not just the anthropologists', they are at least partly present in the social reality. Nor have these studies exhausted the whole range.

None of these forms can in itself be thought of as "typically Kurdish". Superficially seen there is no "Kurdish social organization"; the differences are too obvious and too wide. Certain patterns, however, can be observed in widely different systems, and I shall treat those first, as basic to the many real forms of social organization. From the abstract level of this discussion

I shall move gradually to a more concrete description of specific examples.

The first of those general patterns is a structural one: the segmentary tribe, consisting of patrilineages with a preference for endogamy. Not all Kurds are tribal; in fact in some areas non-tribal Kurds form an overwhelming majority of the population. It should be noted that the distinction between tribal and non-tribal Kurds is generally made by the Kurds themselves and coincides with the distinction social anthropologists would make: non-tribal Kurds have no kin organization beyond the household or extended family level. The origin of these non-tribal Kurds and their relations with the tribes will be discussed in a later section. In nearly all cases they are (or were until quite recently) subjected politically and/or economically to tribally organized Kurds, so that tribal structure is, as it were, superimposed upon quasi-feudal dominance relations.

II. a The tribe and its subdivisions

The Kurdish tribe is a socio-political and generally also territorial (and therefore economical) unit based on descent and kinship, real or putative, with a characteristic internal structure. It is naturally divided into a number of sub-tribes, each in turn again divided into smaller units, etc.

If one looks from the bottom up instead of from the top down the role of kinship is more obvious. At the lowest level there is the single household. Households whose heads are descended from the same father, grandfather, or ancestor see themselves as apart from the others, and under certain circumstances act together, separately from the other households; such a group is called (by anthropologists) lineage. Obviously, there are lineages of different depths, depending on how many generations back the common ancestor is to be found. Kurds do not remember their genealogies as scrupulously as many other tribal peoples do, so that for kinsmen further remote than, say, second cousins one does not bother

to trace the exact relationship. Actual political allegiance to a lineage becomes more important than real kinship. Therefore the distinction anthropologists generally make between "clan" (where common descent is putative) and "lineage" (where a common ancestor can be traced) is rather difficult to make. Many lineages include people who have for some reason attached themselves to them, and who define themselves as members of the lineage by acting in concert with it when the occasion arises; after one or two generations their descendants have come to be accepted as full members and hardly anyone remembers their foreign origins. Some clans or lineages (even entire tribes) have arisen around a powerful family that, because of its military or political success, was joined by numerous adherents, individuals as well as entire lineages. After a few generations these origins tend to be forgotten; the present unity of the clan is projected back into history and the clan virtually behaves as any real descent group; common ancestors may even be invented. Rondot² describes this process for the two clans called Etmankan and Mehmûdkan that together form the Omeryan tribe. Some old people here still remembered that Mehmûd and Etman were two quite unrelated chieftains whose followers were called after them; a dissident younger son of Etman went to live with the Mehmûdkan who later made him their leader (because of his military prowess), so that both groups now had a leader from the same (Etman's) family. Eventually the two branches of the family were reconciled and the two groups merged; many people now claim that Mehmûd and Etman were brothers, eponymous ancestors of the clans (or at least the central and more prestigious lineages thereof).

For the sake of simplicity some features of tribal structure will be discussed using a simplified graphical representation of the type often employed in textbooks (Fig. 1). This diagram can be read in two ways. First as a actual lineage tree, in which case the horizontal rows correspond to generations and the single

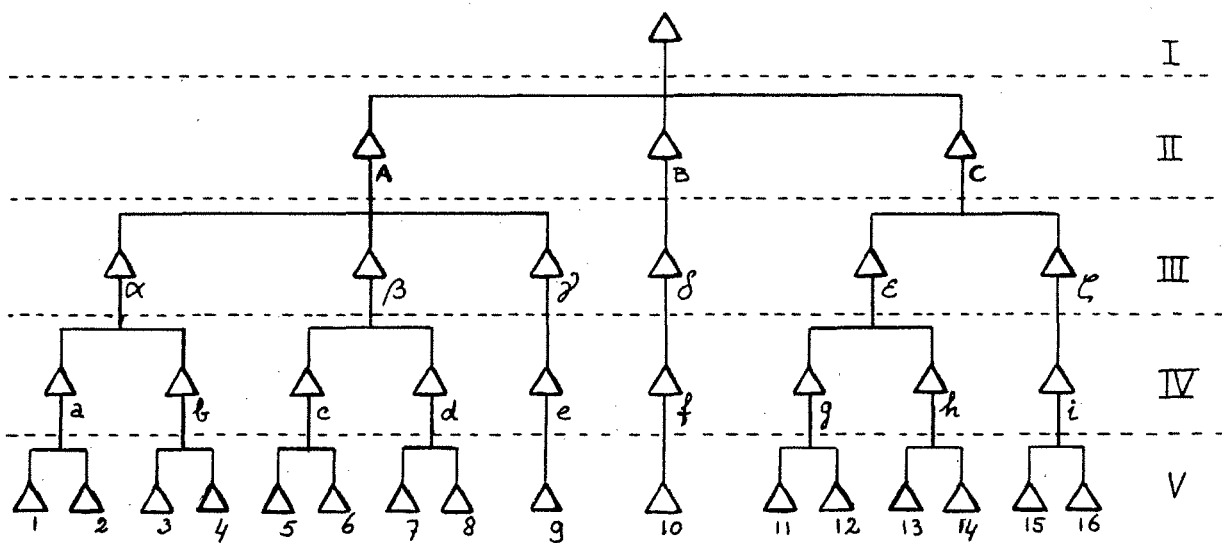


Fig. 1 Segmentary lineage structure

triangle in row I represents the common ancestor of the lineage (and every other triangle also represents a real person, dead or alive). The simplification consists of the reduction of the number of generations and of the number of sons per generation. Secondly, it can be read as a representation of the segmentary structure of a tribe, in which case each row corresponds with a level of organization, rather arbitrarily to be labelled that of tribe (I), clan (II), lineage (III), sub-lineage (IV), household (V)³. In this case the triangles do not represent individuals but social units: 1 represents a household, α a lineage, etc.⁴

The household

The most obvious corporate unit is the household: nearly all economic activities (both among nomads and peasants) take place on this level. The household generally consists of the nuclear family only: husband, wife and (unmarried) children. Sometimes an old father, mother, uncle or aunt is living in. If a man has more than one wife - a privilege of the rich that is gradually

disappearing now - the wives have separate rooms but form part of the same household: they cook together, go out milking together, etc. Among the nomads multiple wives have to live even closer together: the tents generally do have a separate compartment for men and one for womenfolk, but within the last each woman has very little occasion for privacy.

An exception that often occurs is that a son remains in his father's house during the first years of his married life, which gives rise to a hybrid situation. The newly-wed couple is as a rule not as fully integrated in the parent household as a second wife with her children would be. Some activities are separate, e.g. the son may own some private sheep which his bride milks separately and whose milk is not mixed with that of the parent household.

In many other cases such a division does not occur however; and domestic tasks are as a rule performed by all women together.

Barth⁵ made an inventory of household composition in 4 villages of southern Kurdistan and found that only just over 10% consisted of (patrilineal) extended families. Although I have no statistical data to support my opinion I would suggest that in northern Kurdistan this percentage is rather higher.

There is, especially among the rich families, a tendency to administer their property in land and animals as an undivided estate, not to be broken up by inheritance rules, so that there are fewer reasons to break up the household. Extensive landownership thus is often vested in the patrilineage - the descendants of the man who first appropriated the land as his inalienable private property^{5a}. Rights to the actual use of the land however, are generally vested in the small-holding or share-cropping peasant household (not in the head of this household; his sons quite rightly consider it as much theirs: it is never "my land", but "our land").

The territorial unit

Rights in land and membership in a particular tribe, clan or

lineage are closely related, but in a rather complicated way. Traditional tribal law, islamic jurisprudence, Ottoman and Persian ferdal practices, the gradual introduction of the idea of full private ownership have interacted to create a rather confusing situation that will be discussed in a later chapter (Ch IV, sec. 1).

Traditionally, every tribe is associated with a particular territory (or territories) and vice versa. A region is called after the tribe inhabiting it, e.g. Elîkan is both a tribe and an area (in NE Syria)⁶; some place-names recall tribes that are long extinct or that have moved elsewhere. Although by now agricultural land has everywhere become private property, a salable commodity, it cannot be sold to just anybody. In a way the land is still the tribe's and it should be sold to a tribesman, preferably even one from the same village. In northern Kurdistan (except the non-tribal and detribalized areas) this rule appears to be followed rather strictly.

In February, 1976 armed clashes broke out at the village of Kanîkê (belonging to the Reşkotan tribe) in the Batman plain. Here someone had sold his land to an outsider, a member of the powerful Bekiran tribe (settled in the Sasûn mountains, and suffering from a shortage of land). When they tried to move into the village with some of his relatives the villagers did not allow him to, whereupon the Bekiran descended from their mountains and opened fire at the village. After 24 hours' shooting Turkish gendarme and army troops intervened, with the result that the Reşkotan have been able to maintain their territory intact.

Rights in pasture land are more clearly collective: every member of the clan has the inalienable right to graze his animals on the clan's pastures, no one can monopolize these. Among the Teyyan (the only nomadic tribe I visited) each of the 8 clans has its own pastures within the Teyyan territory; they are expected to keep their animals away from the other clans' meadows. The primary territorial unit is thus the clan, but the tribe is the more permanent territorial unit. Clans may split or merge, and the clan's pastures may be redistributed, but the tribe's territorial

boundaries could formerly only be changed by conquest, now only by recourse to the state. Smaller territorial units than the clan do not exist with this tribe. Both in summer and winter pastures the clan as a whole forms the tent group (25 - 50 tents). Among the large, formerly nomadic Caf tribe of southern Kurdistan (now largely settled) tent groups are smaller and are not composed strictly along lineage-lines: all members of the tent group belong to the same clan, but one does not necessarily camp with one's closest relatives⁸. The same is true of the semi-nomadic Mengûr and Mameş (near Qale Dize, northern Iraq) whose villages split up in a number of tent groups in whose composition I could not detect much regularity; they told me that the composition changes from year to year. But here again each clan has its own pasture land; within it the tent groups are free to choose a suitable camping place.

A different situation has arisen in the mountainous district south of Lake Van. Many villages have been repopulated rather recently by small groups of individuals and tribal sections that moved in from elsewhere (the area's sedentary population formerly consisted to a large extent of Armenians, Chaldaeans and Nestorians, most of whom had been killed, deported or had fled during the First World War and the subsequent turbulent events). Since most of these newcomers had no traditional rights here, legal rulings of the Turkish state became decisive: every piece of land belongs administratively to a specific village, and the villagers naturally consider this as right of possession, so that here every village has its own pastures which it jealously guards from the inhabitants of neighboring villages, even when these belong to the same lineage.

On their migration route nomads pass territories belonging to other tribes. The migrating group (a clan in the Teyyan case) has to pay a collective fee; the clan chief exacts this sum from his clansmen and pays it to the village or lineage headman, who generally does not distribute it among his co-villagers. The passage of nomads across a sedentary tribe's lands hardly ever occurs without conflicts. Frequently the groups do not reach an agreement on the sum to be paid; they accuse each other of stealing

animals; often the nomads are accused of passing too slowly, with the result that their large flocks consume too much of the villages' grassland; or the nomad's animals eat from the peasants' crops. Often, the dispute cannot be settled and armed clashes ensue between nomadic clan and village, both soon reinforced by fellow tribesmen. After one or two days' fighting generally someone powerful (a religious leader, a "neutral" tribal chieftain, a gendarme commander) manages to impose an uneasy truce that may be broken at the next passing ^{8a}.

The territory through which the nomads pass is thus apparently considered collective property of the sedentary lineage or of the village (both units claim it as theirs), since the lineage reacts corporately at the nomads' infringements. At least part of the usufruct, however is appropriated privately by the lineage or village headman: the monetary fee the nomads pay for passing. A few chieftains have, aided by their good relations with the gendarme and the judiciary, obtained de facto rights to demand passage money from nomads for areas that did not traditionally belong to a sedentary tribe (or that belonged to a tribe that lost the power to maintain those rights). This represents a further step in the evolution towards private control over land. Something similar is the case with part of the summer pastures of a few clans of the Teyyan: these were usurped⁹ by the Gîravî, a very powerful lineage (with political connections on the government level) that dominates nontribal peasants near Şatag (province Van). The Teyyan have to pay an enormous rent for these pastures^{9a}; but they still have traditional rights which the Gîravî cannot deny them: the Gîravî cannot suddenly refuse the Teyyan access and let another tribe graze there. These rights belong to the clan as a whole: the Gîravî cannot refuse to admit certain individuals or assign the best part to a person they want to favor.

Among the sedentary and semi-nomadic tribes too, units smaller than the tribe have their specific territorial rights. Quite often every clan in the tribe possesses its own area, which may

again be subdivided in accord with the clan's segmentation. There are exceptions, however: the Omeryan for instance are subdivided into 2 clans that are co-residential throughout the tribal area. Thus, both clans are represented in most villages¹⁰. Similarly the Iraqi Mameş (only 5 or 6 villages) consist of 5 clans, each of which is represented in all villages.

The village

The territorial unit that takes precedence over all others, and the only one that can properly be considered a corporate group (apart from the nomadic lineage and tent group, of course) is the village. Agricultural land has become full private property, but, as related above not just anyone can buy it¹¹. Grazing land around the village (mer'a) still communally belongs to it; among the semi-nomads south of Lake Van every village has its own summer pastures.

As far as I could ascertain, a semi-nomad village takes the decision as to when it will start its annual transhumance or return on the village level, and not on that of the tribe, clan or of a subdivision of the village.

Governments also dealt with the sedentary population mainly on the village level - that is when they dealt directly with it at all¹². Taxes were in the past usually assessed as a fixed sum for the whole village. Where feudal dues were levied (labour dues as well as exactions in kind) it was again from the village as a whole. Religious rites as the Friday prayer¹³ and prayers for rain are performed on the village level.

Sometimes the village fits into the pattern illustrated by Fig. 1, corresponding to a segment somewhat below the clan level: small villages often contain just a single shallow lineage. Among the (Iraqi) Mengûr each of the seven (named) clans is dispersed over 2 to 10 village, roughly along segmentary lines, although most villages can boast some "foreigners" from outside the tribe or from other lineages/clans. Most of these foreigners originally

came to take refuge after quarrels in their own village. Among the Balik the small clan Şekir occupies one narrow valley of a tributary stream to the Balik river. Originally there was only one village here. When population increased a segment split off and formed a second village higher in the valley; a later split led to the formation of a third village, again higher. The original population of the mother village had come from diverse origins. They had settled at this spot because some holy man (a shaikh) was buried here. When the village broke up it was at least partly along kin lines: one man had settled on the new spot and was soon joined there by his closest relatives and friends, later also by other people who left the mother village because of a conflict. Thus the present villages are genealogically rather more homogeneous than the original one.

In villages where a tribal and a "non-tribal" population are co-resident, as among the Dizeyî and Hemewend (see below, see II. k), the tribal element usually consists of one or two (very shallow) lineages.

In other cases, however, the village does not correspond to any level of tribal segmentation but is cross-cut by it. The examples of Omeryan and (Iraqi) Mameş, where the clans are dispersed across the whole tribal territory and exist side by side in most villages have already been mentioned.

Corporate action on levels other than the village

Below the village level one rarely finds corporate groups. Among the Omeryan the villages are divided into a number of units called bavik (from bav: father), lineages reinforced by a sometimes large number of unrelated adherents; each bavik belongs to one of the two clans (Mehmûdkan and Etmankan), and each possesses a specific (spatially separate) part of the village land ^{13a}. Corporate action is rare, however; the baviks act as unities only when in conflict with each other. I encountered among the Goyan of Uludere a similar composition of the village: a number of mutually not

very closely related baviks, each consisting of a real lineage with some followers. I could only recognize it as such, however because of a blood feud between two of the baviks (see p. 60).

Similarly, tribe, clan and lineage above the level of the village rarely act as a group. All examples I found among sedentary tribes were cases of conflict. Also in the perception of the tribesmen themselves is that so. When I asked questions about the "function" of the units at the various levels or organization, the occasions where they came and acted together, or about the tasks and duties of the headmen of these units, I always received answers that referred to disputes, feuds, or tribal wars.

Boundaries of the tribe

Boundaries of the tribe and of the clan are rather vague: each has its hard core of central lineages, but there is also a (often much larger) number of "free-floating" individuals and lineages that sometimes act in concert with the tribe and at other times do not. When a tribe's fortunes are good it is soon joined by men of adventure or breakaway sections from other tribes that come and seek its protection and a share in its fortune. The first European to notice this was Claudius Julius Rich, resident of the British East India Company at Baghdad, who in 1820 was invited to southern Kurdistan by a Kurdish ruler and made some extremely interesting observations. I shall quote him many times in this book. On the powerful Caf tribe, many of whose leading personalities he knew, he recorded that out of the several thousand tents that composed the tribe only 600 were Caf proper; the others were large sections of other nomadic or "re-nomadized" tribes from the same frontier district (at that time disputed territory between the Ottoman and Persian empires). These client clans Rich sometimes called Caf, too; at other times he referred to them by their original tribal name¹⁴. A century later, in 1921, when some of the (Iraqi section of the) Caf had settled, 5400 tents of nomadic Caf

were counted. Apparently most of the client clans had by that time become "real" Caf. Edmonds, who generally is very careful in his distinctions between tribes, does not mention the tribes to which part of these "real Caf" must originally have belonged, although he mentions some other client clans/tribes that had not merged with the Caf¹⁵. The Caf were then (in 1921) hierarchically organized, with a "royal" lineage and commoner clans, but that seems to have been the case already in Rich's time¹⁶.

In the 1860's F. Millingen commanded a Turkish army unit in another frontier area, Qotur in northern Kurdistan; he noticed similar processes: "the tribes of Koordistan are formed of two distinct elements - one permanent, the other fluctuating. The permanent element consists of the stock of families which are closely connected with the chief, while the fluctuating element consists of a lot of adventurers and deserters who attach themselves sometimes to one tribe, sometimes to another"¹⁷. How generally applicable this statement was at that time is hard to guess since it appears to be based largely on his close acquaintance with a single tribe, the Mîlan, who ran into bad luck precisely because of their prosperity and success. A coalition of the (Turkish) pasha of Van and jealous neighbouring tribes drove them from their lands and inflicted a serious military defeat on them. Their numbers decreased dramatically: "when prosperous, under the leadership of Omar, (the Mîlan) mustered 1600 tents. After two years of disasters, the same tribe was reduced to 500 tents only. All the others had melted away with the apparition of ill-luck"¹⁸. The third case of similar dramatic increases and decreases in the membership of a tribe that came to my notice is that of the Milan (not to be confused with the Mîlan) under their leader Ibrahîm Paşa. Around 1860 the Milan were a tribe on the decline; they were tributary to the powerful (Arab) Shammar tribe and counted 600 tents, a mere trifle of the size it had 30 years previously when their home district was a no man's land between the rebellious Egyptian forces and the Ottoman armies. In 1863 however Ibrahîm succeeded

to chieftainship; he led his tribe in a number of successful campaigns against Arab tribes, ultimately even defeating the Shammar. The tribe's numbers now increased tremendously; numerous small tribes avowed themselves to be Milan^{18a}.

These three cases are not unique. It may not be accidental, however, that all three occurred at a frontier. There is some evidence of the previous occurring of similar processes in the fact that one sometimes comes across the same clan-names among different tribes¹⁹ (which may, but need not recall a common origin), and that tribes continually disappear completely while new ones emerge, as is apparent from comparison of lists of tribes compiled at different times^{19a}.

Among nomadic tribes tribal unity (and thus the boundaries of the tribe) is apparent from the communal migrations. Among semi-nomadic, and especially among the sedentary tribes, it was only in the case of confrontation with another tribe or with an external power (such as the state, armies, or European missionaries) that the tribe might act as a body, and that it became apparent which of the lineages and individuals in the periphery belonged to it. Such mass confrontations belong to the past, however.

The same is true for clans and lineages: They only act corporately in the case of a conflict with a unit of the same level of organization. Their leaders, generally, act as leaders at such times only. Conflicts are not simply a consequence or concomitant of tribal social structure; they are part and parcel of this structure. Only in conflicts the segmentary character of this structure becomes perceptible. Tribal conflicts are not all of one kind, of course. However, there is one conflict that illustrates better than others the processes of opposition and alliance of tribal segments, one that occupies a central place in the tribal ethos: the blood feud. The tribal Kurds themselves continually refer to the blood feud when explaining clan and lineage solidarity. It

will shortly be discussed extensively; but first an analysis will be made of Kurdish terminology employed for the tribe and its sections, to find out whether this adds anything to our understanding.

II. b

Kurdish terms

The terms of standard anthropological usage, "tribe", "clan", and "lineage", appear to be a straightjacket that ill fits the social reality of Kurdistan. Possibly inspection of the terms used by the Kurds themselves and the way they are applied will provide a better insight. A first glance over the literature, however, makes clear that much confusion exists. Not only are the terms used ambiguously at any given place, but they are also applied differently in different parts of Kurdistan. Most of the terms are used in certain areas only, elsewhere other terms being preferred. In addition, most terms are loanwords from Arabic or Turkish (and possibly Persian), and may have brought with them some of their original connotations. This confusion is illustrated below.

Leach noticed that among the Balik the terms "eşîret", "taîfe" and "tîre" were used, and without much discussion identified them with the concepts of "tribe", "clan" and "lineage" he brought with him from England, although he remarked that "taîfe" and "tîre" were sometimes employed interchangeably. The eşîret is the political group, and taîfe and tîre are kin groups, he claimed; every eşîret consists of one or more taîfes, every taîfe of a number of tîres²⁰. Barth, who did fieldwork among the Caf and Hemwend, comments that Leach's scheme does not fit. When he asked someone to which tîre he belonged the man answered: "Caf", which is the name of the entire tribe. Usually however this term is reserved for the major sub-divisions of the tribe and for the whole the term "eşîret" is preferred. Barth claims that the tîre "approximates the maximal lineage", although not every maximal lineage is called "tîre" (this suggests, by the way, that the tîre is seen by the Caf them-

selves as a political entity rather than as a kin group). A lineage is called "hoz" and is named after its common ancestor: Thus, the hozî Brahîm is the lineage consisting of the descendants of Brahîm. Barth's term "taîfe", it is the exact (Arabic) equivalent of the (Kurdish) "hoz"²¹.

Rudolph (1967a) gives a more thorough analysis of these terms, and shows how they are employed in different parts of Persian Kurdistan. He claims that "tîre" and "taîfe" are used to denote the same units there (with which I cannot fully agree), but adds that "tîre" apparently is used as a "formaler Gliederungsbegriff", while "taîfe" may have other connotations²². This is, I think, an important observation. "Tîre", a word of Iranian origin, can also be used in other contexts to denote fission. In Persian "do tira shodan" means "to split into two". Therefore it seems evident to me that a group is called "tîre" when it is thought of as being a sub-unit of some larger entity; "section" would be the appropriate translation. It does not correspond to our "tribe", "clan", or "lineage" but it can be used for all of them, depending on the context. (The Caf as a whole can be called a "tîre" when one realizes that they share their habitat with other groups²³; usually, however, one does not think of these other groups but just of the Caf, and then the term "eşîret" is more appropriate).

The term "taîfe" (from the Arabic) on the other hand, implies real or fictitious kinship, somewhat similarly to our "brotherhood". Throughout the Middle East it is in use for the extended family and lineage (here Barth is correct in identifying it with "hoz"), as well as for aggregates that are obviously not real kin groups, such as the mystical orders. Especially in Iran this last usage is quite general; if one asks a dervish to which taîfe he belongs he will not mention his tribe or clan but the order that incorporates him in a brotherhood more lasting than worldly kinship.

The ahl-e haqq of Dalehû²⁴ - a religious sect very

different from orthodox sunnism and from shiism, the religions the neighbouring tribes adhere to - call themselves "taife", "the family". Tûtşamî, where their chief religious leader resides, someone called "Paytextê taife", "capital of the family". The ahl-e haqq distinguish themselves physically from their orthodox neighbours by not clipping the mustache; mine was rather longish too, so that often people when they first met me asked: "are you taife?"

This explains why Rudolph, asking an ahl-e haqq Kurd which taife lived in the direction he pointed at was answered "taîfê sunnî"²⁵.

It is not strange, then, that the term "taife" is not only used for real lineages, but by extension also for clans and even tribes. Razm-ara in his survey of the tribes of western Iran²⁶ calls the tribes "taife" (even so large a confederation as the Gûran), and their sub-divisions "tîre"; personally I have rarely heard the word "taife" in this sense, except abstractly, in the plural: "tevayefê Kurd": "the Kurdish tribes", or "tevayefê filan minteqe": "the tribes of region so-and-so".

"Eşîret" (from the Arabic 'ashira) is used throughout Kurdistan and denotes the whole tribe; also a confederation of tribes is called "eşîret"²⁷; the term is thus again not strictly limited to one level of integration. Throughout Kurdistan too it denotes "being tribal" as opposed to "being Non-tribal". Sandreczki, travelling through the territory of the Herkî (near the spot where now the Turkish-Persian-Iraqi borders join) in 1850 remarked on the existing two-caste system of (non-tribal) peasants (called "gûran"²⁸) and a military caste or nobility called "sipah" (the standard term for the feudal military in the Ottoman empire) or "Assyreta", a name which Sandreczki recognized as "Assyrian", but which is evidently a misspelling of "eşîret"²⁹. Rudolph too recognizes this dimension of meaning of the term, especially in the plural: "ma asha'er", "we tribal people", as denoting a social stratum above that of the non-tribal serf-like peasantry³⁰. Hay - who served two years in Iraqi Kurdistan as an (assistant) political officer, remarked that the statement "I am a tribesman" conveys a meaning similar to "civis Romanus sum"³¹. Further

implications of the tribal/non-tribal dichotomy will be discussed in sec. II. k.

The term "îl", sometimes used in Iran as a synonym for "eşîret", seems not to convey this second meaning³². The only Kurdish tribes to which I heard refer as "îl" are the large confederations Ze'firanlû and Şadlû of Khorasan. The paramount chieftains of these confederations receive the official title of îlخانî. The same applies to other large confederations in Iran, such as the Bakhtiyari and the Qashqa'i. In the case of the tribes of Khorasan, the îls were deliberate creations of the state (see Ch III, sec. i). Also the other îls seem to consist of rather heterogeneous elements, that owe their unity to state interference³³. The term îl seems to me to be an administrative one that has acquired somewhat wider currency.

In northern Kurdistan the terms "tîre" and "taîfe" are not used; the Teyyan and other tribes in central Kurdistan call their subdivisions "qebîle". The qebîle is the unit immediately below the level of the tribe, here it is also the tent group. The Mîran (originally nomadic in the same area, but now living in north-eastern Syria) use "feËr" in the same sense - except that here the subdivision of a feËr is again called "feËr". In both cases it was rather difficult to elicit the terms, some people could not produce them even after prolonged interrogation and discussion. The terms are rarely used, people just call the clans by their names. It was agreed, however, that the term "bavik" (or "babik") which the sedentary Kurds in these parts employ, is inappropriate for such clans. The bavik is a rather shallow lineage that may be reinforced by unrelated adherents; generally it is of the sub-village level. I have not heard of baviks made up of or dispersed over more than one village. Clans were thought too large to warrant the label "bavik".

"Mal", "house", comes quite close to "bavik": it is a pure lineage (i.e. adherents are not included), but only lineages descending

from very powerful persons are thus called E.g., in Şirnex the competing families of aghas are not called baviks but are referred to as "mala Teter AXa", "mala Sulîman AXa", etc.

A few remarks to conclude this section:

1. It is striking that nearly all terms used are foreign borrowings (we shall see the same phenomenon with the discussion of terms for leaders); only those for the smallest units are of kurdish origin: "hoz", "bavik", "mal".

A possible though very tentative explanation is that the hoz/bavik are the units that frequently manifest themselves politically at the local level, whereas the taife and eşîret are potential rather than actual groups, only mobilized in confrontations with other similar units (also non-Kurdish tribes) as well as governments. They were the units states dealt with primarily (the use of the term "îl" certainly derives from this), it was their leaders that frequently became incorporated in military and/or administrative ("feudal") hierarchies.

One should not exclude the possibility that what I discussed here as a secondary meaning of "eşîret" is in fact the primary one, that the term originally referred to the warrior aspect of tribesmen, and only later was applied to the units into which these warriors organized themselves or were organized by the state.

2. Leach calls the eşîret a political group, and taife and tîre kinship groups (Rudolph, somewhat hesitantly, follows him in this). Probably he makes this distinction because the eşîret so obviously is not a kinship group; but he seems to overlook the fact that its sections have more political functions than the tribe itself, and that many taifes and tîres are demonstrably not all of one kin. If a tribe is stable (i.e., has existed for a long time) its sections will approximate to

lineages, because fissions usually take place along kin lines. But in tribes that have recently been formed (or that recently have incorporated many "foreigners") the sections are clearly genealogically heterogeneous, even so shallow a one as the bavik. An anthropological training may easily lead one to overstress the importance of kinship in tribal organization.

Two other competent observers, the government officials Hay and Rondot, stress quite other aspects:

Hay: "A tribe is a community or a federation of communities which exists for the protection of its members against external aggression and for the maintenance of the old racial customs and standards of life. Some tribes have no recognized chieftains, some have many (...). The large tribes are divided into sections"³⁴.

Hay continues then with a discussion of leadership in the tribe as its most important institution (which for the administrator it certainly is). Rondot echoes Hay: according to him the tribe is,

"a small world, inward-looking; an organism of defense; a traditional and conservative institution; a community which, with regard to groups that do not have the same character, has feelings of its superiority." A chieftain acquires authority by his deeds only, for "in the essentially defensive defensive institution that the tribe is, the principal activity is warfare"³⁵.

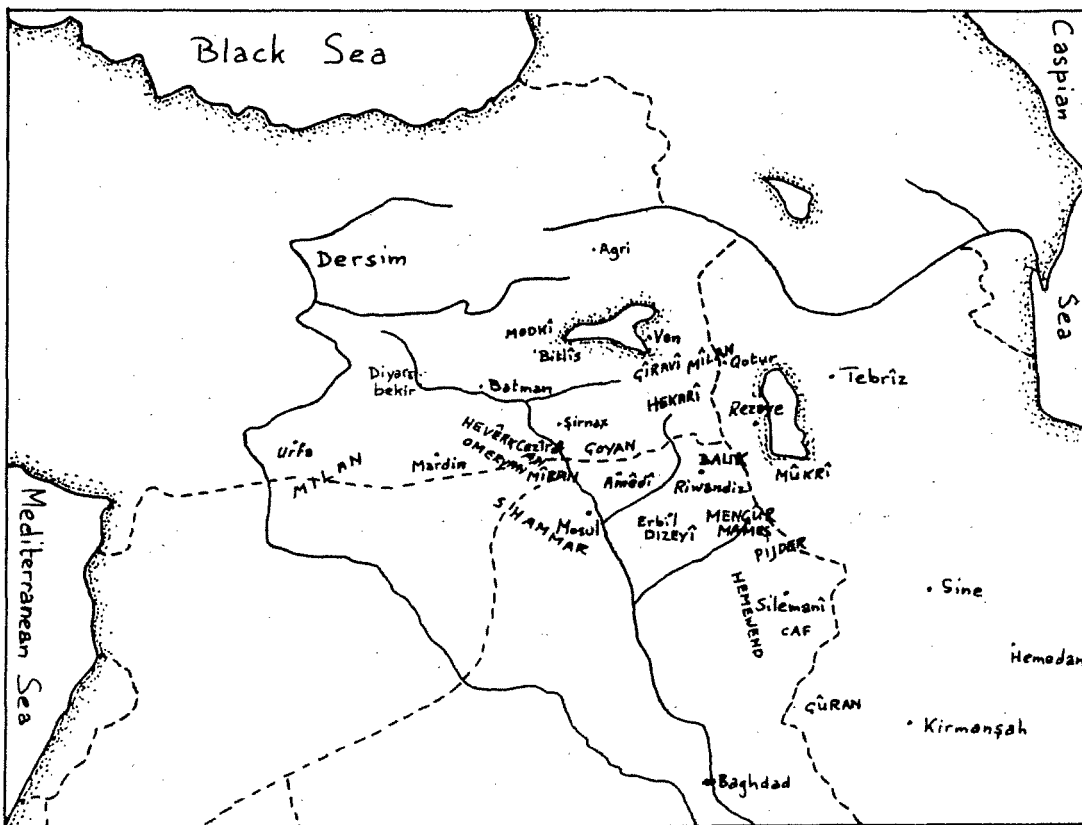
These two authors ignore the role of kinship, which leads to another misrepresentation of the tribe. Precisely for this reason, however, they saw more clearly its political significance.

3. None of the terms used refers strictly to any specific level of organization. The abstraction of Fig. 1 thus exists only in the anthropologist's mind, not in the Kurds'.

"Taïfe" implies both real and metaphorical kinship, "tîre" and "feÿr" the principle of segmentation - the latter are relational rather than absolute terms; while "taïfe" refers to "being a (tribal) unit, belonging together", the other two terms refer to "being part of a larger unit". (If once more Fig.1 is taken to represent a fictitious tribe, then a tribes-

man may one day refer to A as a taife and to β as one of its tîres; another day he may call C a tîre, or d a taife).

Kinship (of the "we are all brothers" type) and segmentation, then, are the basic characteristics of tribal organization that these terms suggest. Not the levels of organization themselves - largely imposed by our model - are important, but the fact that at each of these levels a number of sections confront each other or cooperate.



Map 5 Places and tribes mentioned in Chapter II

III. c. Blood feud and other conflicts

The Koran reiterates the Old Testamentic invective: "... a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for a tooth, and a wound for a wound"; and elsewhere: "Believers, retaliation is decreed for you in bloodshed: a free man for a free man, a slave for a slave, and a female for a female"³⁵.

Kurds claim that until recently their habits were much harsher than this command permits - as were those of pre-islamic Arabs, probably. "When one of us was killed by someone from another tribe his close relatives went after that tribe and killed the first one they saw: sometimes they killed more than one man, four or five; then of course the other tribe came to take revenge, killing some of us; and on it went, for years and years; sometimes 50 to 100 men got killed before peace was finally made". Thus an informant from Modkî; I was told substantially identical stories in many parts of northern Kurdistan. Most of the tribes here have been involved in protracted feuds. In southern Kurdistan blood feud seems to be much less frequent, if Barth's findings may be generalized³⁶. Also in Persian Kurdistan I never heard it mentioned spontaneously, but in northern Kurdistan it is still endemic, though less extravagant than formerly. The numbers I was given may be exaggerated: the stories told were rather inexact because memory had embellished them and brought them more in line with what the events should have been like.

Note that neither in the Koran nor in the stories I was told is there any suggestion that the murderer himself should be killed for revenge: in the tribal milieu a murder is not primarily an individual affair, but one between groups. The difference between tribal custom and koranic law is that more than just one eye is taken for an eye and that revenge is answered by counter-revenge (which the Koran forbids). In areas where government control is incomplete and/or corrupt, such as the mountainous southeast of Turkey, such feuds still persist:

In the large village of Uludere, formerly populated by Assyrians, and since their departure in World War I repopulated by Kurds of the Goyan tribe, there are a number of seemingly unrelated baviks (see p. 48) of quite unequal strength, living in physically separate quarters (mahalle). A year before I visited Uludere a member of a small, rather weak lineage had eloped with the daughter of a powerful member of another, large lineage. Elopement is a rather risky affair requiring quite some daring, even recklessness. When the young man ran off with his beloved - whom he had to kidnap from her own house - he was discovered, and a fight ensued in which he or one of his helpers wounded a relative of the girl's. The young couple is far away now, living somewhere in the west of Turkey, but that was no impediment to revenge, which was severe. Two men of the eloper's bavik were killed; not just any two, but two of the best men the bavik had. Since then peace, or rather a truce was made between the two lineages, the smaller one realizing that it would always remain the loser against the much stronger one, and therefore preferring to leave persecution and punishment of the murderers to the state (it was also a government official who negotiated the peace). But the atmosphere was still very tense (partly maybe because the murderers were still at large). Members of the two baviks concerned avoided each other as much as possible, frequented different tea-shops (there are two in Uludere); and occasionally there is some shooting between the mahalles where these baviks live. Since I left the feud has re-begun and at least two more people have been killed.

When killer and victim are socially far apart it is often not even possible to take revenge against the original culprit himself. If a tribal chieftain were killed by a non-tribal, subjected serf and the chieftain's relatives' only revenge would be to kill that serf, they would in fact be lowering the chieftain to the rank of a serf. But the idea that a serf would kill a lord just on his own account is incongruous to tribesmen; they would immediately suspect another chieftain of instigating the murder, and this chieftain would be the legitimate target for revenge. This is a highly hypothetical case though; neither in literature nor during my field-work did I come across a single case of a chieftain who was killed by a low status individual (if they are killed, it is generally done by relatives or other "equals"). The reverse, however used not infrequently to occur. Non-tribal Kurds as well as christian groups were formerly kept in very subservient positions, much like

serfs on European feudal estates. Their lords (tribal chieftains, usually) considered them their private property, owned in the same way as their sheep and mules (even now, some older aghas still speak about "filehên min", "my christians"). And just as killing someone's sheep is an act that calls for revenge, similarly was killing someone's christian.

Taylor, British consul at Diyarbekir in the 1860's, related that in his time the christian peasants in the district Botan (called "zêrkirî", "bought with gold") were bought and sold together with the land on which they worked. Each of them thus "belonged" to a (tribal Kurdish) lord. With horror Taylor told how, after a zêrkirî had been killed by (or at the instigation of) another chieftain, his lord, as a revenge, killed two of the culprit's zêrkirîs, "although they had no part in the assassination of their co-religionist"³.

Taylor apparently did not notice that it is only in killing two instead of one zêrkirî the lord transgressed koranic law ("...a slave for a slave..."). Killing someone's serf is indeed like killing his mule or stealing his sheep: no one would expect animals or serfs to take their own revenge; such is the lord's affair (besides, the christians were not allowed to carry arms, so would hardly be capable of taking revenge). Tribal law is by definition law from the view point of the tribesman, not from that of the subjected. Taylor noticed this particular case because the serfs were christians ("Chaldaeans"). Subjected non-tribal Kurds, however, are in the same position: it is always their overlord who takes revenge on their behalf, up to the present day. This is precisely one of the reasons why non-tribal peasants rather lived in serfdom than in independence. "belonging" to a powerful tribal chieftain is the best protection one can enjoy, whereas independence would make one vulnerable to forays by any robber.

When killer and victim belong to the same tribe, clan, or lineage, the range of possible targets for revenge is more narrowly circumscribed. This can be illustrated with Fig. 1 again, where we

interpret the triangles as households, lineages, etc. Suppose a man from household 2 is killed by one from household 14; then the whole clan C would be target for revenge, and the whole of A would be the revengers (in practice only the victim's closest relatives will actively try to take revenge, say lineage a). If the killer belonged to household 7 the lineages α and β would become opposed in a blood feud (and γ would stay out of the quarrel now), whereas if the killer were a member of household 4, the range of possible targets would have narrowed down to b, and only a would be the revengers. A blood feud thus implies a confrontation of segmentary groups on the level defined by the degree of relationship of the original killer and his victim.

Now in most parts of Kurdistan it has become unacceptable to kill just any member of the target-lineage thus defined. Only the killer himself or his immediate relatives (brothers, sons) are thought legitimate targets. But the enmity accompanying the feud is still one between lineages, as is shown by the mutual avoidance of members of the two lineages. The communal character of the feud shows itself even more clearly when it is arranged that blood-money (bej) will be paid to the relatives of the victim who then renounce further revenge. (The Koran recommends this solution: "He who is pardoned by his aggrieved brother shall be prosecuted according to usage and shall pay him a liberal fine"³⁸) This blood-money is to be paid by the lineage as a whole, and when its amount is settled not only the importance of the victim (and thus his "value") and that of the killer are taken into account, but also size and bounty of the entire lineage (the killer's). Distribution of the burden of the bej within the lineage is usually unequal, and varies according to circumstances, but every member should make at least a token contribution. The money is not distributed among the members of the victim's lineage. If his father is still alive he should receive it, otherwise brothers or the other relatives who take care of the victim's family.

Ending feuds by mediation

Such a peaceful end to the conflict is not spontaneously reached, it is the result of mediation by an influential person. The threatened party takes recourse to someone whose authority it knows or expects to be acknowledged by those from whom it expects a revenge attack. Sometimes this is the chief of the clan or tribe; if this chief belongs to one of the feuding lineages however he is himself involved in the conflict and cannot at the same time mediate. The higher the level of confrontation between feuding units, the more difficult it will be to find an acceptable mediator ³⁹. In the Modkan district (near Bitlis) someone told me: "In a feud between relatives usually bej was agreed upon, and the feud thus ended; but feuds between different tribes could never be terminated this way, the only way to pay for blood was with blood". This seems to reflect the fact that there was no one in the area whose authority was acknowledged by more than one tribe (or even clan).

Sometimes the chief of a neighbouring tribe may try to intervene in a feud between large clans or tribes, but the powerful men in the feuding groups are very reluctant to let this happen, as this gives the mediating chief a certain leverage over their tribe(s); it adds to his prestige at their expense. "Ser zehf in, lê serê ko ser pê bibihîsine kême", says a proverb from northern Kurdistan ⁴⁰: "Chiefs there are many, but the chief to whom chiefs listen is rare".

This suggests a (partial) explanation of two well-known phenomena in Kurdistan: the conspicuous and influential position of shaikhs (religious leaders), and the prevalence of tribal leaders of "foreign" origin, i.e. originating from other areas of Kurdistan or of Arabic descent (real or reputed). Many leading families in Kurdistan used to claim to belong to Arab families that had played an important role in the history of Islam. A person who does not belong to any of the major clans/lineages of a tribe and is recognized as its leader is the ideal person to mediate in intra-tribal conflicts. In fact, his role as a mediator is what keeps

him in power.

Shaikhs are outside the tribal organization, ideally. They should have no narrow loyalties to any one tribe, only to God and the community of believers. The "typical" shaikh combines a reputation for piety, spiritual powers and wisdom with a shrewd political insight; the ones that achieved prominence were all excellent manipulators. As close to being God's representative on earth as anyone can hope to become, they are the most obvious people to ask for mediation. Nearly all inter-tribal disputes (and many intra-tribal ones) that are resolved are so through the mediation or intercession by a shaikh. This in turn enhances their position. In the period between approximately 1820 and 1860 there was an increase in the number of shaikhs, at the same time their political prominence became more marked. As will be argued below (Ch IV. sec. g) the shaikhs' increasing importance was related with the disappearance of the last semi-independent Kurdish rulers (in the first half of the 19th century) as a consequence of the Ottoman state's centralization efforts. These rulers had until then administered justice and usually were able to impose solutions to conflicts. Their disappearance made the need felt for trusted authorities who could mediate.

For obvious reasons, whenever governments (Persian, Ottoman, (republican) Turkish, Anglo-Iraqi, Franco-Syrian) tried to establish direct control they forbade revenge, tried to replace tribal law with modern civil and penal law and courts of justice, and at the same time tried to take over the ruling and mediating role from chieftains and shaikhs. (In Iraqi Kurdistan the British tried for some time to reinstate a system of indirect rule, which disproportionately increased the power of some chieftains). The most radical attempt was made by the Turks, who killed or exiled many of the traditional authorities after the Kurdish revolts of the 1920's and 1930's. This did not produce the desired effect. Turkish officials were and are distrusted: sometimes they can

impose a peaceful solution to a tribal dispute, hardly ever can they negotiate one. Several times the reverse happened: Turkish officials, in a deliberate "divide and rule", incited Kurdish tribes against each other. If anything, it seems that the removal of aghas (tribal chiefs) and shaikhs has made Kurdish society more conflict-ridden than it was before.

Dargund (a pseudonym) is a village in the Modkî area, NW of Bitlis. In 1935 the small tribes of this region revolted against the Turkish government, believing that a general Kurdish revolt was at hand. They laid siege on Modkî, the regional center and seat of administration, but the first Turkish troops arrived before they could take it. Repression was severe: most aghas and shaikhs were executed, entire villages were exiled to Thrace after a bloody military campaign. Houses were destroyed and the (walnut) trees cut, to prevent people who had escaped from coming back. Over the remaining villagers a tight control was established, with a gendarmerie post for every two or three villages, "and this is how we gradually became civilized, real Turks" (one of my informants). The people of Dargund belong to the Kîbûran tribe and in the village there are two lineages named Memo and Silo. No new tribal, lineage or village chieftains have yet arisen, nor is there anyone who is economically more powerful than the others (all are small-holding peasants). A neighbouring village used to have a resident shaikh but he was killed after the revolt. A son of his still lives there. He is still called "shaikh" and occasionally writes an amulet that protects children from the evil eye; but he has no serious authority, is not a "real shaikh", and he has become the village priest - a distinctly lower position than that of shaikh - in which capacity he receives a salary from the state. Minor conflicts (e.g. on the demarcation of plots) are sometimes settled by the gendarmerie, but this too lacks the authority and credibility to play a conciliatory role in serious tribal conflicts. There is thus a certain power - or rather: influence - vacuum. Social organization and ideology are tribal, but the only law-enforcing body present belongs to a quite different system of social organization, and acts from another ideology.

In 1973 someone of the Memo lineage killed a Silo, apparently by accident (as accidents go). The culprit and his brothers, fearing revenge, immediately fled, they are somewhere in the west now. All other relatives remain in the village; they know that revenge will not be taken on them personally. But the Silo feel they are wronged, and

a severe tension exists between the two lineages for which there is no release, since the killer is out of reach. (He was jailed for a short time but came free with the general amnesty of 1974, and wisely does not let anyone know where he now lives). There is no accepted authority who can bring the lineages to agree to a settlement with blood-money. Members of the lineages still avoid each other and mutual distrust prevails. In the evening people rarely leave home. When there is a wedding there is no loud party with outdoor music. The only place that was visited by both Memo and Silo was the village school where the teachers (outsiders) live and where I also stayed. But when some Memo were present and a Silo entered, the Memo usually left, and vice versa, sometimes even without finishing their tea. Tension will only slowly dissipate. It is likely the young, who in school are educated in values different from the tribal ones, that will take a more conciliatory stand. One day five of these young, 3 Memo and 2 Silo went fishing together (with dynamite). I thought that this meant that they didn't care much about the conflict between their lineages, but when I saw them march about the village where they could buy dynamite I noticed that the Memo walked on one side of the river and the Silo on the other. When they arrived at the village one of each went inside to buy dynamite. Together they walked to the spot where they were going to fish, and then split up again, Memo and Silo throwing their dynamite separately.

In Dargund, probably due to very close control, no new authorities of the traditional kind have arisen. At the same time the modern authority of the state and its organs is not really accepted, so that conflicts cannot be resolved either in the old or in the modern way. In other parts of Turkish Kurdistan (most conspicuously in the southeast) need has again "created" new petty chieftains, most of whom could rise to (or remain in) power by some form of co-operation (nationalist Kurds call it collaboration) with local government representatives. Few of them possess the unchallenged authority required for a peace-maker; by their jealous rivalries they tend to increase rather than decrease the number and extension of tribal conflicts.

I met only one case where members of feuding lineages really "forgot" the feud without its being formally resolved:

B. is a young worker whose family left their village (near Agri) some years ago because of a blood feud in which they

feared revenge. No one of the older generation ever dared go back, but B. does so regularly without feeling any danger. He tells that most of the younger people there have some education, and are socialists and Kurdish nationalists like himself - their socialism may be superficial but it is honest and they try to fight the tribal mentality; for the young from the "enemy" lineage their friendship with B. is a matter of pride.

Marriage type and tribal conflict

A factor that may contribute to making conflicts between tribal sections more severe and enduring in Kurdistan than in many other tribal societies is the fact that tribal sections of all levels are largely endogamous. There is a clear preference for marriage with the father's brother's daughter (real as well as classificatory). In fact, a girl's father's brother's son has the theoretical right to deny her to anyone else. If her father wishes to marry her to a stranger, he has in theory to ask permission to do so from his nephews, unless they have already renounced their right of first proposal. (I have never witnessed a concrete case where this happened, but I heard of this custom in various corners of Kurdistan). And if a boy wants to marry a girl who is his father's brother's son it is very difficult for the girl's father to refuse him, if not impossible.

Everywhere the bride-price a FaBrSo has to pay is considerably lower than the one for strangers, which - quite apart from what the origins, causes or functions of this custom are - favours the choice of a father's brother's daughter as a marriage partner. It is evident that a consistent practice of this marriage type leads to extreme segmentariness (see Fig. 2). Whereas cross-cousin marriage (especially where both cross-cousins may be married) cements multiple relationships between the lineages, the strict endogamy resulting from father's brother's marriage only enhances the segmentary character of the lineages. As the extreme example of Fig. 2 shows, the lineages are completely isolated; there are no affinal relations to soften the potential conflicts between them.

Reality is of course less rigorous: not everyone marries his father's brother's daughter (although surprisingly many do). Unfortunately I have not been able to collect sufficient statistics, so that the only ones available are still those of Barth from southern Kurdistan⁴¹.

Even when a girl is not married to a father's brother's son, close

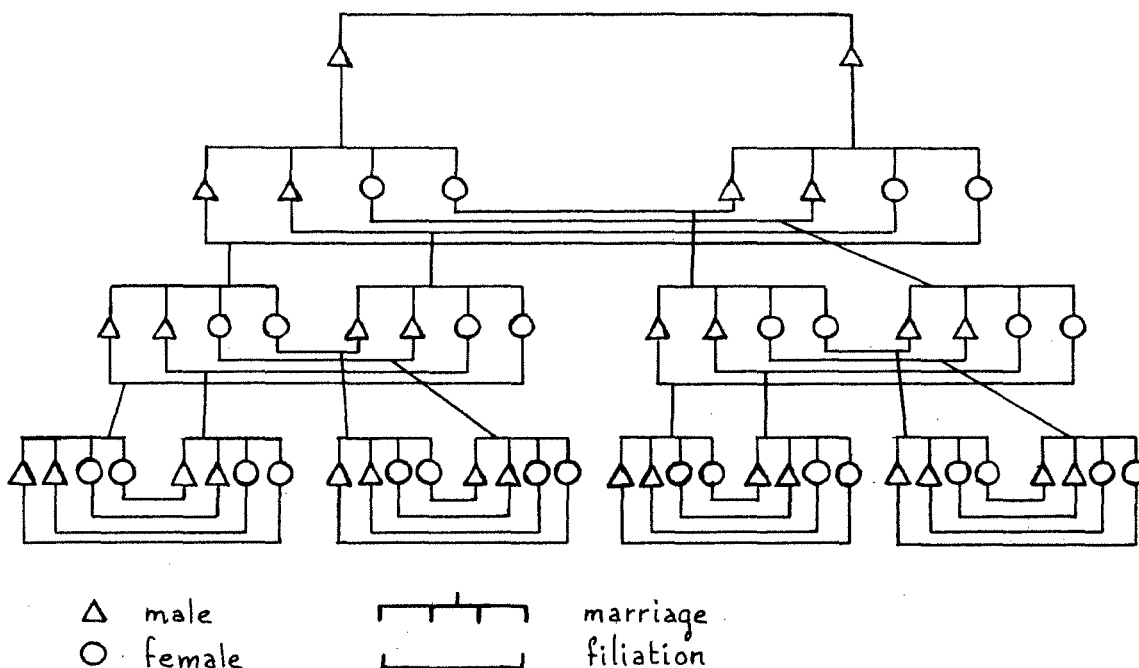


Fig 2 Consistent father's brother's daughter marriage

relatives are preferred to distant relatives, and all (?) relatives are preferred to strangers.

In northern Kurdistan I found an interesting custom expressing the rights of the young men of a village to the girls of that village. If the girl is married to an outsider (i.e. a young man of another village) the young men of her village do not let her go with her bridegroom's father unless he has paid them a symbolic sum of money. On days of such marriages I saw roadblocks (manned by very young boys!) at the exit of the bride's village, where the party that came to take the bride was held up, and "forced" to pay small bribes.

Other sorts of conflict

I have treated the blood feud here rather than any other tribal conflict for two reasons: it is often used by the Kurds themselves to illustrate what it means to belong to a taife (i.e. it is part of their own definition of tribal social structure), and the collective responsibility expressed in the payment of bej expresses better than anything else the principle of segmentary opposition. Many other conflicts follow more or less similar patterns but provide less insight in segmentation. Often such conflicts are

between units that are well articulated under ordinary circumstances already. An example is the stealing of animals from a certain village by nomads belonging to a certain tent group. In such cases retaliation (with a generous rate of interest) is again collective, and may in turn lead to counter-revenge.

Many other tribal conflicts are strongly leader-oriented: they are between two competing chieftains with their followers rather than between tribal sections as such. This latter aspect is rarely absent from tribal conflicts, even in "pure" blood feuds it often plays a part.

All kinds of conflict may result in blood feuds: as a conflict escalates blood is due to be shed.

II. d Higher than the tribe?

Units larger than the tribe

It might be supposed that the principle of segmentary opposition and alliance as vigorously displayed within the tribe would also operate on higher levels: confederations of tribes, emirates (such Kurdish principalities, headed by a mîr or bey, and composed of quite large numbers of tribes, existed well into the 19th century), or even the whole Kurdish nation (as opposed to other nations, such as the Turkish, Persian, Arabic, Armenian).^{41a} As far as the Kurdish nation is concerned - and we should be reluctant in the use of this term even as late as the beginning of this century - this is obviously not the case. Every Kurdish nationalist movement was opposed not only by central governments (that were Turkish, Persian or British/Arabic) but by quite large numbers of Kurds as well. Even in the last war in Iraq (1974/75), when active participation was on an unprecedented scale (over 50,000 active fighters plus a large number who contributed in other ways) the movement was fought not only by the regular Iraqi army but also by Kurdish irregulars who apparently numbered in the tens of thousands! There were various reasons for this opposition, of course,

but the most important single reason was that success of the movement would bestow additional power and prestige upon its leaders and those traditional authorities close to the leadership, to the inevitable detriment of their traditional rivals, whose interest lay therefore with the powers inimical to the movement: its defeat would add to their own power - as long as nationalism had not become a stronger motivating force than tribal loyalty.

A case could be made for the emirates; in some the mîr's authority appears to have been strong and unquestioned, his commands to have been obeyed by all his subjects. As will be shown in Ch. III, however, in many cases the unity of these emirates was precarious, and broke down in confrontations with other (Kurdish) emirates or central government. One out of many examples is the following. When in 1832 the expansive mîr of Riwandiz (Kor Paşa, "the blind pasha") overran the neighbouring emirate of Behdînan and placed his brother Resûl in command of its capital Amêdî he seems not to have met with any serious opposition of the Behdînan tribes. The former mîr, Ismaîl Paşa, tried in vain to find help in the emirates Hekarî and Botan and with the Ottoman governor of Mosul to reconquer his capital. Attempts to raise his tribes against the usurper were equally in vain. This was the end of the emirate; its unity was never restored. Of the petty chieftains some collaborated with Resûl Beg, others with the Ottoman governor, others again were loyal to none but themselves⁴².

Internal rivalries and external sources of power
Even on the level of the tribe unity against outsiders may remain restricted to the domain of ideology. The tribe should be one against outsiders (especially against other tribes), as everyone admits, but in fact it very often is not. In case of conflict between two tribes it may happen that a section of one of them makes common cause with the other one - either because of an internal (blood) feud that is taken very seriously, or (more frequently) because the sectional leader has an axe to grind with

the paramount chieftain. Especially before, in this century, central governments severely curtailed the chieftains' powers there were perpetual struggles for leadership of the tribe. Each of the rivals tried to manipulate the socio-political environment in order to get the better of the others. For such people the relevant classification is not "my tribe" vs "the other tribes" but "the power sources my rivals are tapping" vs "the power source I might tap". From a very early date this environment included not only other tribes and powerful chieftains but also powerful states. Manipulation of the central state in order to get the upper hand in a local, tribal conflict is a recurrent theme in Kurdish history.

Around 1600 A.D. the strong Mûkrî tribe (now sedentary south of Lake Rezayeh) was rent by a feud within the chiefly lineage. At that time northeastern Kurdistan was contested territory between the Ottoman and Persian (Safavid) empires. From 1603 Shah Abbas was campaigning in Azerbaijan, Armenia and Kurdistan and on the 24th Aug 1605 he won a decisive battle against the Ottomans, thanks to, among others, a regiment of Mûkrî tribesmen. The rival section of the Mûkrî had fought at the Ottoman side, as becomes apparent from a story Malcolm (writing from the point of view of the Persians) related, and which is too charming not to quote it in full:

"As Shah Abbas sat upon the field of battle, carousing with his chief officers and some of the principal captives, a man of uncommon stature and soldier-like appearance was led past by a youth, who had just made him prisoner. The King demanded who that was. "I belong to the Kurd family of Mookree" said the captive. The King happened to have an officer of the house of Mookree in his service, of the name of Roostum Beg, who he knew had a blood feud with the family of the prisoner. "Deliver that captive to Roostum Beg" said the King; but that chief refused to receive him. "I hope your majesty will pardon me" he said; "my honour, it is true, calls for his blood, but I have made a vow never to take advantage of an enemy who is bound, and in distress." This noble and generous speech seemed to reflect upon the King, who, in his irritation, called the captain of the guards to strike off the head of the prisoner. The gigantic Kurd, the moment he heard this command, broke the cords with which he was fettered, drew his dagger, and darted upon Abbas. A struggle ensued, and in the general hurry of all to aid their sovereign, every light was extinguished, and no one dared to strike

in the dark, lest he should pierce the monarch instead of his enemy. After a moment of inexpressible horror, all were relieved by hearing the King twice exclaim: "I have siezed his hand! I have seized his hand!" Order was restored, and lights brought. The brave but unfortunate captive was slain by a hundred swords; and Abbas who had wrested the dagger from his hand, reseated himself in the assembly, and continued (according to the historian) to drink goblets fo pure wine, and to receive the heads of his enemies, till 12 o'clock at night."⁴³

This is not the first, nor the last occasion where Kurds fought Kurds, even members of their own tribe, in the service of opposing empires, fights in which, irrespective of the outcome, the Kurds themselves would ultimately be the losers. In retrospect, and seen from the outside, these self-defeating politics appear irrational. But from the viewpoint of the Kurdish participant things must have looked quite different. At the time of the Mûkrî feud the most significant sources of power in the environment were the Persian and Ottoman armies. It was to be expected that at least one of the feuding sections would try to use their presence to its advantage - if they were not obliged to take sides with one or the other. The winning side would no doubt recognize those leaders that had sided with them, add an official title and robes of honour to their actual powers, and eliminate or at least reduce their rivals. And as soon as one section had joined one army, the other was forced to join the other one, and put up the best fight they could, so that hopefully their side would be victorious. What was a decisive battle for the two empires, was for the Mûkrî a "continuation of tribal politics with other means", to paraphrase Clausewitz.

Dichotomy of the social universe

In fact, beside the primary ideological concept of segmentary opposition and alliance (and of solidarity of the tribe against outsiders) one finds sometimes traces of the concept of a dichotomy of the social universe that cuts through tribal units:

In the emirate of Hekarî the tribes were grouped as those

of the left and those of the right. Central in each class was a confederation of tribes, the Ertûşî and the Pinyaniş, in the west and the east, respectively. A number of smaller tribes, interspersed among or at the periphery of these confederations were also classed with one of the two "halves", and so were the small lineages living in the two towns of the emirate, in such a way that not only the entire emirate, but also each region of it as well as the towns contained both "right" and "left". The mîr, of course, was beyond this classification; he could rule by playing one against the other.

Now, 130 years after the last mîr was deposed, the same division still exists, though it is no longer called by the labels "left" and "right". In elections for parliament - a serious affair with repercussions on the local balance of power - usually both Pinyaniş and Ertûşî put up a candidate. Although Turkey - to which Hakkarî now belongs - has a multi-party system, in Hakkarî no more than two political parties take part in the elections, the ones to which these candidates have happened to attach themselves (these are not always the same parties). Since Hakkarî is more conflict-ridden now than in the time of the emirate, the dichotomy now also rents individual tribes apart. Within each of the confederations there are a number of sections whose leaders are in conflict with the established authorities of their confederation and/or tribe; these will now ally themselves with the opposing candidate. In tribes that do not belong to any of the confederations and where there is an internal feud the rival sections will wait till one of them has aligned itself, after which the other one will immediately join the opposite side. In this way all conflicts and oppositions, which at ordinary times exist independently of each other, are at the time of elections made to fit within a complete dichotomy of society.

An interesting feature of this dichotomy is that it is permanent in that there are always the two "factions" organized around the chief families of the two confederations (and in that it never becomes a division into three factions), while on the other hand allegiance fluctuates: a chieftain may suddenly change sides (he may have been promised desired spoils, for instance; or a new dispute may have arisen), with the consequence that some of his friends follow him and some rivals/enemies go to the side he has left. In another context Rondot⁴⁴ encountered a dichotomy that was

applied to a wider universe, and even more clearly split the tribe:

It has been mentioned before (p.41,48) that the Omeryan tribe consists of two clans (Mehmûdkan and Etmankan) that live side by side throughout most of Omeryan territory. Now one of Rondot's informants claimed that not only the Omeryan, but the neighbouring tribes as well, split up into these same two clans, and that in fact the tribes further away all were either Mehmûdkan or Etmankan. He thus extrapolated the division within his tribe to the whole of Kurdistan as far as he knew it. It is conceivable, however, that Rondot's informant had himself made up the latter part of the extrapolation, linking the dichotomy perceived in the own (and maybe in the neighbouring) tribe(s) with the quite general legend that originally there were two tribes of Kurds, the Zilan and the Milan, from which most present tribes of northern Kurdistan derive⁴⁵.

From these cases it may be clear that a certain dualistic world-view is present, but is not well-developed. It is secondary to the segmentary view, and where it exists, is combined with this. It is worth noticing that Rondot's same informant told that a Mehmûdkan bavik in his own village had once nearly gone over to the Etmankan (because the other Mehmûdkan bavik of the village did not help them to boost their chieftain's position)⁴⁶. Here too, belonging to one of the two "factions" is less than permanent; that much the "halves" of both mentioned dichotomies have in common with the tribe.

But why a dichotomy; why not 3 or more "factions" ? A model like Barth's for coalitions among Pathan political entrepreneurs⁴⁷ might go some way towards explaining why the rival petty chieftains of Hekarî align themselves in two coalitions, but in the Omeryan case a similar explanation would not be satisfactory. The question is not entirely theoretical, since - in my opinion - the dualistic world-view is one of the reasons why the Barzanî-led nationalist movement took the particular course it has followed. The whole environment (tribes, political parties, factions within the nationalist movement, the Iraqi and neighbouring governments, the superpowers) was placed into a simple dualistic classification, in which my enemy's enemy is my best friend. There never was strategy

based on a theory of revolution, only tactics that consisted in trying to move units in the environment from the one half of the world to the other (i.e. from Barzanî's opponents side to Barzanî's side).

Chieftains' rivalries and the breakdown of tribal unity
Returning now to the observation that tribal unity against outsiders often breaks down because of petty rivalries among the leaders, who all try to get outside support, I want to make two additional remarks:

1. This tendency made it relatively easy for (external) governments to establish nominal authority in Kurdistan by simply supporting favourite chieftains against their traditional rivals and buying their "loyalty" with titles, robes of honour, salaries and "law-enforcing" gendarmerie that sometimes developed into the chieftain's private army. Full control, on the other hand, appeared extremely difficult to achieve, since every chieftain that had become "loyal" had his rivals, who were thus forced into "rebellion". Especially the British administration in Iraq innocently managed to polarize many tribes⁴⁸. Honestly believing in the superiority of their rule, they mistook chieftains' pragmatic allegiance for love of themselves and called it "loyalty". Of course they were horribly shocked when a supposedly "loyal" chieftain "rebelled". The best known example is that of Shaikh Mahmud (Şêx Mehmûd Berzencî), a leader both power-greedy and sincerely nationalistic, whom the British have never forgiven for trying to use them in order to establish an independent Kurdistan instead of allowing them to use him in order to subdue it.
2. Members of an influential family may also ally themselves to opposing external powers of reasons other than an internal dispute and rivalries: the wise counsel not to put all one's eggs in a single basket is known and followed throughout the

Middle East. Maybe it was put into practice most conspicuously by Iran's aristocracy. These families ensured that at least one of their members sat in each of the political parties (i.e., before these were abolished), so that, whatever the vicissitudes, of political events, the family always had someone close to power. In Kurdistan also this is not an unknown phenomenon, although more in urban circles than in the tribal milieu proper. In southern Kurdistan (Iraq) a number of "great" families were (in the time of the monarchy, i.e. before 1958) represented in the government as well as in the legal opposition. When the monarchy was overthrown and the communist party emerged from illegality some of those families suddenly appeared to have someone there too, which was very useful during the campaigns against landlords. They could direct peasant anger against landowning families other than their own.

Leadership and conflict are closely interrelated. Disputes generally need the intervention of recognized authorities in order to be settled, and a leader's authority is confirmed and increases with every serious dispute he resolves. On the other hand, disruptive tribal conflicts result from power struggles between rival leaders. An important task of tribal leaders (in the case of paramount chieftains it is virtually the only one) is to lead in conflicts, to wage war with other tribes or lineages. In periods of peace the function of the tribal chief does not amount to much, and the unity of his tribe exists in name only. Often therefore, ambitious chieftains actively seek conflicts, in order to re-affirm their leadership and the unity of their tribe and to enlarge the scope of both. It is no exaggeration to say that quarrelling and mediating in other people's quarrels are the most important activities by which one can establish, consolidate and extend one's authority - if we exclude seeking help from outside⁴⁹. The central governments that brought Kurdistan under closer control in the course of this century understandably claimed a monopoly in the exercise of physical violence. As their control became more effective, the road to power through the manipulation of violent conflicts was gradually closed. In order to rise to power, in the tribal domain, knowing how to deal with government officials (which had always been a useful skill) became essential. It seems that, even more than before, chieftains began to depend on external power sources to rise to, or to maintain power. Outsiders who had spoils to distribute that could change the local or regional balance of power (e.g. British Political Officers in Iraqi Kurdistan during the occupation and mandate⁵⁰) saw a multitude of petty and not-so-petty chieftains whose main occupation seemed to consist of intriguing with and against each other, in ways often too intricate and machiavellistic for those naive and "honest" foreigners to gauge their full depth.

As the traditional methods of achieving political dominance are rapidly disappearing, much of the following sections refers to situations that no longer exist, and is based on interviews and written materials. In section II. j some aspects of the change in methods and style of leadership are illustrated by an extended description of two cases.

Who becomes the leader?

In a tribe there are usually several contenders for leadership, as there is no unique rule as to who should be made leader. Lineage structure is symmetrical in that, within any one generation, all individuals occupy structurally identical positions. Let the triangles in Fig. 1 represent persons; the whole diagram then obviously represents a lineage. There are no structural considerations that could point out any one in the present generation (row V) as the leader; apparently everyone can make equal claims. If there is no other mechanism that unequivocally determines who will be appointed, a struggle for leadership may ensue, ending in survival of the fittest. This is a problem all tribal societies face; a mechanism many have adopted is primogeniture, which establishes a consistent ranking of the members of each generation. If we assume that in Fig. 1 the left-to right dimension gives the order of birth, the members of the present generation are drawn exactly in order, (numbers 1 to 16) from "high birth" to "low birth". Generally there is a tendency for people far left in the diagram to intermarry, which leads to a definite social stratification. Lineages of this type are known as "conical clans".

Conical clans are not encountered in Kurdistan. Primogeniture exists, and is paid lip-service to, but it is mainly on the household level that it is generally applied, and not even there strictly. When the father dies the eldest son becomes the head of the household, unless an (unmarried or widowed) brother of the deceased is living in; but this uncle generally has to cede when

the son comes of age.

Leadership of the lineage or the tribe is generally inherited within the same family, but there is no fixed rule of succession. In some tribes the eldest son is thought to be the best successor (but then the rule is still applied quite flexibly), in others it is the elders of lineage or tribe who - in theory at least - choose the brother or son or nephew they consider most fit to succeed to the position. He should be a "man" in the full meaning of the word: strong, courageous, just and generous a good strategist and a wise judge, and nowadays it is also important that he know how to deal with "government people" (to avoid excessive taxation, to help his dependents to evade military service, etc.). In practice often sheer power, even brutal violence, and shrewd manipulation are involved. This is true a fortiori when leadership is taken over from one family by another, as often happened in the bigger tribes; thus the very large Hevêrkan tribe was ruled by 3 different dynasties in the past century (the career of its last great chieftain, Haco, will be discussed in sec. II. j). Somewhat different is the situation among other large tribes (such as the Herkî and the Caf⁵¹) where a more or less stable chiefdom has developed: each of the clans - of diverse origins - has its own chieftain or chieftains, but paramount leadership is vested in a separate "royal lineage" called Begzade. The Begzade enforce their rule through a kind of praetorian guard consisting of the best fighting men of the tribe or even from without the tribe. Any paramount chieftain should be a Begzade (who form something of a separate caste, not intermarrying with commoners); "dynastic" changes are here between different branches of the same Begzade lineage. An even more developed political system was that of the emirates, which possessed many of the characteristics of the state. Here too there were fierce struggles for power, but since very few families had such a reputation as to be accepted as supreme leaders so widely, such struggles were mainly between branches of the same ruling family (see the case studies in sec.

III. f). In addition, according to Nikitine, the rulers of a number of emirates belonged to one and the same family⁵³.

II. f Leadership: titles and functions

It has been said before that it is difficult or even impossible to decide which unit should be labelled "tribe" or "tribal confederation", "clan" or "lineage", and that the Kurdish terminology does not strictly correspond with the levels of organization in our abstract model. Similarly Kurdish terminology does not distinguish between leaders of the tribe, clan or lineage: all are simply called "aĶa" (agha) - with a few exceptions: the heads of shallow lineages such as the bavik of the Omeryan (see p 48) are called "mezin" ("great" or "big man") or "maqûl" (wise man), nôt "aĶa". Head of the village among the Omeryan is generally the mezin of the largest bavik (among the Goyan this mezin is also called "aĶa"). Every lineage has a number of elders or rî spî (lit. "white-beards"), who are supposed to advise the agha and elect his successor but have no real power. An agha is apparently a leader who rules⁵⁴, but by extension also his close relatives may be given this title. In southern and eastern Kurdistan leaders of the tribe or clan are alternatively called "reîs" (from the Arabic: "headman"). "Xan" and "beg" are originally feudal titles bestowed upon paramount chieftains of the tribe; they are usually added to the name, e.g. "Elî Xan", "Resûl Beg". They have gone out of use now, with the feudal roles they belonged to. I have never heard anyone talk of chieftain as "a xan" or "a beg", even when the person referred to had a right to one of these titles. "Beg" was often employed for urbanized Kurds who had administrative positions and were at the same time absentee landlords. One of my key informants described the difference as it existed around Diyarbekir in the 1920's: "The agha is the tribal leader who lives in the mountains among his tribe; the beg lives in town, he may be and may not be a tribal chieftain originally. A beg is literate, an agha illiterate. The beg is civilized and he

engages in politics, the agha fights. Begs possess often large land-holdings (in the plains, cultivated by non-tribal peasants), the agha of the mountains is not the landlord of his tribesmen, who own their own parcels of land".⁵⁵

Among the semi-nomadic and sedentary tribes - to which I shall restrict this discussion mainly - the village is the most conspicuous unit, and it is to be expected that the political (and economical) landscape in which the villagers live is dominated in the first place by village leaders (tribe and clan leaders are also leaders of their own village). Leach distinguished village agha, taife agha and eşîret agha, but it is only the village agha of whose functions he could give a coherent description. Leach noticed two things about the village agha among the Balik tribe:

1. He "owns" the village (in some sense of the word):
 - a) he can evict villagers when he wants to (which Leach rightly doubts, since he is closely related to most of them);
 - b) the villagers pay him part of the yield.
2. He is responsible for the upkeep of the guest house.

Of these two, the more significant for traditional leadership is the guesthouse. It is one of the bases of an agha's reputation, and it mirrors his status. Therefore, before discussing Leach's analysis, a few words about this institution.

II. g The guest-house (dîwan, dîwanxane)

(Preliminary note: guest-houses, and guest-rooms still exist, but most have lost much of their splendour, and villagers do not frequent them so faithfully as they used to do until ten or twenty years ago. Much of this section is based on interviews).

Every traveller passing by a village can make a claim to the proverbial Kurdish hospitality. Most aghas have a special room or

separate building where travellers can rest, are entertained, given tea and a good meal, and a bed for the night. If the traveller wishes to stay for a few days nobody will object, the agha will say "my house is your house, stay as long as you wish" - although there are quite a few subtle ways to make a guest feel he has overstayed his welcome.

Since the agha represents his people to the outer world, his treatment of foreigners is the honour of the village (or lineage, or tribe). Generosity is a requirement for any agha, rarely will a miser rise to much influence (unless by brutal violence). Lavishness shown in one's guest-house adds to one's reputation⁵⁶. The degree of this show of hospitality depends on the statuses of both guest and host. A village agha who is more generous than the agha of the clan encompassing his village becomes a serious rival of this "superior" agha, and will soon enjoy loyalty from others beside his co-villagers.

Entertaining guests has other advantages as well: travellers are the carriers of news, and in spite of modern communications as radio, this means of information acquisition is still highly important⁵⁷. Especially aghas who want to play a wider political role need the kind of intelligence only travellers can furnish. Sometimes aghas also send men of their own on travels to collect information in others people's guest-houses.

But the guest-house has a number of other functions too, as already implied by the names it is given in Kurdish: sometimes Mêvanxane (guest-house), but usually dîwan or dîwanxane (court), sometimes odayê gund (village room). In their heyday all male villagers came and sat here in the evenings, and discussed daily matters. Minor disputes were brought here before the agha, decisions regarding the village (or lineage, or tribe) were taken here, the young were taught traditions and etiquette; also entertainment was centralized here⁵⁸.

It should be added that the agha thus monopolized social life in the village; common villagers, for instance, were not allowed to

lodge guests in their own houses, but had to bring them to the guest-house, so that the agha kept close control of what was going on.

The elaborateness of the dîwan varied from time to time and from place to place. Among nomads it was - and is - simply a section of the agha's tent, furnished with carpets and cushions (that this can be quite awe-inspiring, too, is shown by the picture of the head of the Milan tribe, fig. 2 in Montagne (1932)). In the Balik area it was in summer "a shady pergola....erected close to the agha's house and furnished with carpets, seats and cushions", while in winter guests were accommodated in the agha's house⁵⁹. When I visited the same area in 1975 most villages had a dîwan in a separate room in the agha's house, as in most other parts of Kurdistan. The most elaborate dîwans, and the most luxurious ones I found among the Kurds of the northern Cezîre (the northernmost part of Mesopotamia, west of Mosul); the Kurds who settled here at the beginning of the century went through a half-century of great prosperity. With the re-introduction of agriculture (early this century) aghas usurped the ownership of the extremely fertile land (formerly held collectively as the tribe's pasture) and demanded a share of the peasants' crops. Much of this income was spent on the dîwanxanes. In fact, the first solid houses of newly established villages were usually the agha's house and the dîwanxane; the others still lived under the tent, half shepherd, half cultivator. Some of the guest-houses were well-known hundreds of kilometers away through songs in which they occurred. They were maybe not representative, but certainly exemplary; that is why I shall give here a description of these, rather than other dîwans, as the most fully developed form. The dîwan is always rectangular, and has a "high" and a "low" end; the entrance is near the low end. All around, along the walls there are mattresses or cushions to sit on. An honoured guest or respected old villager may also get many comfortable cushions to lean against

(for young men leaning is an offense). The agha's place is, of course, at the high end, near him the esteemed old men and important guests are seated. The younger and lower-status a villager or guest is, the further down he has to sit; really low-status men do not even sit, but crouch near the entrance. When someone enters, everyone of equal or lower status rises to his feet and waits for the newcomer to find an appropriate place and sit down. Then, one by one, they greet and welcome him, and he returns each greeting. Sometimes the agha, too, rises to show his deference to a newcomer in spite of the latter's lower status; all others rise then, too.⁶⁰ Similarly when someone leaves people get on their feet.

Near the lower end of the dîwan stands a brazier with huge brass coffee pots or a samowar with tea, always ready for the guests that might come. It is served by the qehwecî, a man specially employed by the agha for this purpose (really great aghas had a number of servants for the dîwan alone: a tutuncî for the tobacco that is given around for rolling cigarettes, another to serve food to the guests, or to light and refill the lamps, or to spread the guest's beds; usually however the qehwecî performs all these tasks).

The dîwan as it was until recently provided a powerful mechanism of social control. The villagers were obliged to come every evening; if someone skipped a day he was asked why he hadn't come; and the person who had remained absent for a few days was severely rebuked by the agha or the elders: "What kind of man are you? You are not interested in the talk you hear here? You prefer to listen to your little woman's useless chatter? Are you a man or a woman?" Apart from the fact that most men do find men's talk more interesting than women's, and that frequently important matters are discussed in the dîwan, it would be hard to resist such pressure. Similarly young men were criticized in front of all other men present if something in their behaviour was disapproved of. The pressure was the harder since, being the younger

men, they were not allowed to speak freely and answer the accusations as they wished.

In the house of an agha where I lived for some time I was a few times thus reproached for not saying by prayers often enough. The agha made me feel as naked and helpless as a school-teacher did who once humiliated me in front of the class, back in first grade primary. Of course he only did this when many people were present; when we were alone and I could speak more freely with him he never broached the subject, knowing that there would then not be enough pressure on me.

The older men present gave the good example of what a man should be like. The young had to sit there motionless and listen, while their elders spoke; they could only whisper among themselves, never speak out loud. They had to sit perfectly straight, cross-legged; leaning against the wall was "not done", it would give a very bad impression of weakness. And so they would sit there night after night, and hear the older men discuss daily matters, plan production, discuss disputes, and organize raids when necessary. Sometimes an important decision was taken: the agha asked advice from the old and experienced men - but made the decision alone, ultimately. And the old men would talk about the old days, usually about the exploits of some great chieftain. Many aghas had a motirb, a minstrel, who would know a hundred songs and tales and epics. Accompanying himself on the fiddle (kemençe) he would sing of love and war. Also, a few times a year, wandering dervishes came by, stayed for a couple of days and sang, accompanied by hand-drums (erban), religious, mystical and pious songs, many of them in praise of some great miracle-working shaikh. Thus they provided the kind of religious education that stimulated "saint worship", something different from the scholastic teachings the village priest (if there was one) gave.

Sometimes too, the formal atmosphere would relax somewhat, and all men present, young and old, would play communal games ("guess who has the ring" etc).

I have not seen a single dîwanxane that still fully operates this way. Rapid decay had set in during the 1960's (even young people,

early in their twenties, remember them as described here). In the Syrian part of the Cezîre they were closed under government pressure, apparently they were considered hotbeds of Kurdish nationalism. This can, however, not be the sole reason of their decay. Aghas continued to entertain guests in their private homes, but attendance is not at all what it was like before. The same may be observed in the strip of the Cezîre that belongs to Turkey: guest-houses still exist here, but remain nearly empty (that is, in summer, when I was there; people told me that in winter, when they have nothing else to do, the villagers still spend most evenings in the guest-house). The underlying reasons of the dîwanxanes' decay lie in the rapid change in economical relations of the aghas and their villagers. The mechanization of agriculture (first introduced in the 1950's, becoming more widespread in the '60's) made the aghas less dependent on the villagers' labour. New relations of production emerged. Share-croppers were generally evicted from (at least part of) their plots, small landowners as well as many aghas who did not have enough land for the necessary investments became dependent on entrepreneurs who bought advanced machinery. In many cases the owners of the land saw themselves forced to let such entrepreneurs cultivate their land along capitalist lines, in exchange for a part of the crop only. Many villagers for whom no work (except maybe a few days a year) remained now work elsewhere as seasonal labourers during most of the summer. Thus social ties between the villagers loosen rapidly⁶¹, which is reflected in the decline of the dîwanxane.

In southern Kurdistan Barth had noted another decline (in 1950). The most important aghas had moved to town. They had their dîwanxanes there, but these were evidently lost for the village. In the tribal villages there was a small dîwan visited by a faction only; in the non-tribal villages a number of ambitious men each had a minor guest-room in their private houses⁶². The latter was true for Turkish Kurdistan already at the beginning of this century:

guest-rooms were not very elaborate, and were visited by a limited number of men only. The owner of a dîwanxane was called "xanedan"; he was not necessarily an agha, but each xanedan could at least mobilize a faction, a sometimes amorphous sort of clientele. In central Kurdistan guest-houses proper hardly exist (anymore?). Guests are accommodated in the agha's private house, and villagers close to the agha visit his house regularly.

II. h Economical aspects: tribute to the agha

To pay for the upkeep of the guest-house the agha usually takes a contribution from the villagers. Very often this amounts to a share of 10% of the cereal crop, and if the villagers own large flocks, 1 out of every 40 sheep or goats. This contribution does not necessarily mean that the agha is the landowner and the villagers his tenants. There is difference between the rent tenants pay, and the contribution made for the upkeep of the guest-house, as the following interesting case makes clear:

In Sinarê, a village in the Turkish part of the Cezîre, the former agha was also the landowner of the village. In a partial land reform in the fifties some plots had been redistributed among villagers, so that it was possible to distinguish between land belonging to the agha and the villagers'. When the old agha died his two sons divided the inheritance: one became agha, the other one took most of the land. Share-cropping villagers have to cede 2/3 of the produce to the owner of the land; everyone, sharecroppers as well as small owners, pays 10% of his net income in kind to the agha for the upkeep of the guest-house.

The distinction between the two kinds of prestations is not always so clear, however. Frequently land-owners take the same amount (of 10%) from the villagers as rent (in the case of absentee landlords, who obviously do not have a dîwanxane in the village, it can hardly be called anything else). Other land-owners again, (e.g. in the Syrian Cezîre) collect this amount and call it rent (they also claim the right to evict peasants), but also run a guest-house without demanding any extra tribute from the villagers. The specifications most frequently given for the agha's due are

identical with those for the islamic "alms-tax" zekat, and in Iraqi Kurdistan the tithe goes by this same name⁶³, although the agha certainly does not distribute it among the poor and needy and the priest for whom zekat is intended. Usurpation? Among tribes that call the agha's share "zekat" I found that the villagers do not yearly distribute alms, as they do in other parts (many village priests (mela) are kept alive by zekat; the land they possess does not usually support them); this suggests usurpation indeed. Another suggestion: the aghas of Şirnex (in central Kurdistan) used to collect their dues by force, about which villagers still complain vehemently: "they took 10% even of the onions", and more significantly: "they even took the mela's share!".

The Balik tribe as an example

Exaction of the tribute and responsibility for the guest-house are what Leach calls the "functional characteristics of the village agha". His account suggests that the Balik villagers were at that time landless, share-croppers on the land that all belonged to the village aghas. If that is true⁶⁴ it would be an atypical case, for among the tribes of the mountains small ownership is the rule. Only some non-tribal and non-Kurdish groups can properly be called share-croppers there, they are generally subjected to a tribal lineage (more exactly, to its agha). Leach is justly sceptical about an other aspect of the agha's "ownership" of the village: the right of eviction the agha claims to possess must be difficult to exercise, for the vast majority of the villagers are his close kinsmen⁶⁵.

The village agha owes allegiance to the clan agha, who in turn stands in the same relation to the tribe agha. Leach notes that all three claim to be the sole owners of the villages. According to Iraqi law much of the land here was still state land then, to which the tribes had usufruct rights qua tribes. Tapu registration⁶⁶ was expected to take place soon, and Leach thought the clan aghas stood the best chance to register the land as theirs. It was only the village agha, however, who could levy the tithe

(among the Balik, and acc. to Leach). The clan agha "receives gifts in proportion to his usefulness"; his main task as the clan agha had been "to arbitrate in small-scale feuds, settle disputes between neighbouring villages over grazing rights or water, settle disputes between neighbouring villages over grazing rights or water, settle divorce disputes and so forth", for which he was recompensed by the litigants⁶⁷. Even in Leach's day this was already something that belonged to the past. It can be considered a valid description for most parts of Kurdistan previously however; and in some parts it still applies.

The tribe agha's functions are even vaguer. He is also a clan and village agha, but "his function as tribal agha does not ever seem to have amounted to very much except in time of war, in which he automatically became leader of the whole group and doubtless received economic benefits accordingly"⁶⁸. The more distant tribesmen would in time of peace only send him small token payments.

In most tribes these "token payments" were more institutionalized than Leach seems to have realized. At the two great feasts of the islamic calendar (the feast ending Ramazan and the feast of sacrifice) agha's and/or representatives of every village visit the tribe agha and present him with gifts. Hay says this includes a pregnant ewe from every major flock annually⁶⁹; this practice may still be observed among some tribes, but among most the gifts are more modest, and consist of (smuggled) sugar and tea.

Among the Balik the gradual establishment of external administration in the region concentrated much power, economical and political, into the hands of the paramount chieftain (whom the British found the most loyal chieftain in the area). He received a salary and his authority was backed up with state power; when this practice was stopped his influence eclipsed rapidly. In 1975 he was no longer alive; he has a son who is devoid of any influence.

The Şekir section told me there is no tribe agha anymore.

In Leach's description it is beautifully simple:

there is a three-tiered hierarchy of:

- a) village aghas, who decide on local affairs and disputes and levy the tithe or rental from the peasants, who are their relatives;
- b) clan aghas, who judge in inter-villages disputes and are re-compensated accordingly; and
- c) the tribe agha, who represents the tribe to the outer world and has no practical duties in daily life.

The simplicity is slightly clouded by two other observations of Leach which suggest some of the dynamics of leadership:

1. An agha belonging to the tribe agha's own clan (where the tribe agha is also a clan agha) did not admit his superiority, although the tribe agha claimed him as a "vassal" (Leach, 17). This agha claimed it was he, and not the present tribe agha, who had led the tribe against the invading Russians in World War I (ibid. 18). "On all sides it was maintained that (this agha) was more of a man (...) than his nominal overlord" (ibid. 28). This agha lived in the smallest village of the district (only 2 houses!), but he had a reputation for great hospitality.

The tribe agha's main rival was thus not another clan agha, but one of the poorest village agha's! Thinking too much in terms of levels of organization and corresponding leadership (village, clan, tribe) could obscure the real processes.

2. Some village aghas among the Balik "own" more than one village. They live in one, and have a caretaker or agent (called çûxa, kîxa, or köxa) in the others who collects the contribution for him.

II. i Leadership situation among a number of different tribes

The social organization of the Balik tribe is simpler than that of most other tribes, although not so neat and systematic as Leach's description makes it seem. In this section a number of tribes with a more complex social organization will be discussed.

Mengûr

Among the Mengûr, a semi-nomadic tribe living south of the Balik, there is no village agha. Up to 1966 the kîxa, a local man appointed by the tribe agha, levied the tithe (zekat) on behalf of the tribe agha who had strong central power, backed up by a praetorian guard, a wild bunch of tough men, rowdies recruited from all clans, who lived in his house and "would kill their brothers if he ordered them to do so". More humiliating than zekat was the obligation of unpaid labour (bêgar) for the agha a certain number of days each year. This work included reaping on the agha's vast lands in the plain (the tribal Mengûr live mainly in the foot-hills, the plains are peopled by non-tribal Kurds subjected to the tribe agha), mowing grass and herbs as winter fodder for the agha's flocks, building and repair works. Villagers who refused to perform bêgar were taken by force through a sudden raid by the agha's retainers.

There are clan aghas: the agha of the Çinareî, the clan among whom I stayed, owned a village in the plain of Qale Dize which was share-cropped by non-tribal peasants, as far as I could gather. The share-croppers had to pay him 50% of the yield, in the surrounding villages (tribal as well as non-tribal), either this clan agha or the tribe agha - depending on the balance of power between the two - would exact the tithe.

Petty disputes were discussed and settled by the elders of the village, more serious ones brought before Elî AXa, the tribal chief. The latter would demand some form of payment. According to Edmonds, powerful aghas (as Elî AXa was) frequently imposed fines on offenders - to be paid to the agha not to the offended party⁷⁰. People resorted rarely to an official court of justice. Nor were there any shaikhs of great repute in the area, Elî AXa was therefore the ultimate judge and arbitrator. The small neighbouring tribe Mameş also brought some conflicts before him⁷¹.

At two points of time there occurred sudden changes in the power

situation. After Qassem's coup in 1958 there was a considerable, officially encouraged anti-landlord agitation; peasants refused to pay the tithe or rent, and refused above all bêgar. Small armed bands of students, petty officials and the most activist of the peasantry roamed the countryside and threatened the landlords; many rich shaikhs and aghas fled to Iran. Elî AXa was one of them. After the storm was over he came back and tried once more to exact bêgar. He failed, but the villagers continued to pay him zekat. After the Kurdish war started in September 1961 he managed to safeguard his position by joining the nationalist bandwagon, like many of the aghas in the region did for sometime.

Then, in 1966, a forceful personality, Heso Mêrxan, one of Barzanî's righthand men, was appointed military commander of the region. Heso, son of a poor peasant from Behdînan, did not tolerate any authority beside him, neither an agha's nor the party's. He made an end to the payment of zekat to Elî AXa, and exacted the same as a tax for the nationalist movement instead. He also required the villagers sometimes to work for him (for the movement) without recompensation. Further west commander Elî Şaban acted similarly. This of course antagonized the aghas. Some of them (not Elî AXa, apparently) took sides with the government, hoping in this way to regain their old position. They were forced to leave the area with their most faithful followers, and some of their land was distributed among poor villagers by Heso. For the common Mengûr little changed: in the winter quarters, their villages in the foot-hills north of the Qale Dize plain, Heso simply replaced Elî AXa. The kîxa was re-baptized "mes'ûlî dê" ("responsible man of the village", the title of the local representative of the Kurdish administration) and was appointed by Heso (not elected, as he should be). In the summer pastures however, far from Heso's headquarters, Elî AXa continued to exercise his traditional authority as the supreme judge and sole representative of the Mengûr in dealings with other tribes.

From the above it is clear that a rather decentralized political organization as among the Balik, where powers are divided among tribe, village and clan aghas (and where the role of the village agha is the most conspicuous) is not universal. The existence of an armed retinue among the Mengûr gave the tribe aġa a strong central control, at the expense of local leaders.

This armed retinue, or praetorian guard, is a very significant institution. It is contrary to the kinship ideology of tribal society, as the retainers will fight against their own kin if their lord orders them to (common tribesmen talked about them with ethical indignation). For this reason several authors consider the formation of a retinue system as "a decisive preliminary step in the gradual transition from a tribal towards a feudal order"^{71a}.

A discussion of the question how "feudal" Kurdish society is seems rather pointless to me, but I want to draw attention to the fact that in Germanic tribes such retinues (of seminal importance in the formation of European feudalism) arose as a consequence of these tribes' contacts with the Roman Empire!^{71b} This suggests hypotheses that will be further discussed in Ch III.

Pijder

Another type of central organization, combined with a clear stratification, we find among the Pijder. Here, as the Balik country, each village (or a small number of contiguous villages) had its own agha, to whom it paid the tithe (who "ate the village", in the plastic Kurdish idiom). These village aghas, however, were not related to the villagers here, but all belonged to one and the same lineage (called Mîrawdelf, after an eponymous ancestor Mîr Awdel Aġa who flourished around 1840). In the 1920's there were 6 recognizable branches of this lineage, of which two were perpetually competing for the paramount chieftainship. The candidates were Babekr Aġa (d. 1959) and his second cousin Ebbas (d. 1945). In some areas however members of other branches had an important share in regional power. It seems that conflicts and

disputes were brought before the village agha, and if they were more important, before the 'strongest' agha of the locally most powerful branch of the chiefly family (who was not necessarily of the own agha's branch). Disputes between the branches were, prior to 1918, checked by external expansion. Originally the Mîrawdêlî ruled over just one tribe, called Nûredînî, but later they "planted squireens or agents on an ever widening circle of villages to which they had no shadow of legal title whatever"⁷². After occupation of southern Kurdistan by the British (1918/1919) this physical expansion was stopped (but in the 50's it started again, see note 71). Conflicts between Babekr and Ebbas AXas now became quite serious. The British (asst.) political officers (A.P.O.) all felt strongly attracted to the personality of Babekr⁷³, who became the prototype of a loyal kurdish chieftain. Ebbas became equally prototypical: the untrustworthy, treacherous type. It was the role he was forced into by his rivalry with Babekr, on whom the British bestowed great powers and whose not entirely disinterested advice they asked on all occasions. Even when, after a short unsatisfactory period of indirect rule, all other regions were again administered directly by A.P.O.'s, Qale Dize and Nawdeşt were still being controlled by Babekr AXa "who held the official rank of Qaimmaqam (governor) of Qale Dize but acted also as the A.P.O.'s counsellor on matters affecting tribal politics across the frontier...or in other areas"⁷⁴. The whole tribe now virtually split into the factions of Babekr and Ebbas, who were consistently cast into a pro-government and anti-government role. The split was not along lineage lines of the rank-and-file, it was simply between the two rival branches of the leading family. The other branches sometimes stayed neutral, sometimes took sides with one of the two, depending on the credit the British had at that moment.

When they seemed strong Babekr was joined; when their prestige was low, Ebbas. All opponents of the British (e.g. Şêx Mehmûd when rebellious, and the Turkish agents who were busily making

anti-British propaganda in the early 20's, hoping to regain southern Kurdistan and incorporate it into the newly founded republic of Turkey) could count on support from Ebbas' faction. Because the Pijder were the most powerful tribe of the whole of southern Kurdistan and because Babekr was the British's staunchest ally, Ebbas was an obvious candidate for such recruitment. The balance of power was always unequal, and in the favour of the British and their man Babekr (who had indeed previously also been the stronger of the two rivals: in 1919 he could put 1000 armed men into the field, Ebbas only 500⁷⁵).

In a later stage these tribal or factional disputes were cross-cut by conflicts of another type, those between aghas on the one hand and their common tribesmen and non-tribal peasants on the other. Even among the tribesmen there were great differences in the degree of loyalty and obedience to the chiefly family. There was a faithful hard core (probably mainly consisting of their oldest subjects, the Nûredînî), while others, more recently integrated, resented their subjection and the high dues exacted from them. The Mameş, who managed to escape complete subjection (see note 71), still talk with deeply-felt hatred about the Pijder aghas. It is understandable that others who were less fortunate have similar feelings. In the 1950's when definitive land registration was taking place and the ownership of the land had to be legally decided among those who made claims to it, there were fierce legal battles between aghas and commoners. There were some minor peasant revolts, as in other parts of southern Kurdistan; land invasions and occupations took place. After Qassem's coup the anti-landlord movement found strong support among the Pijder subjects and after some clashes most of the Pijder aghas fled to Iran. They came back after the growing tensions between Kurdish nationalists and Qassem's (Arab) government had forced the class antagonisms below the threshold. For sometime the aghas could benefit from the rather generalized nationalist feelings in order to decrease the anti-landlord sentiment - for weren't the

aghaz Kurds too? Gradually, however, they lost their traditional powers to the new authorities, military commanders of the Kurdish guerrilla army. In 1969 at last they went over to the government's side, together with their loyal followers, and actively fought the nationalists. Their considerable landholdings were partly distributed among landless peasants. But after the peace settlement of 1970 they returned and regained their lands - up to the ceiling set by the new landreform law of 1970.^{75a}

Thus among the Pijder we found a definite stratification: rulers belong to the Mîrawdêlî lineage, among their subjects we can distinguish the "original" commoners (Nûredînî), more peripheral tribesmen (who had either attached themselves voluntarily or had been incorporated by conquest) and in some districts a non-tribal peasantry (subjected by force).

Hemewend

An even more rigidly hierarchical organization, in many respects similar to that of the Pijder, is that of the Hemewend⁷⁶. This tribe, once notorious robbers, already had a disciplined military organization when they entered the Ottoman Empire from Persia and conquered their present territory, subjecting the sedentary, non-tribal peasant population (now called "miskên", i.e. "poor", "servile"). The tribe is led by a Begzade lineage (like the Caf); the other lineages have their own aghas. In the past each village had to contribute a number of fighting men (10-15), led by the village agha, to the tribe's army. These small units were integrated into larger ones under the aghas of more comprehensive sections, etc. Raiding parties were organized by individual aghas, by a number of aghas communally, or - in the case of important operations - centrally by the head of the Begzade lineage. Conquest of miskên villages was apparently the work of individual aghas, who organized a war party with their tribal followers. The village was then made tributary to the agha that organized the

war-party. Some of his men (usually a relative with some followers) settled permanently in the village, collected revenue and passed (part of) it on to this agha. In a later stage the local representative(s) of the agha often completely usurped these taxes. The miskên thus do not own their land, they are share-croppers, and are separated by a caste-barrier from the tribal inhabitants of the village. Theoretically they do have the inheritable right of tenancy of specific plots, but "such rights may easily be infringed upon"⁷⁷. The miskên are not necessarily poor; some possess plots that are so large that they employ completely landless agricultural workers (usually of foreign origin). Exploitation by the Hemewend was not much worse than that of tribal peasants elsewhere by aghas of their own lineage: 10-20% of the cereal crops, a third of irrigated crops (greens, tomatoes, etc) were exacted. Thus, in miskên villages we find a stratified society: agha, tribal Hemewend commoners, miskên with inalienable occupancy rights and agricultural workers.

Before external administration became effective the "feudal" relations of Hemewend and miskên were mutually beneficial; the latter were not only exploited but also protected against other tribes. The miskên also derived economic benefits from acting as middlemen and selling in the bazars loot that the Hemewend had made in their raiding parties. But when government made its power felt more effectively these relations became antagonistic. The Hemewend could no longer raid; so they had to support themselves by taking to agriculture too, and probably by aggravating the economic exploitation. Being of higher status, they had better contacts with government officials, and could manipulate the administration in order to get advantages at the expense of the miskên (e.g., miskên claimed that Hemewend helped the police with military conscription by giving them all miskên names, and were in return themselves exempted⁷⁸). When Barth visited the area (in 1950) he found that conflicts between miskên and Hemewend dominated the scene. They were very intense then because of the

land registration that was in progress. Concrete data on the participation of these miskên in the later peasant movement I have unfortunately not been able to collect.

Dizeyî

Conquest pure and simple is not the only way non-tribal peasants were subjected, as the Pijder and Hemewend cases might suggest. The Dizeyî are a case in point. Political and economical here power are in the hands of the descendants of a certain Ehmed Paşa from Dize (?) who became an Ottoman governor of Erbil early in the 19th century, and as such managed to appropriate much land in the fertile plain of Erbil, and to impose his domination on the sedentary population. It is not clear whether his family's chieftainship over the semi-nomadic, tribal population also dates from that time, or whether they had been tribal chieftains from earlier times. The only thing that is certain is that they are from a different origin than the tribesmen themselves. Written sources rarely make the distinction between the tribal and "non-tribal" element.

According to Hay (1921 - 77) the commoners numbered nearly 30,000 in 1920, and there were 4 rival branches of the leading family. The semi-nomadic tribesmen lived in villages at the edge of the plain, which they left for the mountains in summer⁷⁹. The miskên, in villages on the plain, were submitted to an agha of the leading family, who was their landlord. The aghas between them used to own more than half the Erbil plain; their ownership is not the result of conquest (the Dizeyî tribe "is respectable and does not raid"⁸⁰), but of the collusion of the leading family with the Ottoman administration. This gave them the opportunity to acquire legal title to the land, after which the state apparatus could help them to maintain this ownership effectively - which proved to be necessary repeatedly.

Hay, who had many dealings with the Dizeyî, called Ehmed Paşa, the second most important agha "more a successful merchant and

profiteer than a tribal chief", who had become extremely rich through corruption, shrewdness and extortion⁸¹. He soon became "anti-government" because the British proved less corruptible than the Ottomans (as Hay thinks) or, more probably, because the British favoured his rival Ibrahîm Axa whom they considered the paramount chieftain. The aghas were quite unpopular with the miskên already at that time. Late in 1918 the British held a modest opinion-poll in the occupied part of Kurdistan on the expectations and wishes for the future, especially on whether or not southern Kurdistan should be included in a mainly Arab independent state. From the plains of Mosul and Erbil it was reported that "the view of the country population is that though we have freed them from Turkey, we have yet to free them from the tyranny of landowners, who are the only class in favour of Arab Government"⁸² - an interesting mixture of nationalist and class sentiments. Hay (1921: 68) mentions an occasion "where the Dizeyî refused to assist their aghas in a struggle against the authorities"; he is not clear on whether these disloyal Dizeyî were tribesmen or miskên. Under the Iraqi monarchy the Dizeyî aghas secured their overlordship by close connections with the Baghdad authorities. Some of them became members of parliament, even cabinet ministers. In 1953 a serious peasant revolt shook the Erbil plain, probably the most serious one in recent Iraqi history. The frightened landlords (most of whom were already absentees living in towns) fled from the district and were later brought back under protection of the army.

In the nationalist war few of the miskên joined the nationalist ranks. This did not change even after some members of the leading family had started to play leading roles in it (the family was wise enough to keep a few irons in each fire). In the plains it was generally true that the miskên (who never were fighting men) abstained, while some of the tribal peasants and semi-nomads actively joined or opposed the nationalists, usually under the

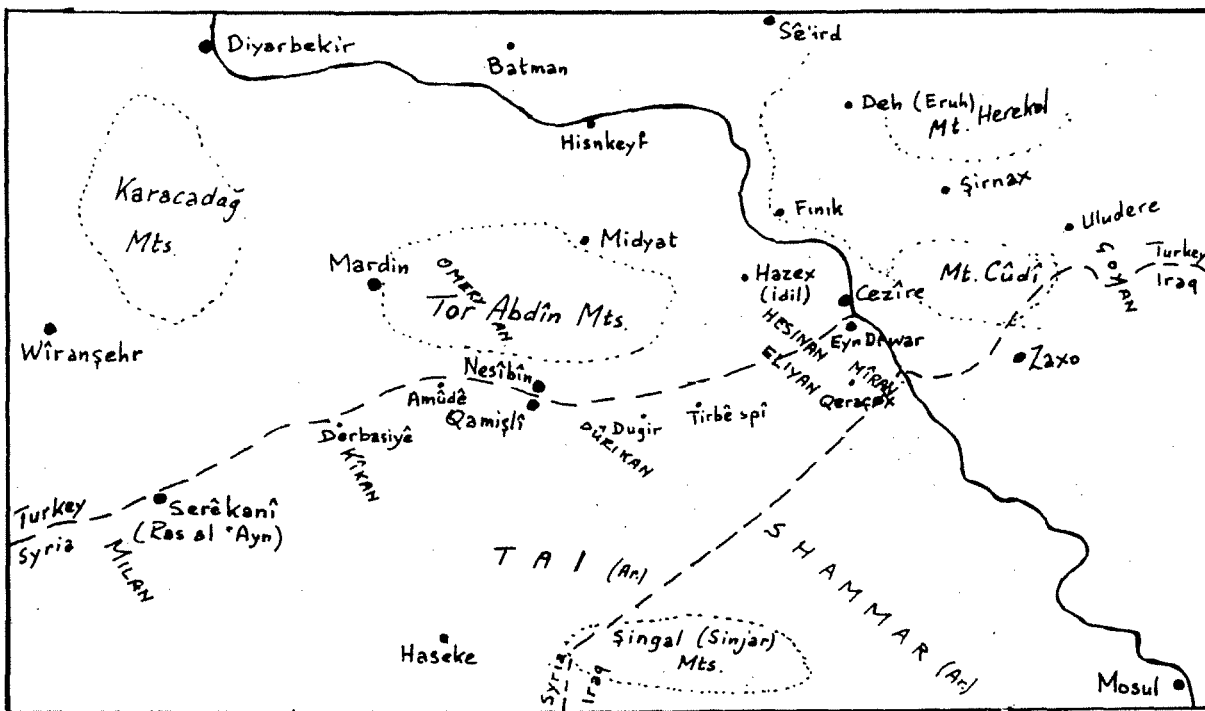
leadership of, or at the instigation of their aghas. Beside their lack of fighting capacities the miskên had another reason for not participating: their main aim was to become the owners of their lands and to achieve some economic betterment, needs more immediate than national and cultural rights or autonomy. They were more liable to get landreform from the Baghdad government than from Barzanî, for the simple reason that Barzanî would never be able to defend the open plains militarily.

II. j POWER AS A PROCESS: colonization of the northern Cezîre

It has been argued that the "purest" form of (western European) feudalism existed not somewhere in Europe itself but in the Crusader State in the Levant, where this mode of production and political organization was implanted in a vacuum, as it were, and could develop to its systemic consequences unhampered by any previously existing modes⁸³. The usefulness of defining forms of social organization in the abstract, so that reality gives only an impure approximation them, may be doubted. It is certain, however, that a close study of the Crusader State adds to our understanding of the logic of feudalism as it actually existed and developed in Europe itself.

A similar "laboratory" for Kurdish tribal and quasi-feudal organization is provided by the northern Cezîre, where some tribes from Kurdistan proper have recently settled in previously un- or very thinly inhabited areas. One should be careful in extrapolating findings from this area, but some of the dynamics of tribal political life may become clearer here. This section is largely based on interviews made in the Cezîre, May 1976.

The northern Cezîre (the northern part of the Mesopotamian plain, corresponding with the extreme northeast of modern Syria and the adjoining strip of flatlands in Turkey south of the Karacadağ and Tor Abdîn mountains) is one of the most fertile areas in the world and supported in antiquity a much more numerous population than at present. Raids by Beduin tribes from the south and Kurdish nomads from the north and from the Sinjar hills had made cultivation a risky and unprofitable affair. Vast areas had been completely deserted, and only numerous "tells" (the artificial hills arisen as the result of centuries of inhabitation of the same spot) were there to remind of more secure times. It was the most dangerous stretch of the caravan route that linked Baghdad via Mosul with Aleppo and Istanbul. Early travellers attest to the insecurity, the perpetual danger of being waylaid by marauding



Map 6 The northern Cezîre.

Beduin or Yezidis⁸⁴. Energetic governors of Mosul and Diyarbekir made an end to raiding by the yezidi Kurds from Sinjar and somewhat bridled the Beduin in the second half of the last century. Gradually the northern Cezîre began to be re-settled, partly by nomadic Kurdish tribes who had always used these low and warm lands as their winter quarters (most of them were still tributary to the (Beduin) Shammar tribe at the turn of the century!⁸⁵), partly by individuals and tribal sections that came from elsewhere, attracted by the rich lands. The process of settlement was accelerated by the closure of the border between Turkey and the new mandated state of Syria (effective around 1924). Nomads could no longer make their full annual migration, so that some settled south of the border. Persecutions of Kurds in Turkey forced many to leave their native lands and come to Syria. Thus in the district of Qamişlî "one town, 28 villages, 48 hamlets, 29 isolated farms (locations of future villages) rose from the ground in less than five years' time"⁸⁶.

Among the first to settle was the leading family of the Dûrikan, at that time a nomadic tribe of the Hevêrkan confederation. Most of the commoners of this tribe have since settled much further north,

near their summer pastures, but still send their chieftains the traditional gift of sheep at the annual holidays. Some of them have individually settled in the Cezîre as peasants. The first of this family to settle was Ebbas (see Fig. 3); it must have been around 1850. In his lifetime the first land-registration took place. He had a very large territory registered in the names of his eldest three sons (the youngest, Şuweys, was not yet born). This territory coincided more or less with the traditional grazing area of his tribe.

There may have been some non-tribal Kurdish peasants as well as members of other tribes who for some reason or other established themselves as Ebbas' dependents. It seems that then none of the Dûrikan themselves had started cultivating yet - an activity that most nomads deem unworthy of themselves⁸⁷. The Dûrikî that I met who were peasants had all come and joined more recently.

When Ebbas died his eldest son Mihemed succeeded him. By then the family had adopted some of the ways of the Arab tribesmen and Mihemed established a great name among the Arab chieftains - more immediate rivals for power and prestige than other Kurds at that time - by organizing the most lavish feasts the land had seen in a long time. Hundreds of lambs were slaughtered in a single day, their blood formed real rivulets at those parties to which all great men of the Cezîre were invited. Among Kurds and Arabs alike prestige is won by military prowess or conspicuous generosity; the latter was Mihemed's forte. Till this day his descendants need only mention his name and every Arab chieftain stands up for them and shows them the greatest respect.

Mihemed had other appetites as well, he married no fewer than 40 women - but respectably, as a good moslem: never more than 4 at a time; before marrying a new bride he divorced one of his wives. He died young, before his sons were old enough to succeed him. His brother Silêman became the new agha. Silêman was more moderate and married only 14 women (but, unlike his brother, he kept the 10 women he divorced in his house). Also the other branches of the family were rather prolific, so that the family increased rapidly

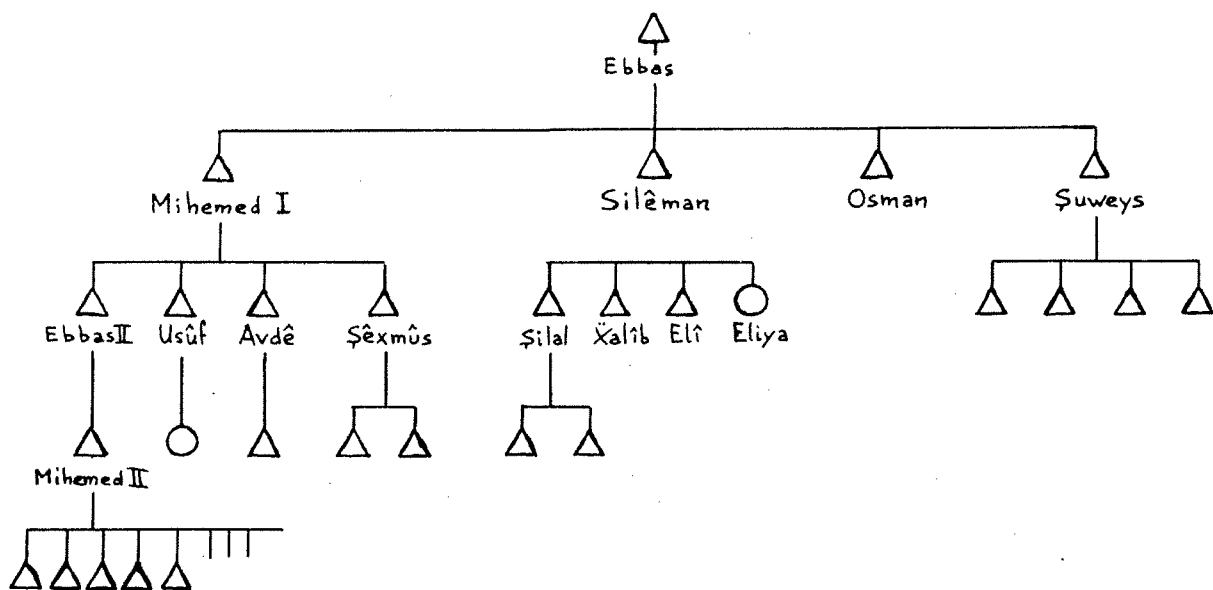


Fig 3 Partial family tree of the Dürîkî aghas (mala Ebbas)

in numbers. None, however, except the family head had any private income worth mentioning. Peasants were free to cultivate where they wished (land was abundant), on condition that they surrendered 10% of the yield to their agha, the head of the chiefly family. The family head then redistributed this among the family members, who received a kind of pocket money and thus remained economically completely dependent on their kinsman⁸⁸. Understandably, not everyone was content with this arrangement, and the family members were Ebbas was not alone, of course, when he settled; a Kurdish chieftain never is. With him were some lesser relatives, a retinue, shepherds for his considerable flocks, and dependant peasants of very diverse origins. A large proportion (maybe even the main body) of this peasantry were Jacobite christians ("sûriyanî") from the Tor Abdîn mountains. It is not clear whether these Jacobites were already living there when Ebbas settled; probably a few were, and many others came down from the over-populated mountains, when Ebbas' permanent presence gave them a year-round protection against raids by other tribes (mainly the Shammar). They cannot have come much later, for Ebbas' second son Silêman took one of the resident christians' daughter for a wife - after having converted her to Islam of course, to the utter displeasure of the father and his co-religionists.

looking for ways of securing themselves a private income without having to touch the plough themselves. As the number of peasants increased, the family had spread over the villages of their territory. Dugir, the village where Ebbas had settled, became the "capital" where the family head resided, the other family members lived in small clusters elsewhere, supervising the peasants. They did not yet want to risk a feud with Silêman or later his sons Şilal and Xalîb who succeeded him, and did not try to keep the revenue for themselves. The villagers normally paid the tithe to the village headman (rî spî, mûxter; appointed by the agha or elected by the villagers), who handed it over to the agha. It seems that there were also a number of villages not fully under control. The rî spî there collected the tithe, but did not surrender it, and kept it for a local guest house instead. Only in the case of a conflict with another tribe (or later with the French) would such villages support the Dûrikî family financially.

The family members who lived in villages other than Dugir did not, as said, keep the tithe for themselves. In the time that Şilal was the family head, however, some started to make themselves less dependent on him in another way. They turned to the really poor peasants, who did not own a plough and the animals to draw it, and entered a new kind of arrangement with them. They provided them with a mule, a plough and seed; in exchange they took half the yield. It is not clear from the accounts I heard whether these peasants paid the tithe to the paramount agha as well. Even if that were so, these peasants were bound directly to the aghas who gave them their means of production rather than to the paramount chieftain. The latter was, understandably, not very happy with this new development, which resulted in many conflicts. These cannot be understood as conflicts over land, for land was without recognized value, it was as abundant as the air. Nor were they about sovereignty primarily: the head of the chiefly family was not challenged in this field yet. One important aspect is the wish of family members to make themselves

independent of the family head: family solidarity (among the aghas) is seen to break down. It was the new (?) mode of production that made this possible. The conflicts in the family had, to a certain extent, also the character of conflicts over the scarce asset of that time: labour. A new class of peasantry was born (or was first perceived)⁸⁹, many wanted to be its master.

The interesting thing is, that the family's "rebels" did not try to change the existing political and economical relationships (they did not try to usurp the tithe, and did not challenge Silêman's position as the family head), but that they entered entirely new arrangements. Thus they initiated socio-political change instead of merely practising traditional politics.

An event that occurred in the late 1920's shows that the political authority of the head of the family was still recognized then, and that he still had ultimate control over the tribe's land. It involved the village where Avdê (see Fig 3) lived. The inhabitants of that village were all christians (Jacobites, or Sûriyanî). Among the Dûrikan and the other Hevêrkan the christians were less oppressed economically and politically than in most parts of Kurdistan. They were even, in a way, considered members of the tribe. Nevertheless, relations between christians and muslims were not always the most cordial. Especially after the French had established their administration many conflicts occurred: the christians felt protected now, and no longer silently resigned themselves to exploitation and humiliations.

Some of the villages in Dûrikan territory were entirely populated by christians: the French expropriated one of them without compensation and gave it to the inhabitants. Probably to prevent further expropriation Şilal, who was then paramount agha, ordered Avdê, who lived in the other christian village, to sell it immediately to the inhabitants. Avdê obeyed and sold the entire village, which he then had to leave, and handed the entire proceeds over to Şilal. Apparently land was then considered full, alienable (salable)

property, but not yet fully private property⁹⁰. It was no longer collective tribal land, but was still the chiefly family's communal estate, administered by the paramount agha.

The nature of leadership had changed considerably in the past 50 years however. As long as the Dûrikî were nomadic the agha had not been much more than a *primus inter pares*, whose authority was based on his military capacities, justice and wisdom (at least, that is what they say themselves). Although all his fellow-tribesmen gave him gifts of sheep annually, his economic position was not much better than theirs. Quite often the agha was not the richest man of the tribe, for a good agha has to slaughter many of his animals. But here in the Cezîre, as agriculture increased in importance while animal husbandry relatively and absolutely decreased, the agha's position evolved into a predominantly economical one. This development was speeded up after the French had introduced their administration and courts of justice, which diminished, though not eliminated the agha's political powers. It is interesting therefore to note which criteria determined succession. If primogeniture were decisive (as in nomad ideology, though not practice), after Silêman's death Ebbas II, the genealogically eldest, should have succeeded. But when I asked why Şilal succeeded instead, no one even mentioned the principle of primogeniture. They gave me other reasons why Ebbas might have succeeded: he (and his brother Şêxmûs too) was much more of a man (*mêr*), more courageous and combative than Şilal. But the latter had other qualities, he was much more generous (*merd*) and wiser. His brother Xalîb, who became agha after him, shared these qualities and knew moreover very well how to deal with government officials - which had gradually become the first quality any good chieftain needed.

That it is not just any generosity that qualifies a man as a good leader is suggested by the way Xalîb's generosity was described: "he gives his daughters to his nephews (*brazî* = (classificatory) brother's son) without demanding a brideprice": an ideal way of

course to placate those corners from where rivalries and challenges might originate⁹¹.

The further developments we shall follow in the person of Mihemed II (whose guest I was for some time). Mihemed grew up in his uncle Şêxmûs' house, because his father had been killed in a fight against the French when these first entered the district in 1922. But soon he got into serious conflicts with Şêxmûs, who had some peasants working for himself under the arrangement described before, in which Mihemed wanted to participate. Mihemed left his uncle and went to Dugir, the capital where Şilal resided since he had become the chief. When Mihemed gave a mule and a plough to a poor peasant under Şilal's very eyes he predictably got into trouble. Leaving Dugir he established himself at a place an hour by foot away from there, but his relatives at Dugir did everything they could to chase him away. Poor and hungry he managed to survive this difficult period only through the help (financial and otherwise) that his first father-in-law (a classificatory maternal uncle) gave him - even his house was built for him by this uncle's men. Soon thereafter his uncle Şêxmûs came and built a house nearby - too close for comfort. Mihemed was thus surrounded by inimical paternal uncles. There was a short lull when a truce was agreed to, and Mihemed married Silêman's daughter Eliya (i.e. Şilal's sister). Soon after however new conflicts arose. Mihemed was an angry young man, challenging established authority, and a tough fighter; never giving up and never giving in, he won his independence. A village slowly grew around his house; and not only poor peasants, whom he had to provide with implements and animals but also other, "ordinary" peasants settled in his village. From them he collected the tithe - no longer for Dugir, but for himself. Similar developments had taken place or were beginning in other villages, so that in the end Xalîb had only income from Dugir itself and one or two other villages. In the years 1952-54 there was a new land registration, and the newly won independence received legal confirmation: all the lands around Mihemed's village were

registered in his children's names.

The relations with his tenants are changing now, as a result of mechanization (early 50's the tractor, late 50's the harvester). He does not really need the peasants any more to cultivate the land, because he can hire machinery with skilled operators for all necessary activities. But the villagers are "his men", he cannot simply send them away. So half of his possessions he cultivates directly now, hiring the necessary equipment; the other half is more or less equally distributed among the other villagers, who let the same machinery cultivate their plots, and give Mihemed 10% of the proceeds. But he talks already of how he will decently get rid of them: his lands, when divided up among his many children, are below the ceiling for land-reform: now he expects his peasants to get some land elsewhere under the land reform law. This change is reflected in other things as well: not only is the dîwanxane (a large separate building) closed, but also most of the villagers do not visit his home very frequently. It is only the oldest (in terms of residence), those who were his retainers, and those who had assisted him in conflicts and in minor raids, that are still frequent visitors to his home.

The gradual decentralization of authority that was noticed among the Dûrikî was a general tendency among the tribes of this area, which had had a strong central leadership for some time and among whom external administration and the rapid growth of the leading family strengthened centrifugal tendencies. But no trend is irreversible. In 1926 a strong personality came from Turkey to Syria and managed to concentrate much power into his hands by a combination of "traditional" and "modern" methods. This was Haco, last great chieftain of the Hevêrkan. The recent history of this tribe and especially Haco's career are the last case that shall be described here.

The Hevêrkan confederation and Haco

The Hevêrkan are a large confederation of (reputedly) 24 tribes;

some of these tribes are muslim, others yezidi, while there are also a number of christians permanently associated with the tribe. The Hevêrkan belonged to the emirate of Botan. When that still existed, it is said, order reigned, there were no inter-tribal fights and certainly no intra-tribal ones. The Hevêrkan had a common chief who was a vassal of the mîr of Botan. When the latter was defeated by the Ottomans and exiled (1847), the emirate fell apart, as did many of the tribes, rent by struggles for leadership. The first dynasty that ruled the Hevêrkan confederation was the mala Şêxê, of which not much more than the name is remembered; soon it was replaced by the mala Elî Remo; Elî Remo was the head of the Erebiyan subtribe, who by his "mêranî" (manliness, prowess) brought the other subtribes one by one under his control. His descendants gradually lost authority to an other family, the mala Osman, of the Elîkan subtribe (see Fig. 4). Osman himself had been dead for some time when the family started to play a role beyond the own subtribe; Hesen was the first to extend his rule over some of the neighbouring sections. For a long time there was no supreme ruler over the Hevêrkan as a whole: authority was divided among the mala Elî Remo and the mala Osman. Even later, when the latter had won complete control over the confederation, they seem to have been considered something of parvenus. The mala Elî Remo enjoys more universal respect. It is significant that members of the mala Osman stand up for the mala Elî Remo, and not vice versa^{91a}. And in conflicts between the two branches of the mala Osman the mala Elî Remo would sometimes mediate.

Haco II extended his rule further, but not as yet over the whole of the Hevêrkan. His strategy included war with the neighbouring tribe Dekşûrî, strangers who had never belonged to the Botan emirate. It helped him to unite a significant number of the Hevêrkan behind him, but also brought him into conflict with the Ottoman government with which the Dekşûrî were in league. From that time on the Hevêrkan had the reputation of being a rebel tribe - and they lived up to it.

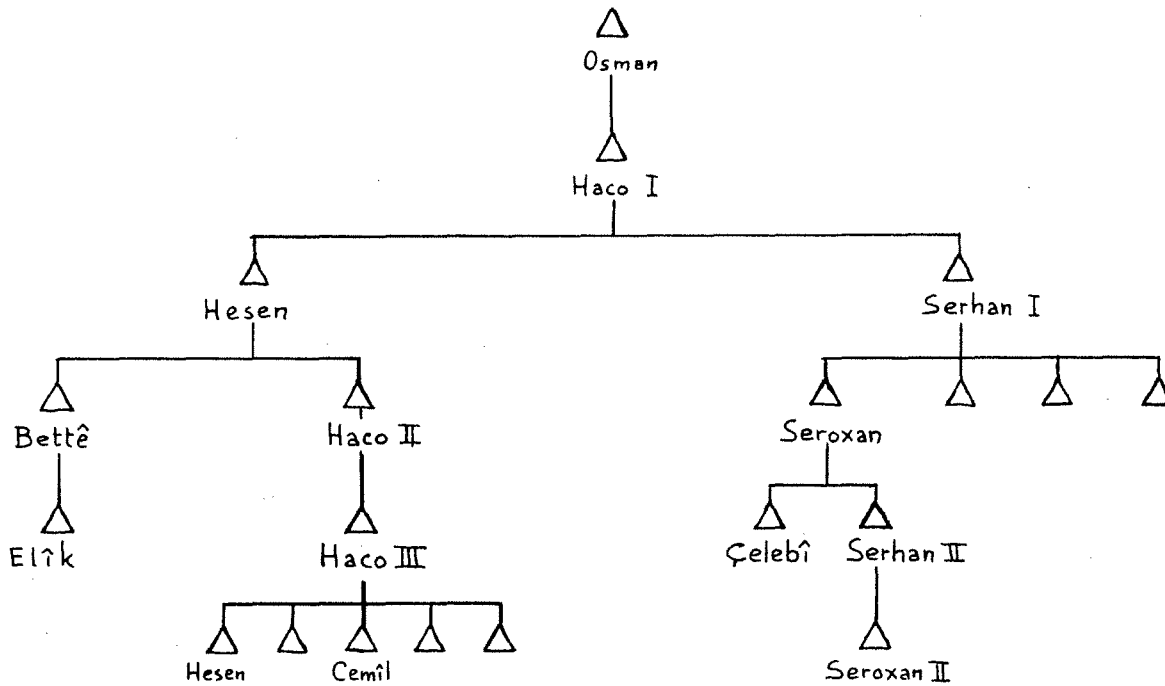


Fig 4 Partial family tree of the Hevêrkan aghas (mala Osman)

In 1896 Haco II was murdered at the instigation of the Dekşûri chief, Cimo. Leadership now passed to Elîkê Bettê and Çelebî, of the younger branch of the family. In perpetual conflict with each other, they brought all subtribes under the control of their family. Elîk, brave and charismatic, legendary hero of the tribe, continued a guerrilla against the government for over 20 years. Taking revenge for his cousin, he killed Cimo with his own hands. In the tumultuous days following Ottoman defeat in World War I he seized the town of Midyat and tried to establish an independent government. By then he dominated not only the vast majority of Hevêrkan, but other, neighbouring tribes as well. The christians, persecuted by Turks and other Kurdish tribes, looked upon him as their protector; fierce christian fighters contributed to his rise to power⁹². In 1919 Elîk was murdered under mysterious circumstances, and the unity of the tribe collapsed. Çelebî and Serhan II, who had meanwhile built up a retinue of over a hundred men (an enormous size for a retinue) now brought part of the Hevêrkan under their rule. Some sections

remained independent under their own leaders, others recognized Haco III, the hero of the story. Haco was still very young (he was born after his father's death), but he had the capacities that go into making a great chieftain. He was full of daring and had a clear idea of what he wanted, and no scruples when trying to reach that; he was an expert at raiding and good military tactician. With a handful of loyal men he started harassing partisans of Çelebî, managing to avoid major confrontations with Çelebî himself. At first he did not aim at the core of Çelebî's following, but at those who were less committed and whom he might easier force away from him. A village that supported Çelebî, for instance, but that was sufficiently removed from Çelebî's main centers of power, would be attacked with superior strength. Haco would only attack if he was 100% sure that his men were much stronger than the village's: a wise man does not take unnecessary risks, and a climber cannot permit himself any defeats. Frequently, too, he and a party of well-armed followers would ride into a village and lead away all the animals they could find. (I did not at first understand this when I heard it; it seemed to me hardly the way for a chief to gain supremacy over his own tribe; so I asked Haco's son Cemîl, who told me much about his father's exploits: "do you mean that they stole the flocks?" Cemîl, aware that Europeans classify these things differently, answered that Haco did appropriate them, but that this was not theft, but talan ("plunder"), which belongs to a quite different category. A thief comes in the night, and takes things away secretly; real men take openly, challenging everyone, showing themselves the strongest, the masters.) Haco was a good raider, and Çelebî could not effectively protect all villages, so that for very pragmatic reasons many became Haco's followers. In many other villages a part of the population was for Haco, another part on Çelebî's side. In such villages there was frequently nightly shooting between the two factions; often the village had been divided before, but the conflicts became more serious when the power struggle of Haco and Çelebî intensified them, and gave a new cause to an old antagonism⁹³.

Gradually but steadily the numbers of those who recognized him as the paramount Hevêrkan chieftain increased. By 1925 the majority supported him. Contrary to what one might expect from the segmentary appearance of tribes he did not at first establish authority in his own lineage and then in successively larger units, but he was active in all sub-tribes at the same time. In each some small sections joined him, later to be followed by more such sections, etc. Petty feuds in groups still beyond his grip could be used to bring one of the parties into alignment with him. And long before he had control over the whole confederation - he never got so far - Haco was involved in politics of a much wider scope: he tried to form a nationalist alliance (under his own leadership, of course). In 1925 a Kurdish nationalist revolt, led by Şêx Seîd, had broken out (see Ch. V), its participants belonged mainly to the tribes north-east of Diyarbekir. The Turkish government tried the old stratagem of sending other tribes against the insurgents. Among the tribes that received orders to march to Diyarbekir and participate in operations against the rebels were the Hevêrkan - who had been formally submitted in 1921, a year and a half after Elîk's death, and were now a "loyal" tribe. Not wanting to risk a confrontation with government yet, Haco and his men obediently went in the direction of Diyarbekir but made sure that they stayed far away from the rebels. Later that year, after the main body of insurgents had been routed by the Turkish army, they could return home without the odium of having become traitors to the Kurdish cause. Haco had an alternative, of course: he could have joined the revolt (of which he had probably previous knowledge; he had probably even been invited to). However, the revolt had been planned and was led by others, and he could at best have played a secondary role in it; I suppose that is why he decided to wait. His time came a year later; in the middle of March, 1926 his men seized police and frontier posts, chased away all government officials, and demanded immediate assistance from all important chieftains in the neighbourhood, also those in what had become Syria and Iraq. The revolt was ill-planned, and in retrospect

it is not clear what exactly may have precipitated it. Maybe the Turkish reprisals against Kurds were also affecting this region; maybe there was some premeditated (but imperfectly executed) plan, for in other parts of central Kurdistan there were nearly simultaneous minor revolts. Responses to his appeals to Kurdish nationalism were not forthcoming, except from some neighbouring tribes that were already under his control, and from a number of individuals from other tribes that came and joined him (among them was Şêx Seîd's brother Mehdî, who had first sought refuge in Iraq). Most tribal chieftains were afraid to commit themselves. Haco kept the whole area under his sole control for about 10 days, then the Turkish army forced him to retreat into Syria. French control over the extreme north-east of Syria was incomplete yet, and both Haco and his persecutors could easily enter and leave again. The (Arab) Tai tribe gave Haco asylum. He remained "rebellious" for some time, raiding into Turkey with small guerrilla bands (çete) and attacking Turkish patrols, until the French stopped him.

As a great chieftain, he was generally treated courteously by the French. He was less welcome among the Kurdish aghas because he was too powerful, too dangerous a rival. His diplomatic capacities made him soon the French's favourite spokesman for the Kurdish tribes; on the other hand, his influence with them now supplemented the old methods that he continued to use in order to bring new groups under his control. He never settled to agriculture like the other aghas: he was not a farmer but a warrior and politician. He built a town for himself, in collaboration with the French: Tirbê spî. At the time of his arrival in the Cezîre, he did not have any possessions there. He received the land on which he built Tirbê spî from the Dûriki aghas. None of the villages had ever paid the tithe to him, but soon after he had arrived some started doing so, hardly voluntarily - the muxters thought it wiser to pay a fixed amount regularly than to suffer unpredictable, but probably higher losses in the raids Haco's companions continued to make. The quarrelling Dûrikî aghas came together and forgot their conflicts, for fear that otherwise

Haco would soon be the lord and master of the whole province and there might not be much left for them to quarrel about. They still accuse Haco of mean behaviour and theft on an extraordinary scale, but it seems that they were mainly worried about his influence with the French. For instance, when the French needed workers they always ordered them from Haco, to whom also the salaries were paid. Many commoners therefore gravitated towards Haco.

Beside these ordinary ways of advancing politically (feuding and raiding; good relations with the state) Haco still had a third way to increase his influence: as a (sincere) Kurdish nationalist. He became one of the foremost members of the Kurdish league Xoybûn (that did much of the planning of the Ararat rebellion) and when the Turkish armies threatened the Kurdish insurgents in the Ararat region he made raids into southeastern Turkey in an attempt to divert them. With all this Haco became by far the most powerful and influential Kurdish chieftain within a vast area. And he died before economical and political developments could undermine his position, thus remaining in people's memories as the last great chieftain in these parts.

The political organization of the Hevêrkan is interesting, because it was clearly not yet stabilized: there was no institutionalized central leadership, with the consequence that authority moved from one sub-tribe to the other (or rather, from one family to the other). In the end, however, the sole two claimants to central authority belonged to the same family. If developments could have continued uninterruptedly the mala Osman might have become a begzade lineage as the Caf have.

Interesting is also the position of the mala Elî Remo, which in spite of the absence of real political authority (except, in a way, over their own sub-tribe the Erebiya) is more respected than the mala Osman.

II. k

Subject "non-tribal" peasantry and
their relations with tribal Kurds

In the preceding sections mention was made of "non-tribal" groups, Kurds as well as others, that live in "feudal" subservience to Kurdish tribesmen. Non-tribal Kurds generally do not own land: they are share-croppers or landless agricultural labourers. As the term "non-tribal" suggests, they are not tribally organized: they have no kinship-based organization beyond shallow lineages without much political significance. There is no noticeable tendency towards lineage endogamy. This is, however, not what tribesmen refer to when they make a distinction between tribal and non-tribal Kurds. For them, these are two castes: masters and servants, rulers and ruled. (see the discussion of the term "eşîret", p. 54). Tribesmen are warriors and do not toil, non-tribals are thought unfit to fight and it is only natural that their lords exploit their labour. They are a productive asset, not unlike a flock of sheep. "Flock" indeed is the primary meaning of the term "reyet" (Ar.: ra'yah) that is widely used in Kurdistan as well as in other parts of the Middle East to denote such groups. Many Europeans who visited Kurdistan in the 19th century commented on this distinction. In their descriptions, the division was very strict, and much sharper than I found it. It is not unlikely that these descriptions were somewhat exaggerated, the informants were generally tribesmen who boasted of their own superiority. But certainly it is also true that the social and economical changes of the past half century have softened the differences between the two categories. Typically, the tribesmen were nomadic shepherds or semi-nomadic shepherds-cum-cultivators, while the non-tribal peasants (and craftsmen) were economically and politically dominated by them. Since most tribesmen have by now fully settled and have taken up agriculture, and since both within the tribal and non-tribal segments class contradictions are developing, the distinction is not as clear-cut now as it used to be. For a discussion I shall therefore lean heavily on written reports from the 19th and early 20th century.

Economical exploitation of peasantry by tribesmen

The nature of the relation of the tribal and non-tribal segments, or rather, the degree of exploitation of the latter by the former, varies from time to time and from place to place. In the districts of Pervarî and of Hekarî (Turkish Kurdistan) I found that the only obligation the non-tribal peasantry have nowadays is to mow grass as winterfodder for a tribal agha's flocks; no other dues are levied. In the Şataq and Nordûz districts (immediately north of Hekarî) the non-tribal peasants (a vast majority of the local population) are not considered the owners of their land, they have to hand over a high proportion of the produce to the aghas of the Gîravî, their overlords⁹³. In southern Kurdistan Barth found that the tribal Hemewend took (only) 10-20% of their non-tribal peasants' cereal crop and a third of the irrigated crop - which is not more than aghas elsewhere take from their cultivating fellow-tribesmen. There is a difference, however. Among the Hemewend and especially the Dizeyî the miskên (as the non-tribal subjects are called here) were tied to the land; they were "owned" by the tribal agha and could not simply leave one agha for another^{93a}. Even now, in spite of the anti-landlord measures taken in Iraq, the Dizeyî aghas can still restrict their miskên's freedom of movement. In the past the non-tribal peasantry were usually just serfs. Taylor, in the 1860's, found that the (christian) peasantry of the Botan district (called "zêrkirî", "bought with gold") were bought and sold together with the land on which they worked (Taylor 1865 : 51). Forty-five years earlier his compatriot Rich, visiting the Silêmanî district (at the invitation of the Baban prince ruling there) wrote into his diary: "A tribesman once confessed to me that the clans conceived the peasants to be merely created for their use; and wretched indeed is the condition of the Koordish cultivators..."(Rich I, 89); Rich went on to compare them with the negroe slaves in the West Indies - he saw little difference. Another agha told Rich: "I take from them my due, which is the zakat, or tenth of the whole, and as much more as I can squeeze out of them by any means, and any pretext" (Rich I, 96).

Ethnic differences

In some cases the subject, non-tribal peasantry are ethnically different from their tribal overlords. This is most obvious in the case of christian peasants, who generally speak a different language and have a different material culture. Not all christian groups in Kurdistan lived in subjection to Kurdish tribesmen: there were autonomous communities, and even some (Nestorians of central Kurdistan) that dominated Kurdish peasants! Most christians, however, were politically dominated and economically exploited by Kurdish tribal aghas. The precise origins of these christian groups and of their relations with the Kurds are rather obscure in many cases. The assumption that "the" christians represent "the" original population that was subjected by "the" invading Kurdish tribesmen (as historical sources suggest) does not do full justice to the complexity of relations between these ethnic groups.

A somewhat exceptional case are the relations that existed between Kurds and Armenians on the "Armenian plateau"⁹⁴. Originally the plateau was nearly exclusively inhabited by Armenians, mainly agriculturalists. After the battle of Çeldiran (1514), a number of pastoral nomadic Kurdish tribes were sent to this plateau, to act as wardens of the Persian frontier. An interesting symbiosis of Armenian peasants and Kurdish nomads developed. In winter the plateau is extremely cold (temperatures of -25°C are normal) the local Armenians had developed a house-type, half or completely subterranean, that is adapted to these circumstances. The Kurds of course did not possess such winter-quarters - they were tent-dwellers - and their duties as frontier guards forbade them to go to the warm lowlands in the south and southwest. So in winter they went to live with the Armenians in their houses, they had stables built in the same village to accommodate their flocks. Food and fodder were provided by the Armenians. The Kurds "paid" them back in kind (animal products), but not more than they, as the more powerful partner, saw fit. During the 19th century Kurdish-Armenian relations deteriorated (influence of the Russian-Turkish wars), and oppression of the Armenians by the Kurds increased. The formation and arming of para-military units out of the Kurdish tribes by Sultan Abdulhamid gave them a licence to rob and steal and even kill at will (see Ch. III, sec. m). Many Armenians emigrated to the Caucasus, many more were killed in succeeding waves of massacres; Kurds, settling, took their place.

But there are also many non-tribal Kurds that live in subservience to tribesmen. In the preceding sections we encountered them among the Hemewend and Dizeyî (p. 97, 100), where they are called "miskên"; in northern Kurdistan they are usually called "kurmanç". Far south, in the Caf territory, they are now also known as miskên, but in the past the term "gûran" was more common here; the latter term is still used throughout Persian Kurdistan as far north as the Rizaye district. As a synonym nearly everywhere the term "reyet" (Ar: ra'yah, pl. ra'âyâ) is employed.

Not all non-tribal Kurds live in subjection to tribes; the peasant population of the Diyarbekir plain, for instance, was exploited by town-dwelling feudal landlords who had positions in the Ottoman bureaucracy.

Two hypotheses concerning these non-tribal Kurds immediately present themselves:

- A. they are simply de-tribalized Kurds: their ancestors settled down to agriculture, gradually lost their tribal organization and the military skill of nomadic pastoralists, and were later subjected by another tribe; or they had been conquered first and been forced to start cultivation for the victors; or they are an impoverished segment of the same tribe who settled because of poverty⁹⁵ and lost tribal organization.
- B. they belong to a different stock (ethnically speaking) from the tribesmen, representing an older, sedentary, population. Present Kurdish culture, in spite of its relatively high degree of homogeneity, would then be the result of the crossfertilization of (at least) two originally different cultures.

Although at first sight the former hypothesis might seem to be the more reasonable, it is the second one that is ever and again proposed by travellers and researchers, lastly by Rudolph (1959). I think there is enough evidence that in some cases a variant of A is true, while in other cases B is more correct, although it might need reformulation. In any specific case, therefore, the fact that

somewhere else the non-tribal peasantry has different origins from the tribesmen cannot be used to support the thesis that the same is true here as well. I think Rudolph falls victim to this fallacy. In central Kurdistan his expedition found differences in material culture between semi-nomads and fully sedentary peasants. This, together with observations from southern Kurdistan (the eṣîret/gûran distinction) leads him to propose an "Ueberschichtungstheorie" identical with hypothesis B above - although the discovered cultural differences could easily be ascribed to ecological factors and/or influence of the other ethnic groups (Armenian and Nestorian christians) that had lived or still live in the area (this objection was also raised by Hutteroth (1961, 40-41)).

That conquest or violent subjection of peasant groups by nomads did take place is well attested. The best-known instance is that of the Hemewend, who came to their present territory (between Silêmanî and Kerkûk) at the same time that Europeans started to frequent these parts. Barth recorded in 1950 very vivid memories of how they conquered peasant villages (cf. p97/9; Barth 1953 - 53-55). The Hemewend were a somewhat atypical tribe, however: they made their livelihood primarily as raiders, not as shepherds⁹⁶. Another instance of conquest is furnished by the Pijder (see p94/7). It should be noted that among the vanquished there were tribal as well as non-tribal Kurds.

A third instance forms an interesting parallel to the Kurdish-Armenian "symbiosis" referred to above. Firat (1975) relates how his tribe, the Xormek (settled cultivators in the Varto district, south of Erzerûm) were subjected by the nomadic Cibran tribe, who since that time spent the winters in the Xormek villages and forced the Xormek to build stables for their flocks. The Xormek are called a tribe, but their position vis à vis the Cibran resembles that of non-tribal peasants.

It is relevant to notice that the Xormek are alevîs, and the Cibran sunni muslims. In the Ottoman Empire the alevîs were suspected of inclinations to collude with the Persian Empire, and their oppression therefore found easy justification.

Domination of non-tribal peasantry by tribesmen is not always a

result of conquest. We have already encountered two instances where it is at least partly due to state intervention: the Dizeyî (see p. 99) and the Kurdish-Armenian "symbiosis" of the Armenian plateau (p.119).

The next question is whether those subjected were (originally) ethnically different from the tribesmen. Clearly the term "ethnically different" needs to be understood in such a way as to avoid tautologies. It has to amount to more than just the cultural differences that are liable to result from economic specialization in endogamous, caste-like groups. "(Originally) ethnically different" should denote that their cultures do not have a common origin or have at least developed independently for a considerable time. A corollary is usually that the groups originally spoke different languages⁹⁷. In one case, that of the gûran of southern Kurdistan, there is abundant evidence that they did originally belong to a different ethnic group than their tribal overlords. But the situation is much more complex than one of straightforward subjection of a non-tribal, sedentary peasant population by Kurdish nomadic tribes. Because it provides very significant insights in the dynamics of the interrelation of peasants and nomads and the way a nation comes into existence from the merging of previously different groups I shall discuss this case rather extensively. Not enough is known (yet) for the ultimate statement on the Gûran. I shall therefore not attempt a review of all known facts (this has admirably been done by Hadank and Minorsky⁹⁸), but mention only those that are relevant in the present context, including some that have not been noticed before.

II. 1

The Gûran

Rich was, by my knowledge, the first European to draw attention to the fact that the peasants of the Silêmanî district were, as he formulated it, "a totally different race from the tribes, who seldom if ever cultivate the soil, while, on the other hand, the peasants

are never soldiers" (Rich: I, 88). The peasantry were called "gûran", and these gûran "are distinguishable by their physiognomy, and by their dialect of Koordish" (ibid. 81). This last remark of Rich invites some comment. It might be thought that he had fallen victim to a confusion that later "experts" warn against: the term "gûran" refers to two different sets of people that should not be identified. In southern Kurdistan it is the common term for the subjected peasantry - who now all speak southern Kurdish dialects that do not differ much from those of the local tribes - but there is also a large tribal confederation called Gûran in Dalehû, a mountainous district between Silêmanî and Kirmanşah⁺. Of these Gûran and some neighbouring groups it has been known for some time that they speak/spoke a language that is quite different from Kurdish and shows some resemblances to a number of central Persian languages (notably Semnani and Siwandi) and to the Zaza - or Dimilî-dialects spoken in northern Kurdistan⁹⁹. The fact that the Gûran are a confederation of tribes (and non-tribal, but not subjected groups) while the gûran elsewhere are non-tribal suggests that one should be reluctant in concluding from identical names that origins are also identical. Thus it might be thought that Rich, when he speaks of the different dialect of the "peasant race" was merely taken in by the identity of names, and ascribed to the peasantry the linguistic peculiarities of their namesakes. Rich was, however, a good linguist who knew Persian and learned Kurdish while at Silêmanî. When he later visited Sine (=Sanandaj, in Persian Kurdistan, at that time the residence of the wali of Erdelan) he noticed that the local notables spoke a Gûranî dialect among themselves. As we know now, a Gûranî dialect (Hewramanî) was indeed the polite and literary language in Erdelan¹⁰⁰. This lends credibility to Rich's observations on the dialect spoken by the gûran peasantry of the Silêmanî district. There is indirect confirmation from Soane, who among the Gûranî dialects mentions a "Şehrîzorî" (Soane 1912: 382). Şehrîzor is the name of the district south of

⁺In the following pages I shall try to maintain this distinction in writing: when the peasant class is intended I shall write the name in lower case: "gûran", otherwise with a capital letter "Gûran".

Silêmanî; in administrative usage it referred generally to a larger area including the Kerkûk and Silêmanî districts). That the gûran no longer speak Gûranî but a southern Kurdish dialect is not unique: in Sine the dialect has also completely vanished, and even among the Gûran there are but few groups left that still speak a Gûranî dialect; most have adopted a form of ordinary Kirmanşahî Kurdish. McKenzie argues that the main differences between northern and southern Kurdish dialects may be attributed to strong influences on the latter from Gûranî (McKenzie 1961).

Rich appeared to be uncertain as to whether he should consider these gûran as Kurds or as a different ethnic group. Sometimes he called them Kurds, and their language a Kurdish dialect (which is probably in accord with usage among the Kurds in his time as well as in ours), at other times he called the nomads the "proper Kurds", and the gûran the peasant "race". Just as the term "gûran"/"Gûran" denotes different groups which cannot a priori be identified with each other, the term "Kurd" is also applied in different ways. Europeans have generally used it as a purely ethnic or linguistic name, and assumed that orientals themselves did so unambiguously too - an incorrect assumption. Mediaeval Arab geographers used the term "Kurd" (in its Arabic plural form "Akrād") to denote those nomadic (or semi-nomadic) tribes that were neither Arab nor Turk. This includes tribes that even the most extreme of Kurdish nationalists would nowadays not reckon among his nation. Occasionally even Arabic-speaking nomads were called "Akrād" (e.g. tribes of Khuzistan)^{100a}. This usage has persisted and may be responsible for Rich's statement that the nomads are the real Kurds.

In a religious poem of the ahl-e haqq I recorded (in somewhat archaic Kurdish, not in Gûranî as many other similar poems) "gûran" and "kord" are opposed. The man from whom I heard this poem (a Gûran!) explained the terms in this context as follows: "a kord lives in a tent and migrates; a gûran lives in a village, is sedentary" No ethnic difference was suggested¹⁰¹. The same man used the term "Kord" at other times in a purely ethnic (or linguistic?¹⁰²) sense, and then included the Gûran among the Kurds.

The inhabitants of Hewraman, who still speak a Gûranî dialect (and of whom Rich noticed that their physiognomy was that of the "peasant race") at the beginning of the century still considered themselves to be a different people from the Kurds. They had a tradition of having come from the area southwest of the Caspian Sea¹⁰³. Gradually (and still very incompletely) the Hewramî's are beginning to consider themselves Kurds. Intercourse with the Kurds is intensifying: there are many intermarriages, and many Hewramî's have participated in the Kurdish nationalist revolts. Cultural differences are still very clear however. Compared with the Kurdish tribes Hewramî society is still very closed, and although the Kurdish nationalist movement had headquarters in Hewraman during the last years, it never managed to be entirely accepted by the local people.

Ambiguity in the usage of the terms "kurd" and "gûran" thus makes it difficult to reconstruct the processes of domination, assimilation and amalgamation that took place. It is not that there is little historical evidence - in fact, there is an impressive amount of documentation - but rather that every simple hypothesis appears to be contradicted by at least some of the evidence.

For Rich matters were still simple: in the Silêmanî district the tribesmen were a minority only (there were 4 or 5 times as many gûran; Rich: I, 177), whereas further north the tribesmen made up an increasingly larger proportion of the population, and even further north, in the Riwandiz area, none of the peasant race were to be found, as he was told (ibid, 101)¹⁰⁴. This he combined with his knowledge that the princely family of Silêmanî, the Baban, hailed from the (more northerly) region of Pijder, and he concluded that the mountainous central Kurdistan is the original homeland of the real Kurds, who are all tribesmen (although they may have settled), and that from there the Kurds have come south and conquered the lands of the non-tribal, sedentary gûran population. The Kurdish principality of Baban may thank its existence to such conquest. The conquered territory was given in usufruct to relatives of the prince,

who in turn had tribal chieftains as their vassals. A kind of "feudal" organization came into being, in which the subjected gûran became serfs.

Rich was right in assuming that the social constellation as he observed it in southern Kurdistan had arisen out of the interaction of (at least) two different ethnic groups. When he suggested that one of these consisted of nomads and the other of peasants, he made an unjustifiable oversimplification, however. The linguistic evidence as well as early written sources (see note 98) seem to establish beyond doubt that the Gûranî language was brought here by a people that had originally lived south of the Caspian Sea and who had relations with, or belonged themselves to, the Dailamites¹⁰⁵. From the 14th cent. geographers mention a people called Gûran living in what is now southern Kurdistan; much evidence connects the present Gûranî speakers with the Dailamites and the Caspian. But it does not follow that all those who spoke or speak Gûranî are descendants of those immigrants (from now on to be called Gûran), or that the social stratification into two caste-like groups is simply the result of subjection of these Gûran by Kurdish tribes. The assumption that these Gûran were not tribally organized is again an independent one, and is not borne out by the evidence.

For Rich, the term "gûran" implied subject position, non-tribality and being a peasant (also in the sense of "boorishness"). The tribal Kurds at Silêmanî gladly confirmed this opinion. They laughed approvingly when Rich, trying to flatter the Baban prince, told that he had heard that the prince of neighbouring Erdelan (an emirate in Persian Kurdistan, in extent roughly corresponding with the present province of Kordestān) was "but a gûran". That is correct, his hosts confirmed, although, they said, the prince belongs to a very old and venerable family, and it is wrong to mock him. The princes of Erdelan (whom one could hardly call "subjected peasants") were gûran and spoke a Gûranî dialect; all the elite at their court in Sine was gûran, too, as Rich noticed later (I, 201). Many Kurdish

tribes were tributary to these gûran princes. The soldiers whom Rich saw at Sine were not Kurdish (as in Silêmanî, where the gûran were said to be unfit to fight) but fierce-looking Hewramî's, unmistakably belonging to the "peasant race". Clearly, the gûran of Erdelan were not socially inferior to the Kurdish tribesmen as they were in the Baban territory. The illustrious history of their rulers (who were of foreign origins, as were those of many Kurdish tribes and emirates) is written in praising terms, also by others than themselves¹⁰⁶. The Baban, who in Rich's time looked down upon this dynasty, were in the 16th century their vassals!¹⁰⁷ Many of the gûran of Erdelan were peasants, of course; there was, however also a Gûranî-speaking military element: Hewramîs.

Another example is the tribal confederation Gûran. Its leaders (in power until early this century) belonged to the sedentary segment, while at least some of the member tribes are definitely Kurdish (they distinguish themselves in language and religion from the main body of the Gûran who speak (spoke) Gûranî and are ahl-e haqq).

Thirdly, according to the Sharafname, the princes of the (Kurdish) Bradost principality are of Gûran descent¹⁰⁸.

Thus, in several cases Kurdish tribes were subjects of Gûran rulers, a situation unlikely to arise if all Gûran were just peasants. In fact, there is some evidence that the Gûran had in the past a two-layered social organization as found later in southern Kurdistan: a tribally organized, military "caste", and a subject peasantry, probably not tribally organized.

a. Such an organization still exists in Hewraman, according to Hewramîs (of chiefly families) whom I interviewed. In Hewramanî Text they mentioned 3 tribes called Hesensoltanî, Mistefasoltanî and Behrambegî, reputedly descended from 3 eponymous ancestors who were brothers. The members of the tribes are all "xevanîn" (pseudo-Arabic plural of "xan", "ruler"), they own (small) plots

of land and dominate a landless peasantry (which is not called "gûran" here, but "reyet"). The Hewramî are undoubtedly Gûran: language, physiognomy and material culture¹⁰⁹ set them apart from the Kurds and associate them with the Gûran. The Hewramîs have among the Kurds a reputation for toughness and bravery, which contrasts with the low opinion Kurds have of the gûran peasantry of Şehrîzor.

- b. The Egyptian scholar Shihab ad-Din al-'Umari, writing (in 1343) about the Kurds first mentioned the Gûran: "In the mountains of Hemedan and Şehrîzor one finds a Kurdish (sic!) nation called Guran (al-Kûrāniya) who are powerful, bellicose and who consist of soldiers and peasants (jund-wa-ra'aya)"¹¹⁰. The latter remark suggests the two-caste organization referred to.
- c. The Sharafname is not very clear about the Gûran; it does not devote much attention to them and there are a few ambiguities, probably due to the usual confusion of tribes with dynasties. But whenever Gûran are mentioned they are called a tribe or tribes ("taîfe" and "eşîret" are the terms used). In the introduction Şeref Xan wrote that "the Kurdish tribes (tavāyaf-e kord) are divided into 4 groups: the Kirmanc, Lor, Kelhor, and Gûran"¹¹¹, which, if intended as a linguistic observation, is correct. The interesting thing is that the Gûran are reckoned among the tribes and are put on a level with the other three groups that largely tribal.
- d. The Gûran confederation remains the most mysterious group. The sedentary population here is not subjected to the tribes of the confederation; indeed, the former leaders of the confederation (who even became the governors of the whole district of Zohab after this had been definitively attached to the Persian empire) belonged to the sedentary segment. Some of the member tribes are definitely Kurdish, e.g. two Caf sections who split off from the main body of their tribe and put themselves under Gûran protection¹¹². These tribes are still sunni muslims, while the other Gûran adhere to the ahl-e haqq religion. Of

these the nomadic Qelxanî tribe speaks a Gûranî dialect; an other large tribe, the Tufengçî (settled), and the sedentary non-tribal Gûran have exchanged Gûranî for a dialect resembling that of Kirmanşah. The origin of the nomadic Gûran is unclear. They may have been a Kurdish tribe that, in order to get access to the rich mountain pastures in the Gûran territory, subjected themselves to the Gûran (as later the Caf did) and have gradually been assimilated linguistically and religiously. Or they may be "real" Gûran - which would be another indication that (some of) the original Gûran were tribally organized.

The fact that the Qelxanî are only superficially ahl-e haqq¹¹³ may suggest the former possibility - but it should be noted that muslim nomads are also only superficially islamicized and do not participate in religious rites. The Qelxanî have a typical style of singing which resembles that of the Hewramî and is quite unlike that of the Kurdish tribes; this seems to point to the latter possibility. At the beginning of the century about half of the Gûran were still nomadic, so that in the past they were most probably more nomadic Gûran than sedentary¹¹⁴. This makes it very unlikely that all the tribes are gûranicized Kurds. I think, therefore, that this confederation provides another indication that the original Gûran had at least a tribal component.¹¹⁵

Conclusion: Gûran and gûran

From the above the conclusion emerges that since at least the 14th century there lived a people in southern Kurdistan who had come from north-central Iran, spoke a central Persian language and were known as Gûran. Linguistically, culturally and also in physiognomy they differed from the Kurds, but like these they had a tribal component that formed the leading and military stratum, and a more amorphous peasant component. It is not clear whether among the tribal component there were any nomadic pastoralists. Being mountaineers, the Gûran had apparently so much in common with the Kurds

that not only the Kurd Şeref Xan but also the Egyptian al-'Umari classed them among the Kurds. Towards the end of the Mongol period a man from the outside, the Kurd (?) Baba Erdel¹¹⁶ established his rule among them, at first in Şehrîzor only. Later descendants brought more Gûran as well as Kurds under their control. In later times Kurdish tribes coming from elsewhere¹¹⁷ gradually replaced the ruling stratum of the Gûran; where this happened the name "gûran" came to mean "peasant".

This happened in large areas; as far north as the Iranian Herkî territory (west of Rezaye) the peasantry were called "gûran"¹¹⁸ which suggests that the Gûran once had a wide dispersion (or that the term came to be used by extension for other subject groups). The fact that a Gûranî-speaking enclave is to be found at Kendûle (a valley 35 miles NNE of Kirmanşah; the dialect was studied by Mann) suggests a rather far eastward spread - as already mentioned by al-'Umari, who located the Gûran in Şehrîzor and Hemedan. In Hewraman the original Gûran were never subjected by Kurds. The Gûran confederation (presently in decay) may have developed out of a principality of the original Gûran with some Kurds attached.

Intermezzo: religious peculiarities of the Gûran

Still, there remain mysteries about the Gûran confederation. As said before, they adhere to the ahl-e haqq religion (except a few member tribes that have joined relatively recently). This is an extremist shiite sect - so extremist in fact that it has very little in common with Islam. It was reputedly founded by Soltan Sohak, whose father (a muslim, and seyyid, i.e. a descendant of the Prophet) came from Hemedan and established himself in Hewraman in the early 14th century. Hewraman is where Soltan Sohak first spread his teaching and where the oldest sanctuaries of the sect are still to be found. Many of the ideas preached by Soltan Sohak had existed long before that time; there are strong Isma'ili influences. An earlier form of the religion is known to have had many followers in Loristan. The famous (Lor?) poet Baba Tahir (who is buried in

Hemedan) is associated with this phase of development of the sect. The tradition of Soltan Sohak's Hemedanî origin provides the link with this earlier phase. The teaching may have found easy acceptance among the Gûran; the Dailamites (with whom these original Gûran are closely associated, if not a branch of them) are known to have had a penchant for shiism, especially in its Isma'ili form¹¹⁹. The new teaching was thus probably not more than an elaboration upon notions already accepted.

In northern Kurdistan there are communities that hold religious notions closely resembling those of the ahl-e haqq. In central Turkey there live millions of heterodox, shiite muslims (alevis), both Kurdish and Turkish. Because they have always been religiously oppressed in Turkey, their religion has never been systematized as in neighbouring Iran where it became the state religion. Extremist tendencies have therefore been able to persist. Especially in the inaccessible Dersim district these still survive¹²⁰. One encounters many conceptions and representations that are reminiscent of those of the ahl-e haqq of Dalehû:

- belief in the divinity of Ali, nephew and son-in-law of the Prophet (sunni muslims recognize Ali as the fourth and last of the rightly guided caliphs, for shiites he was the first imam, and only legitimate successor of Muhammad)
- the conception of the world as an emanation from the Deity (a central tenet of Isma'ili esotericism)
- belief in reincarnation
- the ritual assembly (cem), where the believers sing mystical songs accompanied by plucked string instruments (the 2-stringed "temmir" (tambur) in Dalehû, the Turkish saz in Dersim). The music of both groups shows resemblances,
- even corresponding legends are found in both areas¹²¹.

Part of these Dersim Kurds are speakers of Zaza (which they call Dimilî themselves, another reminder of Dailam¹²²), a language related to Gûranî rather than the northern Kurdish dialects. There are other cultural similarities: like the Gûran, and especially the Hewramî, the inhabitants of Dersim have excellently adapted themselves to the ruggedness of their habitat (which is not unlike that of central Dailam), and distinguish themselves from the other Kurds

by a highly developed horticulture. It is tempting to explain all these similarities from a common origin, which can hardly be anything but the Dailamites. The Zaza would then have migrated west, the Gûran southwest from the original homelands. But this leaves much to be explained:

- 1- The Hewramî, who are most impervious to external influences, are orthodox sunni muslims, and there are no indications of their ever having been ahl-e haqq (Soltan Sohak flourished and died in Hewraman, but all his immediate disciples are buried further south, in Dalehû, the territory of the present Gûran confederation; this too suggests that the sect never took root in Hewraman itself)
- 2- Similarly, the vast majority of Zaza-speakers are orthodox sunnites, not alevi while on the other hand among the alevi the Zaza-speakers are a minority¹²³.
- 3- The present religious tenets of the Anatolian alevi are strongly influenced by Bektashism. Hacı Bektaş was a popular mystic who flourished in Anatolia in the 13th or 14th century. Legend about him resemble those about Soltan Sohak, his near-contemporary who lived 1000 miles further southeast. The interesting thing is that Hacı Bektaş' name is known among the ahl-e haqq; some even identify him with Soltan Sohak¹²⁴. This suggests strongly that there were contacts between the Zaza and the Gûran after they had left the Dailamite homelands^{124a}.

A mediating role may have been played by a number of linguistic and religious enclaves. The Bacilan are a Gûranî-speaking tribe whose main territory is south of the Gûran lands; but as far as Mosul small isolated communities of Bacilan live in the diaspora. They still speak Gûranî, and what little is known about their religion resembles that of the ahl-e haqq¹²⁵. Another isolated group of ahl-e haqq, the Kakaî, live near Kerkûk¹²⁶. Also the yezidis, whose religion is generally considered to be quite different again (although little is known about the real tenets) may well have performed a bridge function. There are some indications of contact

between yezidis and ahl-e haqq¹²⁷.

The fact that the Gûran confederation is religiously heterodox has invited some scholars to derive their name from "gebr", "Zoroastrian" (gebr-ân > gewrân > gôrân). The conquering muslim armies would then have given them this name; this possibility cannot be rejected out of hand, especially since in at least one Kurdish text the name appears to be used in this sense¹²⁸. However, there is not much evidence to associate the ahl-e haqq with Zoroastrianism. Their veneration for Satan has nothing to do with religious dualism, for them Satan is not the evil principle.

Minorsky adduced many arguments to derive the name of the Gûran from Gāvbarakân, "bull-riders", which again would connect them with the Caspian provinces¹²⁹. He apparently supposed that the Gûran mentioned by the early geographers and the present confederation of that name are identical and derive their name from Gāvbarakân, and that the subjected peasantry (gûran) may be completely unrelated, and their name derived from "gebr"¹³⁰.

It is quite possible that the gûran / Gûran have heterogeneous origins, but in the light of the evidence discussed above it is difficult to deny close relations of the gûran peasantry of Şehrîzor and the Gûranî-speaking communities, as well as at least some components of the Gûran confederation.

How Kurdish are the Gûran?

For Kurdish nationalists there is not the shadow of a doubt that the Gûran (and the Hewramî, and the Zaza) are Kurds. Linguists as Mann & Hadank and McKenzie just as resolutely reject this. Obviously there are many different ways to define implicitly or explicitly who is a Kurd and who is not. Definitions of concepts such as "nation" or "ethnic group" are usually arrived at from the preconceived, unargued opinion that certain specific groups constitute a nation and certain others do not; the definition is then made to fit these specific cases. Undeniably there is a certain

arbitrariness involved. The choice of a particular definition may have immediate political consequences, e.g. as for a government's, a party's or another organization's attitude towards the national question. Are some definitions more just or more useful than others? An ambiguous case as that of the Gûran / gûran may be enlightening. Most definitions of "nation" refer to a community of culture (as expressed in, among other things, a common language), a common territory, and a common history. None of these criteria is in itself sufficient for a group to qualify as a nation. They should not be applied too rigorously either, however. In no existing nation, for instance, is there a complete community of culture: there are many class, occupational, religious, etc. subcultures within each. Some definitions include more. Religion is an aspect of culture that is given much importance in the Middle East. Many muslim Kurds, for instance, do not consider the yezidis, who differ from them in nothing but religion, as Kurds. Marxists will look for a material base of a group's unity before calling it a nation. One particular definition that must be mentioned here is Stalin's, which had practical relevance for the Kurds because on the strength of it several political parties denied that the Kurds were a nation and therefore did not recognize their right to self-determination. Beside the community of culture, territory and history, this definition also required that the nation be economically integrated to a certain extent, and that its members have closer economical ties with other members than with others¹³¹ (one of the aims of this definition was to deny the Russian jews the status of a nation). For a sociologist all these criteria cannot be sufficient: the relevant question is whether the group considers itself a unity and acts as such (is not only a nation "an sich", but also "für sich").

Let us turn to the Gûran confederation now: may one call it Kurdish or not? According to the criterion of language, some member tribes would be reckoned as Kurds, others not. Similarly, historical

considerations might classify some tribes as Kurds and others not; this dichotomy is not identical with the preceding one (some Gûranî speakers have been kurdicized; maybe Kurdish speakers had been gûranicized in an earlier phase as well). The criterion of religion would divide the Gûran into three: ahl-e haqq (speaking Kurdish and Gûranî), sunni muslims (speaking Kurdish; these would be "real" Kurds) and shiites (speaking Kurdish). The criterion of economical interaction would make the Gûran part of the Kurdish nation or community: the confederation is no longer a closely knit unit; their economical relations integrate them with the surrounding Kurds. Subjective criteria might set them apart again. Although many Gûran speak of themselves as Kurds, Kurdish nationalist propaganda does not appeal to them. In fact, it is mainly from them that the Persian government recruits para-military units (chrîk, "guerrilla") to patrol the rest of Persian Kurdistan. They can be relied upon because they do not identify themselves with the Kurdish case. Mutual contempt of muslims and ahl-e haqq plays an important part.

II. m Nomads and peasants: one or two peoples?

That the gûran peasantry of the Silêmanî district and their tribal Kurdish overlords have different ethnic origins is beyond doubt (although this should not be taken to imply that all gûran descend from the original Gûran and all tribesmen from the "original" Kurds). It may even be possible to demonstrate something similar for non-tribal Kurds in other parts of Kurdistan. But it would be wrong to jump to the conclusion that all "original" Kurds were nomads, who conquered the territories of previously present, not tribally organized, sedentary populations. To assume that the present peasantry and tribesmen still represent these two different stocks would be a further misjudgement.

In the first place it is hard to imagine a people that consists solely of pastoral nomads. Only under the most severe circumstances will people live by a strictly animal diet. Nomads typically have frequent trading and/or raiding contacts with sedentary cultivators

to provide for their need of cereals (plus many less necessary items). The Medes - who probably form the main stock from which the Kurds, with many admixtures, descend¹³² - are known to have already consisted of a nomadic and a sedentary component. The nomadic sections provided the warriors - their way of life prepared them for and left them the time for military activities-, the sedentary sections fed them. Although tribal, nomadic warriors on the one hand, and non-tribal, dependant peasantry on the other are sometimes presented as hermetically closed castes - not least by their members themselves.

What we know about ethnic and caste barriers elsewhere suggests that also in Kurdistan these barriers might be less rigid than is sometimes supposed¹³³. Concrete evidence is scarce, but not entirely absent.

1. Impoverished nomads are forced (by physical necessity) to settle and practice agriculture; below a certain minimal number of animals it is not possible to live by animal husbandry alone (this number is variously estimated at 80 to 200 sheep; see note 95). In 1820 Rich estimated that the Caf with all attached clans and lineages numbered 10,000 tents of nomads, beside these there were 3,000 families who had settled (Rich I, 177). In 1920 the proportion that had settled was much higher; but, as Edmonds noticed, settlement was not definitive. Many of the sedentary families took up nomadic existence again when they could afford it, or when this seemed more profitable (Edmonds 1957 : 139-156). Within the tribe there was thus a permanent flow from the nomadic to the sedentary segment and vice versa. Some other tribes settled completely; Rich mentioned a few already in his list of tribes of the Silêmanî district (Rich I, 280-281). Such sedentary tribes may gradually lose their tribal organization, especially after conquest by another tribe (in which case the lineages largely lose their political functions). The position of the tribes that were later submitted by the Pijder was very similar to that of the submitted miskên; they were kept in a similar, nearly feudal dependence.

On the other hand, "non-tribal" peasants may, individually or in groups, join a tribe that is in the ascendancy. The new tribes that came into existence and sometimes increased rapidly must have taken their new members from somewhere! When he needed men to fight for him a tribal agha could not afford to be too selective as to the pedigree of his recruits. On the Siwel, one of the tribes in his list, Rich remarked: "The pure origin of these may be questioned, but they are at all events now a tribe, and do not mix with the peasants" (Rich I, 280 my emphasis).

In fact, whereas in 1820 there were 4 to 5 times as many gûran as there were tribesmen in Şehrîzor (Rich: I, 177), Edmonds wrote that in 1920 three quarters of the population of the Helebce district (the central part of Şehrîzor) were Caf tribesmen. It is true that during the political disturbances around 1830, and especially during the plague that harassed the district in the early 1830's many peasants had left for safer horizons (attested by Fraser, who visited the district in 1834: Fraser(1840):I, 146-148, 177); still, the change in the number of tribesmen as a proportion of the total population is so considerable that one is led to believe that some peasants may have become tribesmen during the turbulent events of the past century.

2. It has been remarked before that many tribes have leaders of "foreign" origin. This may also be formulated differently: many tribal leaders have followers of other origins. The following a leader gathers around himself may originally be tribal as well as non-tribal; it gradually develops into a "real tribe".

An example has been described before (sec. j): the formation of a tribe-like unit around the Dûrikî aghas who settled in the northern Cezîre. The case is atypical in that the new followers were primarily peasants, not warriors. Among these peasants, however, the original Dûrikî did not seem to hold more favourable positions. Until 10 years ago the aghas still had a retinue, and would not ride out without

their retainers. The retinues did not consist solely of original Dûrikî either; the presence of christians among them was conspicuous.

3. Certainly not all tribes in Kurdistan have a common origin.

At the periphery Turkish tribes have been kurdicized while some Kurdish tribes were turkicized, but that is not the most relevant process. All over Kurdistan there lived (and still live) Armenian and Aramaean-speaking christians; usually they were subjected peasants and / or craftsmen. They too are usually considered an older population that lived here before the Kurds, or refugees from the plains who found asylum among the Kurds to whom they submitted themselves (although it is quite possible that at least some of them are originally Kurds that were christianized). They distinguish themselves from the Kurds by religion, language and a superior technology, but not very clearly physiologically. Several travellers observed that Armenians and Kurds at one place in Kurdistan were more like each other than like Armenians and Kurds, respectively, elsewhere¹³⁴.

I have encountered formerly Armenian communities (between Sê'rd and Şirnex, in Turkish Kurdistan) that have recently crossed the ethnic boundary: they have become muslims and speak Kurdish only. Several of them are active Kurdish nationalists (although their becoming Kurds was hardly a matter of choice, in face of Ottoman policy towards the Armenians during World War I). However, they are not yet so Kurdish that they refrained from telling me (usually within the first five minutes) that they had Armenian origins.

More importantly, until recently there were real tribes composed of christians:

a. In Hekarî there lived fierce and independent christian (nestorian) tribesmen, the Assyrians. They were the equals of the Kurdish tribes and, like these, dominated a number of subjected non-tribal villages, the latter both Kurdish and nestorian! Both the tribal and the non-tribal stratum in Hekarî consisted of Kurds as well as nestorians; both Kurdish and nestorian tribes dominate Kurdish as well as

nestorian peasantry¹³⁵.

b. Among the nomadic tribes of central Kurdistan there was at least one that was Armenian, the Ermenî-Varto. The first to mention them was Frödin; Hütteroth writes that in the late 1950's they were migrating together with the (Kurdish) Teyyan, and gradually merged with that tribe¹³⁶.

c. The (jacobite) christians of Tor Abdîn mountains that lived among the Hevêrkan and provided these with some of their best fighting men have been mentioned before.

If these christians could be organized into tribes, there is no reason why "non-tribal" Kurds could not, at opportune moments. The christian tribes' origin remains noticeable because of their religion and language; but it is difficult to distinguish tribal from "tribalized" Kurds (depth of lineages might be a criterion, but not a very reliable one).

4. That the non-tribal Kurdish peasants are not simply another stock that has been kurdicized by nomadic Kurdish conquerors is also suggested by the fact that the nestorian tribes mentioned above dominated not only non-tribal nestorian peasants, but non-tribal Kurds as well. If the latter were originally of non-Kurdish stock, how could they have been kurdicized? (Explanations are possible, of course, but appear rather constructed).

Again, in the Diyarbekir plain there is a non-tribal Kurdish population that is dominated not by Kurdish tribes, but by town-dwelling landlords, formerly mainly Ottoman officials, who could hardly have kurdicized them.

5. In fact, not all groups subject to Kurdish tribesmen are non-tribal. There is also the phenomenon of "client tribes", which have a status intermediate between that of the "noble tribe" and that of the non-tribal peasantry. We have encountered such client tribes in the description of the Pijder above (p.95). Similarly, among the Caf there are "real" Caf as well as client lineages. A somewhat different case is that of the Xormek (see also p.121).

These were (in the late 19th and early 20th century, the period on which Firat gave apparently reliable information) a tribe with some degree of independent political organization. They were peasants and had been settled for a long time (although some Xormek owned animals and went to mountain pastures in summer), and were easily subdued by the militant nomadic Cibran. Their position was not much different from that of non-tribal peasant groups. However, they were still distinguished from other similar peasant groups in the same area (Lolan, Ebdalan,...), and had their own, recognized chiefly families. In World War I, they were made into militias, for the first time the Ottomans gave them arms to carry (they had always been denied this right because they are alevi). A process of retribalization took place, and they started claiming their independence vis à vis the dominant Cibran (in Ch. V it will be discussed which part this process played in the Kurdish nationalist movement of that time).

6. Another kind of "client lineages" that should be mentioned are gypsy-like groups. These have an extremely low status, even the lowliest landless peasant looks down upon them. Many of these people are nomadic, they travel in groups of 2 - 5 households. They do repair work, make sieves, brooms, etc. and are musicians (outdoor instruments¹³⁸). Kurds emphatically deny that any intermarriage between these outcasts and themselves takes place. In the Cezîre, the musicians (motirb) are a separate "caste" within the outcast group, and do not intermarry with the others (qeraçî, "gypsy"): musicians, though socially undesirable, are well-paid. In Kirmanşah, on the other hand, there are no distinctions within the gypsy caste: the same household performs all tasks that are elsewhere associated with specific sections.

Social mobility is extremely difficult for these people, since their features and dark skin betray their origins. Even so, the boundary-line between them and the Kurds proper is not completely closed.

Some of them have bought land and have settled to a peasant life. Of one family of Kurdish aghas (!), in Şirnex, it is said that they

were originally motirb, who by a clever political game succeeded in imposing their domination on a large body of peasantry. Even if this is not true, the story proves that such social mobility is perceived as a possibility. Many more motirb and qeraçî have moved to town and found jobs in public works or construction. They are still discriminated, but the work they do is not inferior to that of Kurdish migrants to town, and ultimately they will be assimilated - as is their wish.

7. When Rich asked the name of the tribe to which the Baban princes originally belong he got inconsistent answers. One of them was "Kurmanç". This term appears to be applied to some of the tribes of southern Kurdistan, not as a synonym of "eşîret" but as an ethnic label: Soane wrote that the Kurmanç are "of the purest Kurdish blood"; the other tribes are simply called "Kord"¹³⁷.

In northern Kurdistan the same name "Kurmanç" is frequently employed, in two different ways:

- a. it is an ethnic label, applied to all Kurds that speak the northern ("Kurmançî") dialect. Zaza-speakers are usually excluded, although they are considered Kurds. Kurmançî is the northern dialect group, as opposed to Zaza and the southern and eastern dialects.
- b. in a more narrow sense it is used to denote the Kurdish subject peasantry. The non-tribal peasants of Şataq, who are dominated by the Gîravî are called "kurmanç"; the Gîravî are in this context called "eşîret" or "aşa". In Şirnex and the surrounding villages the non-tribal (detrribalized?) peasants are called "kurmanç"; the 4 lineages that dominate them economically and politically are called "aşa" (When I visited Şirnex for the first time and asked which tribes lived there, someone, after long reflexion, answered "aşa and kurmanç"; there is a strong conflict of interests between these two (class-like) groups).

That the same term "kurmanç" is used in the south for tribal conquerors (even for the "purest" Kurds specifically), and in the north for subjected non-tribal Kurds suggests a more complex relation between tribal and non-tribal segments of Kurdish society

than any simple "Ueberschichtungstheorie" permits.

A Kurdish friend with whom I had discussed the terms "miskên", "gûran" and "kurmanc" later talked this over with an acquaintance who belonged to the ruling family of the Dizeyî. This acquaintance said that in the Dizeyî territory (north of the former lands of the Gûran; on the edge of foothills and plateau, so outside the heart of Kurdistan as well) these three terms refer to different groups: miskên are landless peasants tied to the land, dependant on a landlord; the term implies serfdom;

gûran are (landless) agricultural workers who travel around, working as day-labourers whenever and wherever they may find employ;

kurmanc are usually independent small-holders.

This fits in nicely with what is said before: around 1830 many gûran peasants from the Silêmanî district left for the north; in the Erbîl districts there was already a subject peasantry but they were not related to the Gûran, so that the name of "gûran" here came to be attached to immigrant agricultural workers, landless but not dependent on a landlord (this does not imply that all those now called "gûran" are immigrants from the south or their descendants; the term may have acquired an extension of meaning). Kurmanc are then tribal (or formerly tribal) Kurds who have settled in this area; as elsewhere when a tribe settles most of its members become owners of their land.

8. Several times already I have had occasion to point to the role of neighbouring powerful states in determining the organization of the tribes, especially as regards leadership. Apparently also the relation of tribes and non-tribal groups is influenced by the state. Rich remarked that the tribesmen in Silêmanî are called "sipah" and the peasants "reyet" (Rich: I, 88); further north, among the Herkî, Sandreczki (1857: II, 263) noticed the same. Now these two terms ("sipahi" and "reyet"; pl "reaya") denote the chief two classes recognized in Middle Eastern states, the military (who paid no taxes) and the tax-payers (mainly peasants). In the

Ottoman Empire the sipahi was a man rewarded for his military services with the grant of a timar ("fief"), an area of land with the peasants working on it. By way of salary he levied a tax from his peasants (for a more complete description of the timar system, see the next chapter). Ottoman law-books contained frequent warnings against the practice of allowing reaya to assume sipahi status and take possession of a timar. This suggests that it was not an uncommon practice in at least some parts of the empire. It would therefore not be an anomaly if similar crossings of the caste barrier took place in Kurdistan.

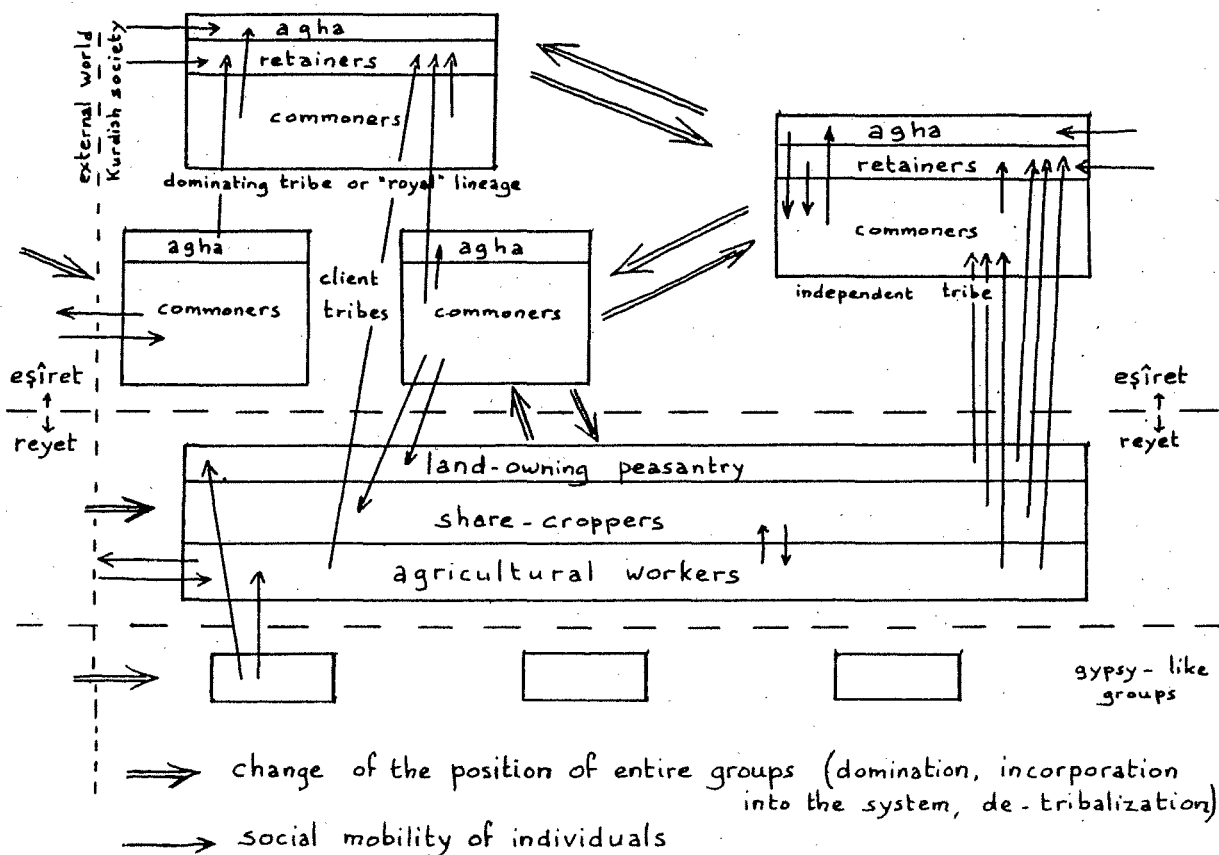


Fig. 5. Social stratification of Kurdish society

Conclusion

To sum up: The Kurds must necessarily have many heterogeneous origins. Many peoples have lived in these lands before and have disappeared without a trace. They must all have their descendants among the present Kurds. However, it is probably wrong to identify the tribes and the non-tribal peasantry with two of the stocks that went into making the Kurds. There has most probably always been mobility between the groups, the intensity and direction of which were determined by the political and economical situation of the moment. Nomads became peasants, and peasants nomads; people regrouped themselves around successful leaders and thus formed new tribes. Some tribes subjected others as well as peasant groups. Lineage organization is the "natural" form of social organization of nomads and - to lesser degree - of warriors. In relatively "young" tribes these lineages are shallow, and frequently really factions organized around a few leading lineages (as among the Pijder (p.95) and the Omeryan (p.41)). Among settled people who have not gone to war for some time lineage organization weakens, especially when they have been subjected by another tribe, in which case their own lineages lose political functions.

Entire groups may change position from independent tribe to client tribe, from settled tribe to non-tribal peasant group etc. Individual mobility is more common, and can take more forms.

All this is summarized in Fig. 5.

CHAPTER III

Tribes and the State

III. a Resumé of characteristics of the Kurdish tribe; introduction to the discussion in this chapter.

In this chapter a number of ways in which Kurdish tribes have undergone influence from surrounding states will be discussed. Before discussing to what extent the present tribes owe their socio-political organization to contact with powerful states, it may be useful to resume the characteristic features of Kurdish tribes that were discussed in the preceding chapter.

1. Tribesmen make a distinction between themselves and non-tribal people. "Tribe" has the connotation of "(military) aristocracy".
2. There is a strong, but by no means complete, correlation between being tribal (in the sense indicated above) on the one hand, and pastoral nomadism or semi-nomadism, on the other.
3. Structurally, the most characteristic trait is the segmentary organization. This becomes apparent especially in blood feuds and other group conflicts, and in the power struggle between political leaders. It is directly related to:
4. Ideology of common descent. In some cases (small or "old"

tribes or sections) a large proportion of the tribesmen may, in fact, descend from a very small number of common ancestors, in other cases that is not so. Homogeneity of descent is enhanced by:

5. A tendency towards endogamy, down to the lowest level of segmentation (father's brother's daughter marriage, real or classificatory).
6. Corporate action at the level of the tribe or largest subtribe is rare.
7. The economic units (above the level of the household) are the camp-group for (semi-) nomads and the village for sedentary and nomadic tribesmen. The latter generally is a tribal section, the former may have an irregular composition.
8. Territorial unity is a secondary and not always present characteristic. Sections of the same tribe may live far apart, while any territory may be co-inhabited by two or more tribes or lineages. Apart from such exceptions tribe and territory are often associated, and the name of one is often used to denote the other.
9. The nature of leadership varies considerably from tribe to tribe. Most tribes recognize a paramount chieftain, but his functions are rather vague. Quite generally it is felt that his role was more important in the past. Usually his position is associated with warfare and intra-tribal conflicts. In the smaller tribes the chieftain (agha) is usually a kinsman of the other tribesmen, while larger tribes have often a chiefly lineage of foreign origin.
10. The chieftain of the tribe or section is not only a political leader, he holds generally a privileged position economically also. Pastoral nomads give the chieftain yearly a gift in kind (a number of animals). Among cultivators the prestations from the tribesmen or subservient non-tribal peasantry to the agha are more considerable. In some cases the agha is a landlord who exploits the tribesmen economically.

11. In several cases it is clear that Kurdish tribesmen act out of loyalty to a certain leader rather than to the tribe (for instance, the rapid growth of tribes under strong leaders, followed by decline after their disappearance).
12. In order to maintain or extend their influence tribal chieftains ally themselves with external powers. Rivalries within the tribe are thus often brought into association with rivalries in their environment (i.e. between other tribes, between political parties).

Several of these characteristics are related to the specific conditions of pastoral nomadism. Kurdish tribes have these in common with (formerly) nomadic tribes in most other places. Others however, especially those of leadership and social stratification, are more determined by concrete historical circumstances and events. In this chapter important historical events will be discussed, which have influenced or even brought about structures that are often called "traditional". I shall describe important political changes occurring in Kurdistan in the past four or five centuries. The material strongly suggests that the internal organization of Kurdish tribes is a consequence of the long-standing interaction of Kurdish tribes with surrounding states.

From my reading of historical source materials and from interviews with many elderly Kurds I inferred a number of hypotheses as to how states influence tribes. I present these hypotheses (or, maybe I should rather say, interpretation) before the bulk of the historical material (sections b, c and d), so that the historical narrative of the following sections reads as illustrations of the hypotheses. Only a part of the material from which the hypotheses were inferred could be presented. It was selected according to two criteria:

1. it should represent crucial phases in Kurdish history, and should refer to tribes or emirates that played important parts in Kurdish history;

2. it should illustrate the processes with which the hypotheses deal. The material cannot, of course, be used to test the hypotheses that were inferred from it. It will be seen, however, that the hypotheses are very plausible in the light of this material. I have not deliberately excluded material that might contradict the hypotheses, and I shall try to present the material sufficiently broadly and within context, so that it may easily be rearranged and other hypotheses inferred from it.

III. b Tribes of Kurdistan not autonomous units

Even if a "pristine state" of the tribe (in the senses of "original" and "untouched by external influences") were imaginable, there is no reason to believe that any present Kurdish tribe might resemble it. Not even in the most remote and inaccessible parts of Kurdistan is such a "pristine tribe" to be found. Tribes with a rather complex political organization, such as the Pijder, Hemewend, or Caf, obviously are not "pristine tribes". One might be tempted to think, however, that they have evolved out of more primitive units. i.e. that they represent a stage in evolution that is intermediary between the small, amorphous, acephalous band and the state with fully articulated centralization of governmental power and delegation of this power to specific offices. Such an evolutionary perspective seems attractive and, adopting it, one might try to explain the divergences in political organization among Kurdish tribes. For instance, more complex forms of social and political organization are generally found in the transitory areas between plains and mountains, while in the higher mountains and less accessible valleys the organization is generally very simple. The evolutionary approach would lead one to investigate factors facilitating or inhibiting the development of political institutions. Although I do not deny that differential evolution has played a role, I think that the evolutionary standpoint might make one blind for a significant fact about Kurdish tribes. They do not simply represent a stage of evolution preceding the state but they are, in

several ways, creations of surrounding states.

A large part of this chapter will be devoted to the elaboration of this statement. I shall try to show that tribes were sometimes literally created by or, more usually, received an indelible imprint from surrounding states.

The idea of the tribe as a creation of the state imposed itself on me during my field research, and even more so during the perusal of historical source materials. Later I found the same idea - expressed with due reserve - in an important article by Morton Fried¹. In a related discipline, the historian Thompson pointed out that the political organization of the Germanic tribes as described by Tacitus was not the result of autonomous evolution but had undergone significant modifications under the influence of the Roman Empire with which they had been in trade contact for some time². Anthropologists were rather late in becoming aware of the great influence that the internal organization of tribes underwent from the states with which they were in contact³. This is all the more surprising since the earlier generations of anthropologists were directly in the service of their states and in some cases even involved in the deliberate exercising of this influence. Classical Middle Eastern authors and, in their tracks, orientalists have often taken it for granted that rulers could (and did) create tribes by decree. The most famous instance are the *Shāh-savan* (lit. "those who love the shah"), a Turkic tribal confederation now living in Persian Azerbaijan. This unit was reputedly created by the Safavid Shah Abbas out of people who responded to his call for loyal followers (ca. 1590)⁴. Another example are the *Çemişkezek*, who were probably a conglomerate of Kurds of diverse origins that was moulded into a tribal confederation by the same Shah Abbas and sent to Khorasan as frontier guards. It is difficult to establish in how far these historical statements are correct, in how far the new unit was really a tribe and in how far it was really created. The instances where state authority directly interfered

in the political process of a tribe, and thereby modified its socio-political and economical organization are more frequent and better documented. Thus, the introduction of the notion of full private ownership of land, or the appointment of tribal chieftains to positions in the state administration could not but have far-reaching effects. Even if there is no direct intervention by the state, the very existence of a well-developed state with which a tribe has contact, however incidental it may be, induces changes in the tribe's organization. A dramatic example is the introduction of cash money. On the other hand, tribes have always played an extremely important role in middle eastern states. Nearly all ruling dynasties were founded by tribal chieftains who had taken, and kept, control of government due to the coercive power their tribe represented. It was only in the 1920's that the last two great tribal dynasties fell: in 1923 Atatürk deposed the last Ottoman ruler, Sultan Mehmed VI Vahideddin, and two years later Reza Khan dethroned the last Qajar shah, Ahmad. (Reza Khan was later to crown himself as shah, but he was a military man, not a tribal chieftain). And as recently as 1963 Iran's government was seriously challenged by a politically inspired revolt of the Qashqa'i (a large tribal confederation of southern Iran)⁵.

III. c Some recurring patterns: tribes and the government of states in the Middle East

With some simplification it might be said that the political process in the Middle Eastern empires has always been cyclical. It showed a Paretian⁶ circulation of ruling elites. A (nomadic) tribe took - by force or otherwise⁷ - control of the government and became the ruling stratum of society (or, at least, formed the nucleus of the ruling stratum). In the course of generations this elite, become sedentary, lost its militancy. Its rule weakened, until another (nomadic) tribe took over and established a new dynasty. The tribal origin of most Middle Eastern rulers left its imprint on many institutions of the state: there is nearly as much justification for

the statement that the tribes created the Middle Eastern states as for its reverse. Several Kurdish (and other Middle Eastern) tribes can be considered simplified replicas of nearby states; on the other hand, Middle Eastern states replicate some tribal features. States and tribes developed together, in continuous interrelation. There is little reason to doubt that the tribe (some sort of tribe) is historically prior to the state, but that does not mean that tribes such as exist today belong to an earlier stage of social evolution. The state has not come in the place of the tribe, but co-exists and interacts with it ⁸.

Typical of all Middle Eastern empires is the clear-cut distinction of a military "caste" ("nobility") and a bureaucracy on the one hand,⁹ and the mass of the population on the other. A similar dichotomy is that of tribal and non-tribal Kurds (and other subjects) described in the preceding chapter. Even some of the same terms are employed. At some places tribesmen were called sipahî,¹⁰ after the "feudal" cavalry of the Ottoman empire. The non-tribal subjects are quite generally called reyet (beside locally preferred terms as gûran, kurmanç, and miskên), which is the term used in most Islamic states for the tax-paying subjects (see also below, p.185f). Even a rudimentary bureaucracy is observable: the tribe agha may have his deputies (kîxa, gûxa; see p.91/2) who represent him in the villages under his direct influence; he may also have his scribe and counsellors, etc. When the Kurdish emirates still existed, they had a much more elaborate bureaucracy, with titles and offices that replicated those of the Ottoman and Persian empires (see below, sec. h).

One of the reasons why the bureaucracy in the tribal milieu is so rudimentary is the relatively small size of tribes. Many current affairs can be handled directly by the chief-tain, where in larger units that is physically impossible. Another reason is that in Kurdistan rainfed cultivation predominates. Such terrassing as takes place is on a small scale; elaborate irrigation systems as in Persia or Southern Mesopotamia, which may give rise to a sizable bureaucracy, are absent.

The military "caste" of the Middle Eastern empires was largely recruited from the nomadic pastoralists and warriors who periodically swarmed out of the Arab peninsula and the Eurasian steppe belt. Often it was these recently arrived "tribal" groups that provided these states with new rulers.

The probably largest single contribution to the genetic material of the present-day Kurdish people was made by one such wave of immigrants of Iranian stock. These, known as "Medes and Persians", moved south along the narrow pathway between Caucasus and Caspian Sea in the last quarter of the second millennium B.C., and established themselves in western Iran. It seems that the immigrants were welcomed there by local rulers, who employed these warriors with war carts (an innovation!) in their service. In exchange they gave meadows for pasturage and cultivable land¹¹. But in due time these newcomers - or a section of them - came to form the ruling stratum of these ethnically mixed societies. In 612 B.C. the Medes, after several centuries of warring with the Assyrians, conquered and sacked the latter's capital Nineveh¹². For quite some time they were to rule northern Mesopotamia. It seems probable that under the protection of the Median armies not only the pastoral nomads, but also Median sedentary elements moved west, and established themselves in the heartlands of Kurdistan¹³.

The physical constitution of Kurdistan makes it into a natural frontier of empires. It is very difficult for any outside power to establish and maintain its sovereignty there. For the Mesopotamian empires it had always constituted the northern and northeastern frontier (the Assyrian conquests in the north were made west of what are now the Kurdish heartlands). For the past two and a half millennia it has been the buffer between Persia and the great empires of Asia Minor: Greek-Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman. The Kurdish mountains formed a secondary reservoir (if I may call the Arab deserts and Eurasian steppes primary) of "tribal" warriors, recruited by the surrounding states. This was certainly so after the arrival of the Medes there, but possibly already before that time. (Assyrian chronicles make mention of the kings of Nairi, redoubtable fighters in what is now central Kurdistan). Throughout the history of Islam one encounters Kurdish chieftains with their tribesmen in the service of the great dynasties around them¹⁴.

The most famous of these was Selahedîn Eyûbî (the Saladin of European lore), a Kurd of the Rewadî tribe who earned fame as a general leading Kurdish and Turkish troops against the Crusaders. He put an end to the (shiite) Fatimid caliphate of Egypt and set himself up as the new (sunnite) sultan there (1171). Later he extended his authority from Egypt to include Syria. His descendants ruled until 1249 in Egypt, and until 1260 in Aleppo.

Saladin may, however, not have been a very representative example of the Kurdish tribesman who entered military service of a neighbouring empire. He was not a tribal chieftain; he was not even born in Kurdistan but in Tekrît (Arab Iraq). He earned his power to his appointment as a general by Nûredîn, the independent Atabeg (ruler) of Aleppo, and to his qualities as a soldier, not to any tribal backing (The many tribal chieftains who served under him in lower ranks were much more typical). Probably his very lack of strong connections with his own tribe was even an asset, in that it became easier for other tribes to be loyal to him. His position thus somewhat resembled that of a shaikh whose charisma transcends tribal boundaries. In his case the charisma was due to his success in war against the unbelievers (the Crusaders) and his opposition to the heretical Fatimids, so it had a religious flavour, too.

The tribal troops of which his army consisted were Kurds and Turks, with the latter dominating; conflicts between these groups were frequent. Therefore Saladin never took the risk of alienating the larger part of his men by stressing his Kurdish identity. The Eyyubid dynasty was not a Kurdish, but an islamic one .

III. d Some recurring patterns: center-periphery relations

Processes closely related to the periodical change of dynasties in the centre of Middle Eastern empires may be observed in the periphery. The role of tribes is even more obvious there. Dynastic change in the capital may, in fact be seen as a special case of the processes occurring in the periphery.

Generally, then, there is a difference in the administration of the central lands of empires, and the periphery. The tendency is towards direct, centralized control in the central districts, and forms of vassalage ("indirect rule") in the periphery. Since Kurdistan has always been - and still is - peripheral to any state it belonged to, it is the processes in the periphery that are

relevant. They occur probably in all other peripheral regions of empires as well. The central authority chooses, rather arbitrarily, a few out of all the locally powerful men, and invests them with an office. The exact terms under which this occurs vary between different times and places; the term "vassalage" has to be understood in a very broad sense. All dealings of the government with the people are then made through these chosen lords, which considerably changes the nature and extent of their powers. The appointed lords are held to collect taxes from their subjects and also supply military recruits to the central government, but otherwise retain a high degree of autonomy. The only other demand is that of "loyalty". In exchange they receive state support to back up their local claims. Whereas chieftains without state backing have to rule by consent (although a strong band of armed retainers may compensate for incomplete consent), those whom the state recognizes and invests with a title can and generally do afford much more authoritarian forms of rule. Through their obligations to the state (taxation and soldiers, both of which they can easily levy in excess of central demand, and keep the balance for themselves), as well as through the coercive sanctions of which they ultimately dispose, there grows a rudimentary replica of the central state organization around them. They, in turn, have a number of minor chieftains as their vassals, whose relations with them replicate their own relations with the central authority. Thus even rather loose association with the state may significantly affect political organization down to the lowest levels. Beside these purely political influences there are the equally important economical influences emanating from the political centre. The effects of trade, or of the influx of cash or new products are generally so as to increase social stratification, although the processes by which this occurs are less predictable. Mechanization of agriculture is the latest, but certainly not the only one of these influences.

A petty chieftain has little to lose, and much to gain by becoming

a vassal to a powerful state. He may have to give up some of his independence, but is often amply compensated for this by an increase in effective power. Now Kurdistan differs from many other peripheral regions in that it has, for the past centuries, been contested for by two or more big powers, which gave the local rulers some leverage. They could try to balance the powers against each other, a dangerous but rewarding game.

The world witnessed the dramatic outcome of the last game of this kind in March 1975 with the Algiers agreement between the rival powers Iran and Iraq (themselves clients of the USA and the USSR), as a result of which Barzanî's vassal kingdom¹⁶ collapsed within a few days and hundreds of thousands of Iraqi Kurds fled across the border into the relative safety of Iran. Barzanî received Iran's support because it wanted to harrass Iraq, with which it had a long-standing conflict; by always keeping a door open to the Iraqi government Barzanî had long managed to retain a certain measure of independence vis à vis Iran. He simply followed the example of numerous Kurdish chieftains before him, a chain whose beginnings are lost in the dawn of history.

The presence of more than one big power in the area also strongly affects the course of rivalries among petty chieftains in the periphery. The best thing to do for rivals or enemies of a particular chieftain who has become a vassal to one state is to try to enlist support from the other state (or one of the other states). For this other state it is precisely their rivalry with the other chieftain that is some guarantee of their loyalty. Usually, states trying to get influence in Kurdistan sought for vassals among the enemies of the other state's vassals. In this way local or regional enmities and rivalries became intimately intertwined with the power conflicts of neighbouring, and even more distant states.

Nowhere have I found people so acutely aware as in Kurdistan of power conflicts within the state apparatus as well as between different states. In particular I still remember vividly a night that I was questioned very thoroughly about the present state of relations between the USA, the USSR, and China - in an encampment of nomads, almost none of whom had ever been to school. They were quite well-informed, and listened daily to news broadcasts from several countries, the contents of which they analyzed together. Their

main interest was, of course, in the possibilities for Kurdish independence (even if as a vassal state) that the news implied.

Loyalty of such vassals usually only lasts as long as it is profitable to be loyal. When this is no longer so they may transfer their loyalty to another outside power, or proclaim their full independence. As soon as central authority weakens the vassal in the periphery show signs of independence. They may continue to proclaim their (nominal) allegiance but progressively empty this allegiance of content: they stop paying taxes regularly, no longer provide military assistance when demanded, and in the end may openly proclaim their independence. If the center's weakening is only temporary, these vassals may soon reaffirm their loyalty. If, however, central authority is not rapidly restored one sees the appearance in the periphery of a number of autonomous chiefdoms or mini-states, some of which may dominate others and become fully grown states in their own right. Decay of an empire thus creates, as it were, a number of new states at the periphery which are smaller copies of the old empire. It is not necessarily the former vassals who become independent rulers. The turmoil accompanying the decay of central power, and the intensified rivalries between more or less established authorities in the periphery makes the rapid rise of new leaders possible.

As an illustration of this process I take the case of the Merwanids, a Kurdish dynasty that made itself independent and ruled for a century (ca. 985 - 1085) over a large part of Kurdistan. The central power in this case was the Abbasid caliphate of Baghdad. In this capital the Buyids, a Dailamite dynasty, had taken the reins into their hands (955) and provided some muscle to the Caliph's too weak rule. Officially the Caliph remained the head of state, but to all purposes the government was the Buyids'. They had reduced the Hamdanids, an Arab dynasty that had for some time ruled independently northern and middle Mesopotamia (and even, for 3 years, Baghdad itself). Two branches of the Hamdanid family were made governors of the Buyids at Aleppo and at Mosul. They always remained eager to regain full independence and expand the territory under their rule. The greatest Islamic rival of the Abbasids in this period were the Fatimids at Cairo, who also had influence in Syria.

The third contemporary empire was Byzantium. Minor roles were played by the two semi-independent Armenian kingdoms of Anî (under the Bagratid dynasty) and Van (under the Artsrunians). Religious factors should not be left out of consideration. The Abbasid caliphs were accepted by all sunni muslims as their ultimate overlords, their secular as well as religious leaders. The Buyids, however, and the troops through which they exercised de facto authority, were shiites of the "twelver" persuasion, which may be one of the reasons why they were unpopular with the (mainly sunni) population of Kurdistan. The Fatimids were Isma'ilis ("sevener" shiites). Religious sentiment would thus make the sunni Hamdanids the most congenial of the external powers.

We are told of the founder of the Merwanid dynasty, the Kurd Bad (or Baz) that he was originally a shepherd, then became a robber, and later with a band of followers, took the town of Ercîş and some minor towns near Armenia. Elsewhere he is called chief of the Humeydî, apparently a tribe. This need not contradict his lowly position in earlier times: when leadership in the tribe is not sanctioned by a state, there are no overriding restraints on rapid social mobility. Also, among Kurdish tribes it is not uncommon for chieftains' sons to work as shepherds in their youth. As long as the Buyid Adud ad-Dawla, a strong ruler, lived Bad stayed in the mountains and kept quiet, but after the former's death Bad's following rapidly increased¹⁸. He marched toward Meyaferqîn (the present town of Silvan), where a governor of the Hamadanids was in command, and easily seized the town, thanks to the inhabitants' co-operation (973/4). Soon he was also master of the towns of Amid (now Diyarbakir) and Nesîbîn, and the districts they commanded. Leaving a brother in command at Meyaferqîn he went southward and took Mosûl, routing troops sent against him by the Buyids and the Hamdanids. He even threatened Baghdad but was then defeated and had to retire to Meyaferqîn. A general sent after him, however, was forced to leave him in¹⁹ the possession of the entire province of Diyar Bekr²⁰. The Hamdanids accepted that a large part of their territory had fallen into Bad's hands. An arrangement was reached whereby Bad administered the southern fringes of his territory (the Tor Abdîn and Cezîre) as a vassal of the Hamdanids - who themselves were vassals to the Buyids, though with aspirations to independence²⁰. When in 990 A.D. the Buyid Samsam ad-Dawla died the Hamdanids tried to profit from the temporary weakening of central power. Among other things, they tried to reconquer the territories lost to Bad. Bad collected his troops near the Tor Abdîn, and established communication with the inhabitants of Mosul (who were apparently in favour of him).

He would possibly have taken that town if he had not been killed in the battle that ensued near the Tor Abdîn²¹. Three sister's sons succeeded him in turn. They managed to withstand attacks from outside (the Byzantines tried at that time to conquer the northern shores of Lake Van) and established marital relations with the Hamdanids. But the first two of these brothers faced internal opposition, and it was only the third, Ebû Nesr, who managed to establish internal peace. His long reign (1010-1061) was a period of prosperity and cultural splendour. He strengthened his position by establishing friendly relations with both the Byzantine Emperor and the Caliph and the Buyids²². In the third year of his reign, after he had consolidated his rulership, envoys of three great powers visited him simultaneously and brought him precious gifts and titles (which would make him at least in name a vassal of the granter). The first to arrive were envoys of the Caliph and his Buyid "protector". They brought many gifts, robes of honour, the title "Nasr ad-Dawla" ("support of the state"), and a signed charter in which all towns and castles of Diyar Bekr were given to him. A few days later an envoy from the Fatimid ruler Abu Ali Mansur of Egypt arrived with many gifts and another title, "Izz ad-Dawla" ("glory of the state"). And another day later an envoy from the Byzantine Emperor Basil arrived, carrying magnificent gifts. This recognition by the three great contemporary powers greatly contributed to Ebû Nesr's independence and the strength of his reign²³. He added Amid to his dominions, and carried on government in grand style, resembling that of Cairo or Baghdad²⁴. Bureaucrats in his service hailed from several corners of the Islamic world. Political refugees were welcomed, contributing to the cosmopolitanism of this new state. Unfortunately, the sources do not give much useful information on the internal organization of the Merwanid state, the ethnic origins of its soldiers, and the composition of the population. Minorsky (probably following the historian Ibn al-Athir) called Bad leader of the Humeydî, and related that for his last confrontation with the Hamdanids he collected a large body of Beşnewî Kurds around him²⁵. That suggests that the main body of his army consisted of Kurdish "tribal" warriors. The towns' population, however, was largely non-Kurdish; a high proportion were Christians and Jews²⁶. Bad's first successor Ebû Elî complained that the inhabitants of Meşaferrîn, especially the "drunks and stupid ones" were not on his side but on the Hamdanids', and even opposed his troops. If they felt insulted by "a soldier or another Kurd", they would kill him without recourse to the ruler²⁷. The vast majority of the peasantry, too, were Christians²⁸ (Jacobite "Syrians" and Gregorian Armenians, with a few Greek orthodox). It is highly

improbable that at that time there were any Kurds practising agriculture in this area. They were described as a mountain people, living mainly by animal husbandry and raiding²⁹.

In the Merwanid state then, the military caste consisted of Kurdish tribesmen; peasantry, craftsmen, traders, etc. were mainly christians and jews, while the bureaucrats were often Arabs, later also Syrian christians. The land regime remains very obscure; it is not clear whether the Merwanids ever gave out fiefs, and under what conditions. There is one passage in Ibn al-Azraq's chronicle that refers to a grant of land, but that concerns a rather special case. After Ebû Nesr's death his most able son Ebûl Qasim succeeded him, but another son, Seïd, caused much trouble and had to be bought off with money and a territorial grant³⁰. Government of other towns was delegated to centrally appointed officials, often relatives of the ruler at Meyaferrîn. It is probable that these, as well as the military commanders of the tribal troops received their salaries in the form of grants of land (fiefs), as in the other islamic empires, but we have no concrete evidence for this.

Decay of the Merwanid state set in after Ebû Nesr's death. The main external cause was the arrival in western Iran and Mesopotamia of the Saljuq Turks. These nomadic warriors had a great love for raiding, which their paramount chieftain Tughrul Beg could not control, only try to channel into acceptable ways. Ebû Nesr had already been confronted with two Saljuq "generals" who had received his dominions as fiefs from Tughrul Beg, but he could rebuff them. Somewhat later Mosul was taken by the Saljuqs and plundered; Ebû Nesr again succeeded in expelling them from that city. In 1055 Tughrul Beg marched into Baghdad, and from that time on the Saljuqs (who were orthodox sunnis) replaced the Buyids as protectors of the caliph. Ebû Nesr now had to buy off Tughrul Beg's designs against his lands with gifts of money. In the succession struggle between Ebû Nesr's sons Ebûl Qasim and Seïd (referred to above) the latter enlisted the support of Tughrul Beg, and laid siege to Meyaferrîn with a large body of Turkish troops. These troops could still be bought off however: while Seïd was contented with a number of fiefs, the Saljuqs withdrew upon receipt of 50,00 dinars³¹. The Saljuqs meanwhile continued to expand. Their main drive was directed against Byzantium, but the confrontations found place in or near Merwanid territory, to the great anxiety of Ebûl Qasim. In 1071 the Saljuq sultan Alp Aslan decisively defeated the Byzantine Emperor Romanos IV near Melazgird - on what used to be Merwanid ground. From now on, Melazgird and Axlat became Saljuq dependencies, governed by Saljuq feudatories. In 1084 a new Saljuq

campaign to submit the Merwanids took place. They laid siege on Meyafērān and Amid. The Merwanid ruler Ebûl Muzeffer (a son of Ebûl Qasim) left his capital and fled to Cezîre, leaving the defense to his vizier. The sultan's advisers proposed to take only Cezîre, and to leave Ebûl Muzeffer in the possession of both big towns. But the latter, at the Saljuq sultan's court to negotiate about the new southern borderline of his territories, was obstinate, and the Saljuqs therefore took everything from him (1085). As a consolation they gave him a small fief in Iraq. From then on the former Merwanid districts were under the control of Saljuq governors who collected revenue for the sultan.

When, after a period of weakened central control, with its proliferation of petty and not-so-petty independent units at the periphery, a new, strong central authority arises (such as the Saljuqs' in the preceding example) the independence of the rulers in the periphery is reduced or destroyed. This new central authority may be an entirely new dynasty (possibly from one of the independent peripheral units), or it may be the result of internal reforms in the old empire. In the historical narrative of the following sections we shall encounter instances of both.

Since once-independent rulers cannot be trusted to become very loyal vassals, the central authority may try to remove them from the area or otherwise eliminate them (this may be the reason why peripheral chieftains seem to be so quick to offer their submission to any new powerful central ruler who turns towards Kurdistan). A rival of theirs may be appointed in their stead, especially if he is acceptable to the local population. Alternatively the district may temporarily come under a (military) bureaucrat as a governor.

Especially in the latter case there often remains a power vacuum since an outsider cannot easily replace a local ruler³². The result is a crumbling of the unity the former ruler managed to maintain: many petty chieftains fiercely compete to fill up as much of the power vacuum as they might. Quarrels between power-greedy individuals are ever-present, but when there is no paramount ruler who knows how to contain them, the chiefdom or state may fall apart into a number of feuding tribes³³. Several tribes owe their existence

as separate units to the decay of strong (regional) authority.

As a wise and experienced Kurdish ruler wrote³⁴ nearly four centuries ago, when describing such a period:

ولایت ز سلطان چو خالی شد
رئیس بهر قریه والی شد

As the country was emptied of
its ruler (sultan),
in every village the headman
became its prince.

The general processes sketched above will now be illustrated. The next section describes the historical context for the first set of examples.

III. e The incorporation of Kurdistan into the Ottoman Empire³⁵

The Turkish and Mongol invasions in the Middle East (11th - 14th centuries) caused great instability and frequent political changes. The geographical spread of the Kurds was also significantly affected, in that by moving north and west, they penetrated both Armenias³⁶.

A new stabilization took place in the late 15th - 16th centuries, with the emergence of two strong multi-national states, the Ottoman and Persian Empires. Confrontations of these two states took place in Kurdistan; Kurdish tribes and chieftains played, naturally, an important role therein. In the first half of the 16th century Ottoman military success and diplomatic wisdom secured the incorporation of the greater part of Kurdistan by winning the loyalty of local Kurdish rulers (mîrs). The border line between the empires thus determined was to undergo only minor modifications in later centuries.

Prelude: Qaraqoyunlu and Aqqoyunlu

After Timur Lang's Death (1404) his empire, which had stretched from the Syr Darya to western Anatolia, rapidly fell apart. In the far west the Ottomans, rulers of a small Turkish principality, started anew to add other similar principalities to their dominions. In Azerbaijan and Kurdistan two confederations of Turkish tribes gained independence and became the ruling stratum of territorial states:

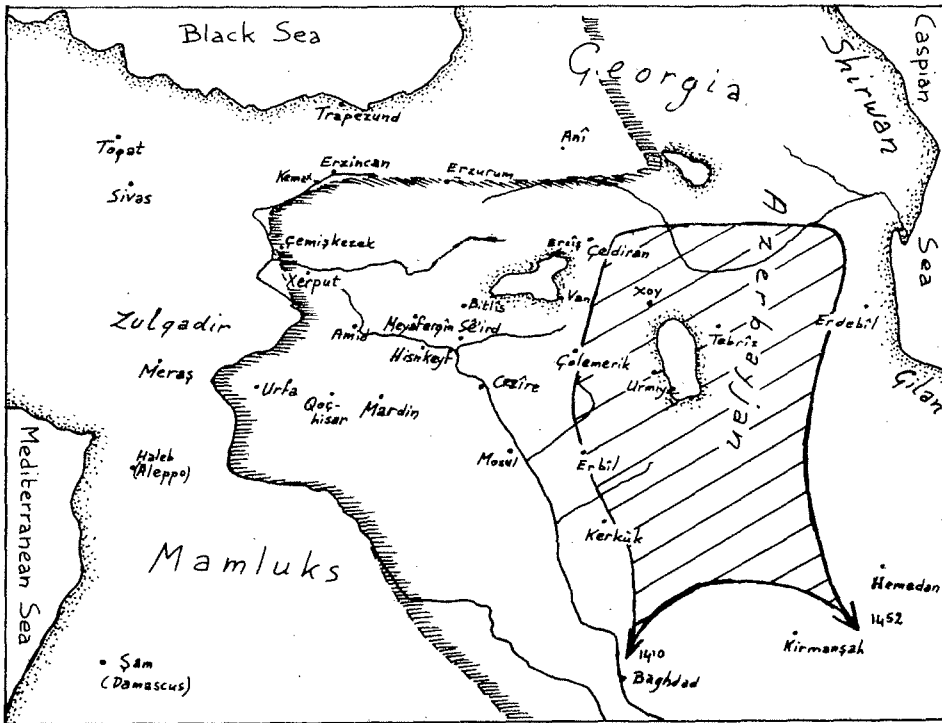
the Qaraqoyunlu and the Aqqoyunlu. The former had their centre originally in the area northeast of Lake Van; shortly after Timur's death their leader Qara Yusuf conquered most of Azerbaijan. The Aqqoyunlu confederation had Amid (in western Kurdistan) as its capital. Its territory was, at that time, still small and hard to delineate. Around 1450 most Kurdish emirates (principalities) were under Qaraqoyunlu sovereignty, although towards the west (Bitlîs, Sê'ird, Hisnkeyf) the Kurdish mîrs' vassalage to the Qaraqoyunlu rulers was nominal at best³⁷. Qara Yusuf, who previously had had to flee from Timur, gave upon his return his daughter in marriage to Mîr Şemsedîn of Bitlîs, who in turn gave him part of his territories as a gift, and helped him to defeat a Timurid descendant³⁸: The Kurdish mîr seems more an ally than vassal. Further west, around Mardin, Amid, Xerput, and Erzincan the Kurds were subject to Aqqoyunlu rulers. The Kurds do not seem to have played any role of importance in the armed confrontations between the two ruling dynasties. Most battles took place in Mesopotamia, southwest of Kurdistan proper³⁹. After 1460, however, the strong and able Aqqoyunlu ruler Uzun Hasan started pushing eastward; his Turkish troops took Hisnkeyf and Sêird. The Qaraqoyunlu could not but feel threatened at this eastward push: they considered these occupied territories their sphere of influence. Jihanshah, the Qaraqoyunlu ruler, marched with an army against Uzun Hasan. In 1467 the army was defeated, and Jihanshah was killed in flight. In the following years the Aqqoyunlu subjected most of Kurdistan: in 1470 the Cezîre district was taken; the fortresses of Bitlîs and Çolemerik (capital of the Hekarî Kurds) followed in the same or the next year⁴⁰. All of Kurdistan now fell to Uzun Hasan, who, according to the Sharafname, "took it upon him to exterminate the leading families of Kurdistan, especially those who had shown themselves devoted to or subjects of the Qaraqoyunlu sultans"⁴¹. After defeating a descendant of Timur in Iran, Uzun Hasan became the master of Azerbaijan and most of Iran as well. He made Tebrîz his new capital. Meanwhile, in the west, the Ottoman empire was also expanding.

Sultan Mehmed II ("the Conqueror", who ruled in 1444, and 1451-1481) made conquests in Europe and Anatolia; the latter at the expense of other Turkish petty states. The Venetians, who saw their commercial interests threatened by this Ottoman expansion, proposed a military alliance to Uzun Hasan. And the (Turkish) beylik of Qaraman asked the Aqqoyunlu's military support against the approaching Ottomans. The troops that Uzun Hasan sent were, after initial successes at Toqat and Sivas, severely beaten near Angora (1473/74). Venetian assistance, though promised, never materialized⁴². The Mamluks, rulers of Syria and Egypt, with whom Uzun Hasan used to have cordial relations (he sent them tokens of subjection, e.g. keys of towns taken and heads of Qaraqoyunlu leaders killed⁴³) preferred to remain neutral in the conflict. As long as the two new big powers were occupied with each other, they could not make encroachments on Mamluk territory. Their confrontation may therefore not have been unwelcome. In 1478 Uzun Hasan died. His sons proved weak, the empire desintegrated. Kurdish chieftains who had survived Uzun Hasan were among the first of his former subjects to reassert their independence. Soon a new leader was to take over control of the Aqqoyunlu territories, including Kurdistan, and to become shah of Iran: Isma'il, scion of the shaikhly dynasty of the Safavids.

The Safavids

This dynasty was named after its ancestor Safi ad-Din (1252 - 1334), a much respected sunni mystic and saint, living at Erdebil⁴⁴. He made many followers, also among the nomadic Turks and Mongols; many Mongols were converted to Islam through his efforts. Although Safi does not seem to have spread any special teaching, a sufi order grew up around him, the adepts of which felt a strong personal loyalty towards Safi and his descendants. Erdebil became a centre for the spread of a pious, devotional sufism. A sudden change in the nature of the order's sufism occurred with the accession of Junaid as its head (1447). This adventurous and militant shaikh travelled widely, after having been expelled from Erdebil by Jihanshah, the

Qaraqoyunlu ruler. He established quite friendly relations with Uzun Hasan - who gave him a sister in marriage - and attempted, successfully, to build up a strong following among the nomadic Turkish tribes of central and southwestern Anatolia. These tribes were only superficially islamicized, and were inclined to rather heterodox beliefs. Earlier extremist shiite movements had found an enthusiastic following among them. This may have been one of the reasons why Shaikh Junaid, and after him his son Haidar and grandson Isma'il (the later shah) adopted similar heterodox teachings. Extreme veneration for Ali was only one aspect thereof; to their followers, the shaikhs themselves came to be seen as (incarnations of) God⁴⁵. Their khalifas (deputies) spread their religious propaganda all over Anatolia. It took root especially among the nomadic Turkish tribes and the poorer sections of the sedentary rural population (settled Turks or the islamicized descendants of the original inhabitants). The followers of these Safavid shaikhs came to be known as "Qizilbash" ("redheads"), because of the red headgear some of the converted Turkish tribes wore. With the most militant of these disciples the shaikhs also indulged in "holy warfare" against the non-muslim kingdoms in the north (the last Byzantine stronghold of Trapezund - which was to fall to the Ottomans in 1461 -, Georgia, and the other Caucasian states, especially Shirwan). When Isma'il was still very young, his father fell in a campaign against Shirwan. The young boy had to take refuge in (shiite) Gilan, because the (sunni) Aqqoyunlu, sovereigns of Erdebil, feared the power of the Safavid order, and wanted to kill him. In 1499, when internal dissension had considerably weakened Aqqoyunlu power, Isma'il left his hideout and came to Erdebil. The next spring he went into Anatolia (to Erzincan, according to tradition) to collect loyal troops around him. In a short time he had an army of 7,000 devoted disciples, from diverse parts of Anatolia, mainly Turkish nomads and turkicized peasantry⁴⁶. Probably there were also a few Kurdish groups among them, although they are not mentioned among Isma'il's troops on this occasion. A few years later two tribes from northern



Map 7



territory of the Qaraqoyunlu, 1406-1469



western boundary of Shah Isma'il's empire around 1512

Kurdistan are repeatedly mentioned among the Qizilbash tribes: the Çemişkezek and the Xinuslú⁴⁷. Isma'il did not immediately turn against the Aqqoyunlu, but led his followers first in a campaign against Shirwan: maybe an act of revenge, for both his father and grandfather had been killed in similar campaigns. After his conquest of Shirwan, however, the last Aqqoyunlu ruler of Azerbayjan, Alwand, attacked him. Isma'il routed his army, and thus Azerbayjan fell into his hands like a ripe fruit. He had himself crowned shah, and proclaimed (twelver) shiism the state religion (middle of 1501)⁴⁸. In the subsequent years he eliminated the other petty rulers that had appropriated parts of the Aqqoyunlu's empire⁴⁹.

Kurdistan did not fall into his hands so easily as Azerbayjan. Several Kurdish mîrs had been virtually independent for the past few decades, and also Amir Beg Mawsilu, a Turk who had under the Aqqoyunlu been governor of (the province of) Diyar Bekr had asserted independence. A greater danger was represented by the (Turkish) beylik

of Zulqadir (Elbistan), the last remaining independent state between the Ottoman Empire and the former Aqqoyunlu dominions⁵⁰. Its ruler Ala' ad-Dawla, attempting to expand his sovereignty over these former Aqqoyunlu lands, took some fortifications in Diyar Bekr. Shah Isma'il marched with a strong army (20,000 men) against this rival and defeated his army. Amir Beg Mawsilu of Diyar Bekr then tendered his submission to the shah. For this Isma'il rewarded him richly; but instead of leaving him in his old function he sent him as a governor of Khorasan to Herat, far from Kurdistan where his personal influence was too great. As a governor of Diyar Bekr the shah now appointed his own brother-in-law Muhammad Beg Ustajlu⁵¹. The central town of Amid, however, stood under command of Amir Beg's brother Qaytmas Beg, who refused to give it up to Muhammad Beg Ustajlu, and incited the sunni Kurds to harass Ustajlu's shiite Turkish troops. He also asked for assistance from fresh Zulqadir armies after the shah and the main body of his army had left. Muhammad Beg Ustajlu, however, slaughtered many Kurds, and defeated the troops from Zulqadir. In a most bloody way he similarly asserted his authority over Mardin, Cezfire and Mosul, "killing and plundering the Kurds"⁵².

Shah Isma'li's policy towards the Kurds resembled Uzun Hasan's. Both eliminated many Kurdish chieftains and appointed their own men as governors. Alternatively, when they left local authority with local people, it was not the old, noble families, but rivals of lesser status whom they recognized⁵³. Rebellions of Kurdish chieftains who resisted this policy and tried to remain or become independent were brutally suppressed. A delegation of 16 Kurdish chieftains, who had agreed to offer their submission to the shah and pay him homage in the hope of a more lenient attitude, were taken prisoner when they visited the shah in his winter residence at Xoy (1510?)⁵⁴. The shah then sent trusted leaders of his Qizilbash tribes to these mîrs' territories, in order to subject them. The religious factor played a role, too, although it is sometimes overestimated. Most Kurds were sunni muslims, while Isma'il had

made twelver shi'a his state religion, and (many of) his troops were fanatical extremist shiites. This could only exacerbate the antagonism between the Kurds and their Turkish overlords.

The events as seen "from below"

Most of the contemporary sources on this period have the perspective of the ruling classes (or the ruling strata). History is presented as an adventurous struggle between Turkish and Kurdish military and political leaders; of the common people and their role we learn next to nothing. Exceptions are a few chronicles written by christian subjects in the Aramaeic language. One of these⁵⁵ relates the occupation of Cezîre by Muhammad Beg Ustajlu and subsequent events. It is a concise account of disaster upon disaster that befell the peasantry and townsmen: Qizilbash, locusts, Kurds, etc., in seemingly never-ending sequence:

"Isma'il Shah, who viewed himself as God and who had conquered the entire East, sent as a governor into Armenia a mean, cunning and hard-hearted man called Muhammad Beg. He ordered him to kill any king who would disobey him, and to destroy every town that would rebel against him". Mîr Şeref, "king" (mîr) of Cezîre, refused to submit himself and to send presents to Muhammad Beg, who therefore sent his troops and defeated the mîr. "He pillaged the entire country; he took away the animals; he killed a large number of the inhabitants; he slaughtered priests, deacons, children, peasants, artisans, young people and old; he burnt villages; he destroyed the monasteries and the churches and he took as slaves many young men and women. King Şeref was then obliged to make peace with him, and give him one of his nieces as a wife".

The next year it was only the locust that made life miserable; again a year later, mîr Şeref revolted. Muhammad Beg immediately sent troops into Botan, the region of mîr Şeref's Kurdish subjects. Many muslims and christians were massacred. To prevent Muhammad Beg's taking the town of Cezîre, mîr Şeref ordered all its inhabitants (mainly christians) out, and had his Kurds set it on fire. Then he and his Kurds retreated to his mountain fortress at Şax. When the Qizilbash came they met with no resistance upon entering the town's ruins. They forced the inhabitants to return and rebuild it.

No sooner was it rebuilt than new misery impended. Hearing the rumour that Shah Isma'il had been attacked and defeated

by "a courageous people who cover their heads with felt", Kurdish tribes everywhere united; they came down from the mountains where they had withdrawn, and attacked the Qizilbash. The local governor at Cezîre was defeated; Muhammad Beg sent reinforcements, which were welcomed by the inhabitants, who hoped to be delivered from the Kurds. Instead, however, these troops pillaged the town and butchered its inhabitants. At first the notables, christians and muslims alike, were tortured, women and girls raped. Then a general massacre ensued; the newly arrived troops killed without discrimination, christian and muslim, man and animal, "they even raped each other's wives..." "The town was burnt down. Muslims, Syrians (jacobites) and jews who had escaped the bloodshed were taken into captivity. On the way all who could not, for fatigue, continue their forced voyage were killed. All these unfortunate prisoners were sold on the islands and in far-away countries".

Ottoman - Safavid confrontation

Considering Isma'il's policy it is not surprising that the Kurds - or, rather, those traditional Kurdish rulers that survived - were looking for help to the one big power that might liberate them from Safavid domination, the (sunni) Ottoman empire. As long as Sultan Bayezid was in power there (1481-1512), Isma'il's relations with this neighbour had been friendly. Bayezid, however, became weak in his old age; during his lifetime a struggle for the succession already ensued between his sons. Around that same time (1511) a social and religious revolt broke out, and spread from its original centre Teke (in southwestern Anatolia) over large areas of the empire. The evidence⁵⁶ suggests that it was a Qizilbash revolt, although Isma'il seems not to have been directly involved. Only in a later stage, when the eastern provinces were also in revolt, Isma'il intervened. He sent Nur Ali Khalife Rumlu, his representative at Erzincan, into the Ottoman Empire to support the revolting Qizilbash there (and, indirectly, Bayezid's grandson Murad, one of the pretenders to the sultanate). Nur Ali, aided by the local Qizilbash, defeated several armies that were sent against him by provincial governors and by Selim I who had meanwhile mounted the Sultan's throne. Selim (nicknamed "Yavuz", " the Grim") was the

army's favourite; he was a sworn enemy of Shah Isma'il. He had been governor of Trapezund (an Ottoman possession since 1461), and his incursions into Safavid territory had then greatly annoyed Isma'il. One of Selim's first actions as a sultan was the execution and imprisonment of large numbers of Qizilbash subjects ("40,000", according to some sources)⁵⁷. Both monarchs now had their *casus belli*. To make things worse, Muhammad Khan Ustajlu⁵⁸ (a governor only!) challenged Selim to arms in most insulting terms. In the winter of 1513-14 Selim prepared for war, and in spring he marched east with an army of over 100,000 (!) On his approach Muhammad Khan Ustajlu evacuated his dominions. He forced all inhabitants of the Armenian plateau to go to Azerbaijan, and burnt all that was edible, trying thus to place an impassible barrier between the Ottoman and Safavid lands. Thanks to 60,000 camels carrying provisions the sultan however managed to pass. In August 1514 the two empires' armies met near Çeldiran (northeast of Lake Van). Isma'il suffered a crushing defeat. Selim occupied Tebriz⁵⁹. However, logistic problems necessitated the Ottoman army's return before winter set in. Isma'il reoccupied Tebriz, and sent back his governors to his western provinces. Muhammad Khan Ustajlu had been killed at Çeldiran, so in his place he appointed Muhammad's brother Qara Beg, with the title of Khan. Two other brothers, Iwaz Beg and Ulash Beg, became governors of Bitlîs and Cezîre, respectively. When Qara Khan arrived in Diyar Bekr he found the Kurdish mîrs in open revolt. They had recognized Selim as their sovereign, and solicited his help to get rid of the Safavids.

Ottoman policy vis-à-vis the Kurds

According to the *Sharafname*⁶⁰, some twenty Kurdish mîrs had already sent him declarations of submission before Selim's campaign against the Safavids. The man behind this was a Kurd born in Bitlîs, Idrîs Bitlîsî. He had formerly been a secretary to the Aqqoyunlu ruler Ya'qub (son of Uzun Hasan), was an important historian, and an accomplished diplomat. From Ottoman sources⁶¹ it appears that he

was already in Selim's service - where his intimate knowledge of Kurdish affairs was appreciated - and had been despatched to secure Kurdish support. It was Idrîs - whom the Sharafname praises in the most florid language - who counselled the Kurdish mîrs to bet on Selim, and who returned to the capital with their promises of allegiance ("sincere attachment and devotion", in the words of the Sharafname). At the Ottomans' arrival in 1514 the inhabitants of Amid opened the gates of the city for them. Elsewhere the Kurds started throwing out the remaining Qizilbash occupation troops, led by their mîrs who tried to regain their strongholds which the Qizilbash had taken from them⁶². But before winter, as related above, the sultan retired to western Anatolia with the bulk of his army, and Isma'il sent troops into Kurdistan to reassert his sovereignty. Kurdish mîrs closed their ranks and jointly opposed these Qizilbash troops. They received assistance from the one general Selim had left behind as the governor and military commander of the eastern frontier, Biyikli Muhammad Pasha. The Sharafname's story of his appointment merits attention. Even if it did not happen this way, this is how it ought to have happened, apparently:

When the sultan left Tebriz for the west, the Kurdish mîrs sent Idrîs to him with the demand of recognition of their hereditary rights over their respective territories, and with the request to appoint one from their midst as the beglerbegi so that they could, under an unambiguous leadership, march together against Qara Khan and expel him from Kurdistan. (It should be noted that beglerbegi was the title of the military and civil commander of an eyalet - large province in the Ottoman Empire; these posts were given to the sultan's sons and the highest generals only⁶³). The sultan then asked Idrîs which of the mîrs was most worthy of this paramount leadership. The wise Idrîs advised: "They are all more or less equal, and none of them will bow his head before any other. For an effective and united struggle against the Qizilbash it will be necessary to put coordinating authority into the hands of a servant of the court, whom all mîrs will obey." Thus was done, and Biyikli Muhammad stayed behind in Kurdistan as the beglerbegi of Kurdistan⁶⁴.

Immediately upon his arrival, the Qizilbash commander, Qara Khan, laid siege to Amid, the most important town. He received reinforcements from the towns that were still in Qizilbash hands, Mardin,

Hisnkeyf, and Urfa. The siege lasted over a year, and cost the inhabitants many casualties (50,000, acc. to Von Hammer's source⁶⁵), but the Qizilbash never succeeded in taking it. During all that time Kurdistan was in a rather chaotic state of uncoordinated warfare, in which the mutual rivalries of Kurdish pretenders and the sunni-shii or Ottoman-Safavid struggle were not easily distinguishable from each other. But finally a combination of Kurdish tribal troops, under their own mîrs, and regular troops under Biyikli Muhammad and other generals despatched by Sultan Selim inflicted a number of defeats on the Qizilbash. The latter received the final blow near Qoçhisar, at the hands of mainly Kurdish units. Many, maybe even the majority, were killed; the survivors fled to Iran⁶⁶.

The larger part of Kurdistan from now on belonged to the Ottoman Empire: the entire province of Diyar Bekr, most of what is now northern Iraq, and everything west of there. Selim's successor Süleyman was to push the frontier further east some twenty years later. A number of tribes and emirates were to remain in the Persian sphere of influence, while a few others were to switch their loyalties several times in the centuries to follow. The frontier may not yet have been fixed definitely; the administrative organization as it was introduced in 1515 was to remain in force with only minor changes for four centuries. It was the achievement of Idrîs, who had received plenipotentiary powers from the sultan. He appointed mîrs who had cooperated against the Qizilbash as hereditary governors of districts - an anomaly in the empire, where these positions were usually held by military appointees, and were (at least in theory) not inheritable. The administrative organization will be treated in more detail in section III. h.

From the Sharafname, which gives the histories of most important leading families in Kurdistan, it becomes apparent that the mîrs whom Idrîs appointed all belonged to old families that had for centuries exercised near-regal powers - at intervals. The Aqqoyunlu and the Safavids had followed a policy of breaking these families'

power. When they could, they replaced them with their own (Turkish) governors, otherwise with other, less aristocratic Kurds. The Ottoman conquest, on the other hand, consolidated the position of the old aristocracy: no parvenu was allowed to share in the power to be derived from the Ottoman state. In the section that now follows I shall try to illustrate these policies by retelling the same history from the narrower perspective of a few Kurdish emirates or, rather, of their ruling families.

III. f Political history of some Kurdish emirates

1. The meliks of Hisnkeyf

Hisnkeyf is an old town with a fortress on the Tigris, between Amid and Cezîre. Until very recently the town's population consisted mainly of jacobite christians (Sûriyanî: speakers of Aramaeic and Arabic). The district surrounding it is still inhabited by Sûriyanî, muslim and yezidi Kurds (tribal and also non-tribal) and some Arabs. In the period under consideration the population may have been even more mixed (the Sharafname only mentions Kurdish tribes and christian subject peasantry). Since centuries the same family had been in power here, with only very few interruptions. It claimed descent from Selahedîn Eyyûbî. The Sharafname mentions them as one of the five families that have, it is true, never arrogated full independence and the title of absolute monarch, but that at one time or another had money coined and the khutbe read in their own name⁶⁷. They bore the title of "melik", "king". Melik Eşref was a contemporary of Timur Lang, to whom he submitted himself and pleaded absolute devotion (which found, undoubtedly, material expression). His rule was long and quiet. After his death (early 15th century) his son Melik Xelîl "with the unanimous consent of the large and small tribes"⁶⁸ succeeded his father. The Qaraqoyunlu never succeeded in extending their influence over Hisnkeyf. Melik Xelîl recognized Timur Lang's son Shahrukh as his sovereign, and when the latter was in Van in a campaign against the Qaraqoyunlu Qara Yusuf who had made himself independent, Melik Xelîl went to pay homage. His rule, too,

was a period of peace and happiness: "His soldiers and subjects were satisfied and content with his generosity"⁶⁹. His successor was a brother's son, Melik Xelf, who had to fight several wars against the powerful Botan tribes of neighbouring Cezîre. In his time Uzun Hasan the Aqqoyunlu started his eastward expansion. His Turkish troops laid siege to Hisnkeyf. One of Melik Xelf's nephews treacherously killed him and opened the gates of the town to the Turks. He expected to be placed on his uncle's throne as Uzun Hasan's vassal, but such was not the policy of this monarch. He gave town and district as an hereditary fief to one of his Turkish chieftains.

Melik Xelîl, a brother of the murdered Melik Xelf, had escaped and kept himself in hiding in Syria until Aqqoyunlu rule was weakened by internal disputes. He returned to his territory and, aided by Mîr Şah Mihemed Sîrwî - the heads of the Şîrwî tribe always acted as viziers to the rulers of Hisnkeyf - he called on his family's subjects to show their loyalties. Representatives of all the diverse tribes and groups gathered under his banner and marched first against Sê'ird, then against Hisnkeyf, both of which towns they took from the Aqqoyunlu. From then on, Melik Xelîl enjoyed full independence. "None of the princes of Kurdistan equalled him in grandeur or power"; all he did was in regal style. He married a sister of the future Shah Isma'il. His independence came to an end when he (together with 15 other Kurdish mîrs, see above) went to the Shah to pay homage and offer his submission. With the others, he was taken prisoner. The only privilege his brother-in-law granted him was to send for his wife and family. The Qizilbash took possession of Hisnkeyf; they left the town in the custody of the (Kurdish) Becnewî tribe, which bore a grudge against Melik Xelîl, who had killed its chieftain. After the battle at Çeldiran Melik Xelîl escaped and returned to Hisnkeyf. He found the population there divided among itself on the selection of a paramount chieftain who could lead operations against the Qizilbash. A majority of the tribes supported Melik Xelîl's son Suleyman, but others preferred one of his cousins. The

Botan profited from this dividedness and laid siege to Sê'ird, determined to take that town from the Qizilbash and keep it for themselves. Within a few days, however, Melik Xelîl brought unity among his subjects. The Botan were forced to renounce on Sê'ird, which Melik Xelîl soon managed to retake. The Becnewî, who held the town of Hiskeyf, also surrendered. Melik Xelîl did not punish them, and conciliated them by granting their chieftain a village as a compensation for the killing of his father.

The exact status of Hiskeyf after its incorporation in the Ottoman empire is not clear. Anyway, Melik Xelîl continued to govern until his death. Between his four sons, however, there was nothing but rivalry. Huseyn, who first succeeded him, threw two brothers in jail. The fourth, Suleyman, took refuge with the Ottoman governor Khusrev Pasha at Amid, who had Huseyn killed and put Suleyman in his place. Rivalry of his brothers, and anger of the tribes, who blamed him for his brother's death, made it impossible for him to govern. He voluntarily resigned and submitted the keys of all fortifications to Khusrev Pasha at Amid. This was the end of the family's rule as hereditary mîrs. The sultan indemnified Suleyman by appointing him as a governor in the town of Urfa, and later at other places, while his brothers each received a zeamet (large fief) that guaranteed them comfortable incomes.

2. Hekarî and its mîrs ⁷⁰

The history of this emirate is interesting because its territory remained much longer under Safavid influence; it was always to remain a frontier province desired by both empires. Although the natural conditions gave it a rather efficient protection against foreign invasions, the mîrs often needed much political skill to retain their independence. Among the population of the emirate was a large number of Assyrians (Aramaeic speaking christians, following the Nestorian rites). Half of these were peasants subjected to the Kurdish tribes, as christians elsewhere; the other half, however,

were tribally organized and were redoubtable fighters⁷¹. We shall see that they also played quite an active role in the emirate's politics. The ruling family claimed descent from the Abbasid caliphs; at one time or another they had their own money minted and their names read in the khutbe. In earlier times Hekarî Kurds were mentioned in a more southerly direction⁷², but at the period under consideration they resided at Van and Çolemerik (the latter town is now called Hakkâri). The mîrs ruled over a territory consisting of the present Turkish provinces of Hakkari and Van, and stretching south into northern Iraq.

At the arrival of Timur Lang (1387) Mîr Êzdîn Şêr ruled over these dominions and firmly resisted Timur's incursions. But seeing how Timur harassed the non-military population, Êzdîn Şêr at last surrendered. A relative, Nesredîn, barricaded himself in the nearly impregnable fortress of Van and continued a desperate fight against Timur's troops; only with great difficulty could this resistance be broken. That may have been the reason why Timur contented himself with making Hekarî a nominal vassal state only. He gave Êzdîn Şêr - who after all had recognized his sovereignty - his patrimonial dominions as a fief, and left administration and government fully in his hands. The family remained loyal to Timur and his successors after that. When Timur's son Shahrukh led a campaign against the rebellious Qara Yusuf (the founder of the Qaraqoyunlu dynasty, see above), Êzdîn's son Melik Mihemed went (together with the mîr of Bitlîs, Şemsedîn) to the former's camp to pay his respects and to receive a renewal of his investiture.

The Sharafname is silent on the period of Qaraqoyunlu domination. It is highly probable that the family submitted itself to these new rulers, in spite of their profession of loyalty to the Timurids. The author, a great friend of the Hekarî family, may have preferred to leave this unmentioned.

The Aqqoyunlu ruler Uzun Hasan sent his (Turkish) generals against Çolemerik, the Hekarî capital. They managed to take it due to the extreme negligence of its ruler, another Êzdîn Şêr, who did not put

up any defense in spite of entreaties by all his councillors. The mîr was killed (and with him, probably, many others who might have led future resistance against occupation), and the district was placed under the control of the (Kurdish) Dumbilî tribe, a fierce lot, probably originating from Cezîre. The Dumbilî used the good relations of their chieftain Şêx Ehmed with Uzun Hasan to effect some conquests of their own, in the name of the Aqqoyunlu. The eastern subdistricts of Hekarî were placed under control of the Mehmûdî. These were a confederation of Kurdish tribes of diverse origins, formed around a certain Şêx Mehmûd (from whom their name derived), who had entered the service of the Qaraqoyunlu. Qara Yusuf had granted him the districts Aşût and Xoşab, which had at times belonged to the Hekarî. His son Mîr Huseyn Beg enjoyed the favour of Uzun Hasan, and received official title to the same or even larger districts from him. Thus the Hekarî emirate had come under control of two "foreign" Kurdish tribes, that were vassals to the Aqqoyunlu. Now some of the Assyrians of the subdistrict Diz (one of the five tribal communities) were merchants and travelled frequently to Syria and Egypt. In the latter country lived a scion of the Hekarî family, Esededîn, who had greatly distinguished himself as a warrior in the service of the Circassian sultans there. The Assyrian merchants heard of his reputation and met him; then they asked him to come with them and regain possession of his family's dominions(!) His return was prompt. One of the strongholds occupied by the Dumbilî was the castle of Diz; christian subjects had the task of bringing firewood and provisions up to the castle. Dressed as Assyrians, Esededîn and some valiant men of his tribe thus entered the castle, and, with arms hidden between the firewood, slew the Dumbilî. In a short time he purged much of the Hekarî dominions from occupying Dumbilî tribesmen. These Dumbilî are found in later times in Azerbaijan, around Xoy, as vassals of the Safavids. The Mehmûdî, however, proved more redoubtable rivals. They continued to hold part of the former Hekarî territory, and, aided by Turkish (Aqqoyunlu) troops, defeated Esededîn's son several times. Only when the latter

had recruited help from Bitlîs could the Mehmûdî be repelled. Esededîn's grandson Zahid Beg submitted himself to Shah Isma'il, who apparently trusted him more than the other Kurdish mîrs (see above, p.166) and invested him as a hereditary mîr. After his death his dominions were apparently split up into (at least) two emirates, Vostan (at the southeastern corner of Lake Van) and Hekarî proper; rulers there became his sons Seyd Mihemed and Melik Beg, respectively. The events of this period are rather confusing, and the Sharafname leaves too much obscure; it is clear, however, that rivalries within the family were aggravated by Ottoman and Safavid competition for this frontier district. Since 1534 Hekarî belonged nominally to the Ottoman Empire; de facto it was independent. One of Melik Beg's sons entered the service of Shah Tahmasb (son of Shah Isma'il). Another left for Diyar Bekr, where the Ottomans gave him a large fief. He participated in the Ottoman-Safavid battle for Çildir (1578), was made a prisoner of war, and was given into the hands of a nephew of his in the Safavid army, who had him killed. Other sons again governed sub-districts of Hekarî as representatives of their father just like Ottoman sultans and Persian shahs appointed their sons as provincial governors, for the double reason of centralizing the administration within the family, and of keeping their most dangerous rivals far away from the capital). Melik Beg's eldest son Zeynel Beg revolted against his father and, aided by notables of the tribe, defeated and imprisoned him. Melik Beg, however, escaped, at first to his brother Seyd Mihemed at Vostan, and from there to Bitlîs, where he was received with great honours. Seyd Mihemed elicited the support of the large tribe (or confederation) Pinyanîş to chase away his nephew Zeynel from Çolemerik and to unite all the family dominions under his rule. Zeynel then went first to Azerbaijan, in order to enlist Safavid support for his reconquest of Hekarî. When this proved hopeless because the Safavids favoured Seyd Mihemed, he went to Istanbul with the same intention. Sultan Süleyman's vizier Rûstem Pasha was interested in the improvement of control over this virtually independent district but, knowing of Zeynel's

flirtation with the Safavids, he demanded as a guarantee of Zeynel's future loyalty that he bring his wife, children and other close relatives into Ottoman territory. When Zeynel was back in Hekarî to take his family and belongings, he received the news that RÜstem Pasha had been deposed. Not daring to return to Istanbul he went anew to Iran, and tried to win Shah Tahmasb's favours. But the Safavids' relations with Seyd Mihemed were only improving, and they showed no interest in Zeynel. As soon as he heard that his protector RÜstem Pasha was back in favour and had been re-appointed vizier, he left for Istanbul, therefore. But the vizier had apparently lost interest in Zeynel, and gave him a fief in Bosnia, instead of an appointment to Hekarî.

Meanwhile the vali (governor) of Van, Iskender Pasha, to whom the mîr of Hekarî was (theoretically) subordinated⁷³, had conceived a strong dislike for Seyd Mihemed. This chieftain had consolidated his rule over Hekarî, and was in contact with the Safavids⁷⁴ (probably more as a way of counterbalancing the Ottomans than for real sympathies). With the assistance of the Mehmûdî (who still held Xoşab) Iskender Pasha managed, using a ruse, to capture Seyd Mihemed, and had him put to death. He asked the Court in Istanbul for Zeynel Beg to assist him in the pacification of Hekarî (in the function of adviser or "political officer"). Shortly after his arrival Zeynel Beg was sent on a reconnaissance mission on the border. By accident he met there his brother Bayendir Beg, who was in the shah's service, and on a similar mission. The brothers came to blows. Bayendir was killed, and Zeynel brought a few of his brother's companions to Iskender Pasha as prisoners of war. The reward for this proof of loyalty to the Ottomans was Zeynel's appointment over Hekarî.

Thus the history of the family was to continue for a long time: perpetual intrigue, recourse to Ottoman and Safavid officials, to other ruling families of Kurdistan, and to the tribes of the Hekarî confederation. Only in the mid-19th century was the last mîr of

Hekari, a scion of the same family, deposed. But even today the politics of Hekari resemble those of the old days.

3. Çemişkezek⁷⁵

Çemişkezek is now a, not very populous, district of Dersim, (in NW Kurdistan), one of the least accessible and least explored parts of Kurdistan. The Sharafname describes its ruling family (which is probably of Saljuq descent⁷⁶) as one of the most illustrious of Kurdistan, and their dominions are said to have been so extensive that they were often simply referred to as "Kurdistan". Many large and small tribes obeyed this family; they were masters of 32 fortifications. All these belongings remained in the family's hands during the turbulent periods when Jinghiz Khan, Timur Lang and Qara Yusuf, the Qaraqoyunlu, conquered these parts of the world. However, the family's rule ended abruptly with the emergence of Uzun Hasan. The Aqqoyunlu ruler strove to eliminate all native Kurdish dynasties, especially those that were attached to the Qaraqoyunlu if we may believe the Sharafname. He sent the Kharbandlu, one of the Aqqoyunlu tribes, to the emirate of Çemişkezek in order to submit it. They did, in fact, conquer it, but the young mîr Şêx Hesên energetically organized an army from among his subjects, and managed to expel the occupying Turks. He and his descendants then held these possessions until the time of Shah Isma'il. The family's attitude towards this monarch was very friendly, probably because they had Qizilbash, or at least shiite, leanings⁷⁷. When Isma'il sent Nur Ali Khalifa Rumlu, military commander and governor of Erzincan, against Çemişkezek the mîr, Hacı Rustem Beg, gave up all his belongings without any resistance. This contrasts with his deportment, 30 years previously, towards the Ottomans. In 1473/4 Sultan Mehmed had routed an Aqqoyunlu army, and the commander of the castle of Kemax (in Çemişkezek's sphere of influence) wanted to submit himself to the sultan, which Hacı Rustem forcefully opposed. He then gave the same castle away to Shah Isma'il. Then, going in person to the shah, he was received in audience and made governor

of a district in Iran in exchange for Çemişkezek. The population of Çemişkezek, meanwhile, was far from content: Nur Ali proved a most tyrannical and brutal governor, who even had entire tribes exterminated. Soon the entire district was in armed revolt, which was undoubtedly stimulated by the approach of Ottoman troops (Sultan Selim's campaign of 1514). They sent a messenger to Iran, asking Hacı Rustem to return, but the latter had left his residence to join İsmail's army at Çeldiran - he was even a member of the general staff. After the defeat Hacı Rustem wanted to go over to the Ottomans' side. He found Sultan Selim, and "received the honour of kissing his stirrups". The sultan, however, had him executed that same day; his grandson and 40 aghas (members of the mîr's family and heads of vassal tribes) suffered the same fate. Another son of Hacı Rustem, Pîr Huseyn Beg, who still resided in Iran, decided upon hearing this news to go to Egypt, to enter the service of the Circassian rulers there. A wise man, however, counselled him to go to Sultan Selim and offer his submission. Thus he did. He visited the sultan in his winter encampment at Amasya. The sultan admired the young man's courage, and gave him the emirate of Çemişkezek under the same conditions as those under which his ancestors had held it.

The sultan sent orders to Biyikli Muhammad Pasha to expel the Qizilbash from Çemişkezek and install Pîr Huseyn there, but the latter, impetuously, gathered the tribes of the district around him and drove out the occupiers all by himself⁷⁷. He reigned in peace for another 30 years. The 16 sons he left could, however, not reach an agreement on the problem of succession. They therefore appealed to Sultan Süleyman, who divided the Çemişkezek dominions into 3 districts, of which one (Señman) fell to the crown domains, while the other two (Mecengird and Pertek) were transformed into sanjaqs (governorates), the government of which was to remain in the ruling family. Poll-tax (jiziye) levied from non-muslim subjects, and also the tax on flocks, formerly the mîr's, had from now on to be transmitted to the crown. The 14 brothers who did

not become governors received a small or large fief (timar or zeamet, see the next section) each. Not much later one of them, by a cleverly formulated appeal to the sultan, succeeded in receiving Sexman as his hereditary sanjaq.

In the above the term "fief" was mentioned and the subject of taxation was brought up. These subjects will be discussed more systematically in the next section dealing with the administrative organization of the Ottoman Empire and the way of inclusion of Kurdistan therein.

III. g Administrative organization of (Ottoman) Kurdistan in the 16th century

Land regime and administrative organization of the Ottoman Empire (15th - 16th century)

The Ottoman Empire was a heir to three traditions. Its founders, and the ruling stratum in its early phases, were Turkish tribesmen, whose Turkish traditions had been modified by their conversion to Islam. The islamic prescriptions pervaded all spheres of public and private life. The entire empire had been conquered from other states (of which the Byzantine Empire was the most important).

Institutions of these states and customs of the original inhabitants persisted in the Ottoman Empire, in more or less modified forms, which caused rather wide divergences in land regime and taxation, and, to a lesser extent, in administration between the different parts of the empire. There are, therefore, many local exceptions to the general statements that follow.

There were, in the empire, two coinciding administrative networks; offices in both were filled by the sultan's appointment. Every district was governed by a beg, a military commander, while judicial affairs were the responsibility of the qadi. The latter had to be an expert in the shariat, religious law, as well as in the practical juridical rulings of the sultans laid down in the qanunnames ("law books", regulating taxes, tolls, etc.). In terms of the trias politica

the qadi represented judicial authority; legislative authority was partly with the sultan (who could issue practical laws), but was ultimately embodied in the shariat. There were legal experts, müftis, in every district, whose duty was to know the intricate system of qoranic law with its later accretions, and to apply and develop it in such new situations as might occur. Anyone could bring a juridical problem before the müfti and ask him the solution which islamic law, applied according to the legal school to which he adhered, imposed. The müfti answered in a fetva, an ex cathedra statement, The issuing of such fetvas provides the only way of legal innovation in (sunni) Islam. Executive authority was the beg's. As a symbol of his dignity he received a standard (sanjaq) from the sultan; the district under his command was also called sanjaq, and he himself a sanjaqbegi. Above a number of sanjaqbeyis a beglerbegi (later also called vali) was placed; the unit consisting of the sanjaqs under his authority was called beglerbegilik or eyalet. The division of the empire into eyalets and sanjaqs was changed several times (each time the units became smaller). Originally, the core of the Ottoman army consisted of a tribal cavalry (sipahis) that is often called "feudal" because as a reward for military services its members received grants of land. The "feudatory" had the right to collect for himself revenue from the peasants on his "fief", in accordance with rules that were laid down in detail in the law-book of each province. His obligations were three. Firstly, he had administrative and simple judicial tasks (land disputes between peasants, etc.), as well as the duty to collect some taxes for the central treasury. Secondly, he had to ensure that the land remained under cultivation (which meant that he had to prevent the peasants from leaving en masse). Thirdly, he had to arm and maintain a number of cavalry men (jebelü) that had to be ready for mobilization (together with himself) at any moment. The number of jebelü he had to provide was in proportion to the revenue of his fief. This revenue varied widely; the merit or rank of a sipahi was indicated by the size of his fief

(as expressed in aqches of revenue, the basic monetary unit⁷⁹). Law distinguished two, or rather, three kinds of fief. The timar (with a revenue of up to 20,000 aqches per year; median value around 6,000aqches) was granted to the meriting sipahi of ordinary rank, while the zeamet (revenues generally in the range of 20,000 to 100,000 aqches) was granted to sipahi officers or high officials of the civil administration⁸⁰. A somewhat different kind of fief was the khass, granted to sanjaqbegis and other functionaries of very high rank. Unlike timar and zeamet, the khass belonged to an office, not to its incumbent. It consisted of the revenue of certain villages as well as certain other taxes and dues, and ranged from 100,000 to 600,000 aqches (for sanjaqbegis) or up to a million aqches (for beglerbegis). This system of land grants "mapped" the sipahi army and its hierarchical organization on the territorial space of the empire. In large villages, in which a number of sipahis held timars, these sipahis were organized by a subaltern officer, the jeribashi. The timar-holders of a certain district, with their jebelüs, formed together a military unit under an officer, the subashi (who himself held a zeamet or a khass). The subashis of a sanjaq, with their men, formed that sanjaq's regiment, under the command of the sanjaqbegi. The sanjaqbegis of an eyalet were subordinate to the beglerbegi, the commander of the army consisting of the sanjaqs' regiments. It is estimated that in 1475 there were 22,000 timar-holding sipahis in the European, and 17,000 in the Asian part of the empire (which did then not yet include Kurdistan)⁸¹. For the mid-16th century a total number of 200,000 sipahis (including the jebelüs) is given⁸².

The timar system differed in several respects from western European feudalism:

1. Theoretically at least, central control was stronger. The land belonged to the state; the fief-holder never owned it, but had only the right to collect a stipulated revenue

from it. Over-exploitation of the peasantry by the sipahi could be a reason for revoking the fief. Although a sipahi's son often inherited his father's timar, the fief could be revoked at any moment.

2. Whereas in feudal Europe the feudal lord was virtually the sole judge and administered justice according to customary law, the sipahi, subashi and beg had only very restricted jurisdictional powers. They were responsible for applying the Ottoman state's land laws in their fiefs, but other cases, civil as well as penal, were to be brought before the qadi.
3. Also otherwise, the sipahi's rights over the peasantry were more narrowly circumscribed than in feudal Europe. The peasants, once registered, had nearly inalienable, inheritable tenancy rights, although they could not sell or otherwise transfer them. Only if a peasant left, without sufficient reason, the land uncultivated for 3 consecutive years, could the sipahi take it from him and give it to someone else. The peasants' main obligation was to cultivate the land. Therefore they were not allowed to leave, and the sipahi could force them to return if they did so.
4. The concept of fealty, so prominent in Europe, hardly existed. The sipahi was a military man, subjected to military discipline. Other vertical ties of loyalty (both up and down) might exist, but were not essential to the system.

These differences should not be over-estimated, however. Especially at times of weak central government the system tended to transgress its written rules; sipahis and begs arrogated more privileges and the system remarkable approached its western European counterpart. As we shall see below, this was especially so in Kurdistan.

The classification of land-holding is not exhausted by the three types of fief enumerated above. Some state lands were never given out as fiefs, but belonged to the crown domains (emlak or khass-i hümayun, the sultan's khass); their revenue was collected by salaried officials. Other state lands had been set apart (by sultan or beglerbegi) as pious endowments (vaqf, pl. evqaf). The revenue of these lands (or part of the revenue) was to be used for the upkeep of mosques, shrines, water-wells, etc. Another category of vaqf consisted of lands originally privately owned of which (part of) the revenue had thus been endowed in order to prevent its

appropriation by the state.

Only a small fraction of the land was not de jure state land but private property (mUlk). Theoretically, this category was limited to land in towns and to agricultural land of a few areas only (Arabia proper and southern Iraq). In practice, however, many locally powerful people usurped state land and treated it as their privately owned property. Some sultans recognized this de facto ownership in exchange for the owner's obligation to pay 10% of the produce (the tithe, ushr) to the treasury. More powerful sultans reasserted state ownership of all land and expropriated mUlk.

There was a strict caste-division between the reaya (the tax-paying subjects, mainly peasants)⁸³ and the military class. Only the sons of sipahis or of the sultan's or begs' qullar ("slaves") were eligible to receive a timar⁸⁴; also members of the military classes of newly conquered territories were eligible, even if they were not muslims⁸⁵. Qullar, who were reckoned to the military class, were christian peasants' children who were taken from their parents at an early age and given a muslim education⁸⁶. They were "owned" by the sultan or other notables, but that implied in no way low status. Some of them, it is true, performed menial jobs, but also most of the highest offices of the state were theirs. The reaya had neither military duties nor privileges; they were not even allowed to carry arms. The law-books also made distinctions within the reaya class, according to the amount of land they held. For administrative use the measure of land was the chiftlik (approximately 6 to 15 hectares (15 - 35 acres), depending on the quality of the land). A rayet could not generally hold more than one chiftlik. Laws prevented the splitting up of the chiftlik into too small units. Reaya were classified as those holding one chiftlik, those with half a chiftlik, those holding less, and the landless. The latter category included peasants who had fled the land, and peasants not registered for some reason or other: former

nomads, sons of reaya who had left their father's household, etc. If there were vacant lands on a timar the sipahi could rent these to such landless peasants for a (fixed) sum per unit of surface. When they stayed for three consecutive years, however, they became that sipahi's reaya, with hereditary rights to the occupancy of those fields.

The peasantry were subjected to a number of taxes and dues⁸⁷; some of these found their base in the shariat, others were customary, or derived from Ottoman legislation. The latter taxes differed widely from province to province. In eastern Anatolia the tax system introduced by the Aqqoyunlu ruler Uzun Hasan continued to be applied for some time, and was later modified only slightly (see Hinz 1950). The most important taxes levied were:

1. A poll-tax (jiziye, also called kharaj). It was levied from all adult male non-muslim subjects, in 3 rates, according to their financial position. In a way, this tax compensated for their exemption from military service. As a rule, all jiziye went into the central treasury⁸⁸. Fief-holders collected this tax not for themselves but for the central treasury.
2. Certain lands were subject to two other shariat taxes: the ushr (öşür, tithe), from freehold mülk owned by muslims; 10% of the produce of the land, or even less. The kharaj (or kharaj-i erziye), a tax of 20 - 33% of the crops from certain lands held by non-muslims. When these lands were later owned by muslims the same taxation continued to be imposed.
3. On timars, tenants of a chiftlik paid a fixed annual sum, the resm-i chift, to the timar-holder. Who held only half a chiftlik paid half that sum, etc.⁸⁹.
4. In addition to the resm-i chift, usually a sum proportional to the size (in dönüms, the unit of surface⁹⁰) had to be paid: the resm-i dönüm.
5. Sometimes the tax paid to the sipahi consisted of a share (usually 30%) of the crop, called salaria (originally this was food and fodder to feed the jebelüs and their horse).

6. Both nomads and sedentary pastoralist paid an annual tax on animals, the resm-i aghnam.
7. Nomads and semi-nomads also had to pay dues to the timar-holder whose land they used as pasturage.

Beside these, there were a large number of minor taxes, dues, tolls, and fines: marriage taxes, market and road tolls, etc.

In the qanunnames another well-known "tax", the zekat ("alms-tax") is not mentioned. Some of the specifications of other taxes remind of those of the zekat⁹¹. It is not clear to me whether the new taxes were thought to have replaced the zekat or that it continued to be given voluntarily in excess of the other taxes.

The re'aya had also labour obligations to the sipahi. Usually these were precisely specified: they could be forced to build a barn (but not a house) for the sipahi; carry the tithe to the market (but only if this was not too far away), and work on his private farm for three man-days per household per year⁹². The sipahi was not allowed more than this at the risk of losing his timar. Obviously, this latter restriction was theoretical only. Quite a few sipahis did exploit their peasants more than was allowed. Beginning in the middle of the 16th century, as the central treasury needed more income than was brought in by the taxes mentioned, new dues (subsumed under the term avariz-i divaniye) were imposed. These taxes became in the course of time, higher than the older ones, and were often experienced as a heavy and unjust burden⁹³. Which taxes were to be levied, and at what rate, was specified by the qanunnames (law-books) that the sultans issued for each province.

These qanunnames respected local conditions and perpetuated a number of customary taxes and dues, but generally made taxation more equal and just. This is nicely illustrated by a number of Ottoman documents dating from 1516 and 1518 (published by Ö. L. Barkan, and analyzed by Hinz (1950)). These describe taxation in eastern Anatolia as it was imposed by the Aqqoyunlu ruler Uzun Hasan, and the much simpler tax legislation with which the Ottomans replaced it. Uzun Hasan's taxes varied widely from district to district (which suggests that they were based on customary taxes) and included a large number of special dues. They discriminated strongly against christians: these

had to pay higher taxes than muslims, and had to perform twelve (instead of only one) days of unpaid labour services. The Ottomans made an end to this severe discrepancy, and (temporarily) abolished the special taxes. The sources specify the following taxes as imposed on muslims in four districts :

resm-i chift: 50 aqches per chiftlik (corresponding to 150 kg of wheat, see note 79).

tax on agricultural produce: 20% of cereals, 14% from orchards, vineyards and gardens;

tax on honey: 10%;

resm-i aghnam: $\frac{1}{2}$ aqche per animal;

nomads had moreover to pay 640 grams butter per household per year. Taxation of christians was not much heavier: instead of the resm-i chift (per chiftlik), they paid a tax called ispence of 25 aqches per man, and from orchards etc. they had to pay 20% instead of 14%.

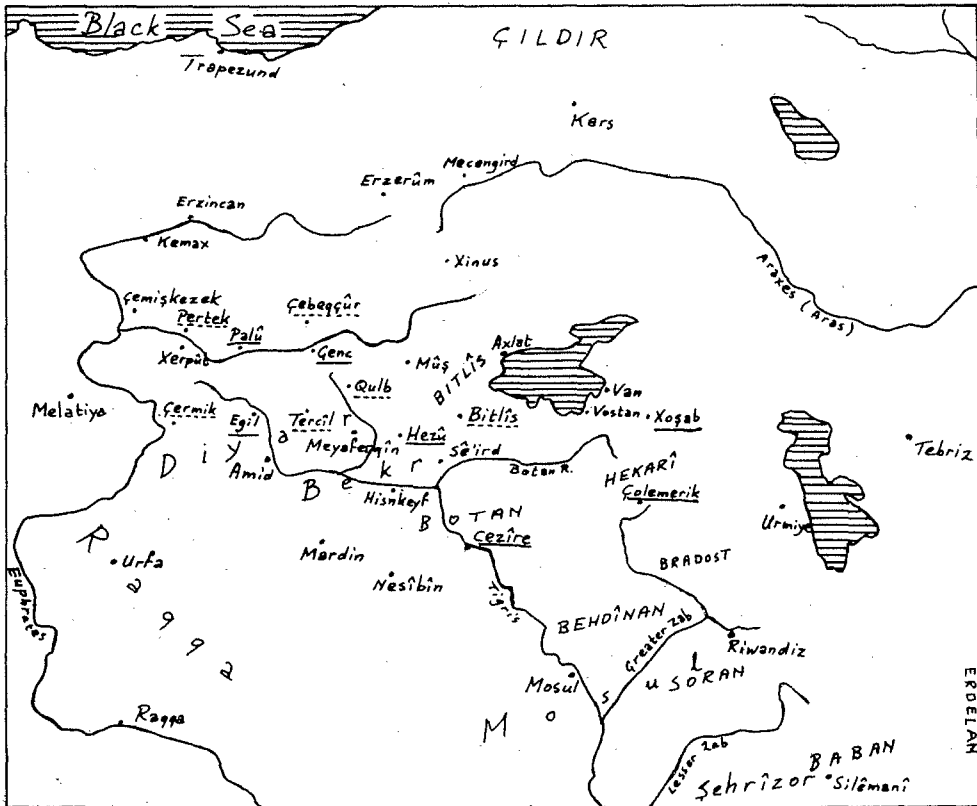
From a later qanunname of Diyarbekir and Mardin (mid-16th century)⁹⁵ a similar picture emerges. Both christians and muslims had to work 3 man-days per household per year for the sipahi; nomads were explicitly exempted from these labour dues. Instead of performing these labour services one could pay the sipahi 2 aqches per man-day.

The practice of granting revenue as fiefs to sipahis and, later, to non-military officials, made tax-collecting less burdensome. Another reason for this practice was the lack of bullion (until, in the late 16th century, gold and silver from the Americas started to pour into the empire); taxes were largely paid in kind. In 1523, 37% of total state revenue was distributed in the form of timars; previously this percentage had been even higher. The jiziye, centrally collected, constituted another 8%. A large, maybe the largest, share of revenue came from the imperial khass, the crown domains. The remainder consisted of the smaller dues, tolls, and taxes⁹⁶. The revenues that were not granted as fiefs or endowed as vaqf were collected either by salaried officials (emins) or by tax-farmers (mültezims). The latter were also centrally appointed (in later times the office was sold by the state). They paid a fixed annual sum to the treasury as the revenue of the land under their responsibility; their salary consisted of whatever more they could squeeze out of the peasantry. As the central state apparatus' need for income increased, sultans started to replace

the timar system with iltizam, the system of tax-farming⁹⁷. It will be clear that this meant an increase of the peasants' burden. The modernization of the army, where infantry with fire-arms gradually replaced the sipahi cavalry as the backbone, was both the main cause of the increased need for state income, and the reason why the state could afford to take land away from the timar-holding sipahis. This development, started in the 15th century, was not exactly an uninterrupted process. It demanded strong central authority, which was often lacking. The last timars were not revoked until 1832⁹⁸. Already in the 16th century the sipahi army (which resisted the introduction of fire-arms, of little use to a mobile cavalry) had to yield the first place to the modern infantry. This army was recruited from quite a different stratum than the sipahis: they were all qullar of the sultan's (qapuqullari; sg. qapuqulu). The famous Yenicheri (Janissaries) were the infantry corps of the qapuqulu army; besides, there were also a qapuqulu artillery and cavalry. The qapuqulu armies were, in contrast with the sipahis, permanent standing armies; there were regiments of them in all regional centers of the empire. They were to become a state within the state, with a major influence in politics.

The application of Ottoman administrative organization in Kurdistan

The territories that were incorporated into the empire in the years 1514 to 1517 were divided into three new eyalets⁹⁹: Diyar Bekr (comprising most of northern Kurdistan west of Lake Van), Raqqa (which included the present Turkish province of Urfa and the Syrian one of Raqqa; it was mainly inhabited by rather prosperous sedentary Syrian peasants, who were an inviting prey for raids by Kurdish, Turkish and Arab nomad tribes, all of which partly settled here), and Mosul (approximately present northern Iraq). Of these, Diyar Bekr was the first to be organized administratively. As said in the previous section, Idrîs, who was charged with the task of establishing this administrative framework, gave the old



Map 8 Location of the most important emirates Palu hükümeti
Cermik ojaqlıq

ruling families of Kurdistan important positions in it, thus preserving and solidifying their dominating position. Some districts remained fully autonomous: the rulers received a diploma of recognition, but the state undertook not to intervene in their succession, which was simply from father to son (selection of the succeeding son was the tribes' affair, not the government's). These districts, called "Kürd hükümeti" (Kurdish government), did not pay tribute to the central treasury, nor did they perform any form of regular military service (no sipahis or other soldiers were levied, nor was land in those districts given out in fiefs by the sultan). The rest of the province was divided into some twenty sanjaqs, of which some were to be governed in the ordinary way, by centrally appointed sanjaqbegis, while in others, called "ojaqliq", "yurtluq" or Ekrad Begligi" ("family estate" or "Kurdish

sanjaq") governorship was to remain within the Kurdish ruling family¹⁰⁰. In these sanjaqs the central government (in casu the beglerbegi) had the right to intervene. Every incumbent was instated anew by the beglerbegi, but only members of the ruling family were eligible for office. Thus the state could, in the case of internal family rivalries, impose a solution and appoint its favourite candidate, but it could not replace the entire family. It seems that until the 19th century, the Ottoman officials stuck largely to this arrangement - which may tell more about the independent-mindedness of the Kurds than about the Ottomans' respecting once made promises.

Thus when in 1655 the mîr of Bitlîs¹⁰¹, Ebdal Xan, revolted against central authority and refused to pay attention to serious admonitions from the vali of Van (to whom he was subordinated) the latter came with a strong army and put Ebdal to flight. The vali confiscated most of Ebdal Xan's belongings and, in accord with the unanimous wish of the town's inhabitants, designated one of Ebdal's sons, Ziyadîn, to succeed him¹⁰².

Otherwise, these Kurdish sanjaqbegis had the same obligations towards the state that the other sanjaqbegis had. They had to join military campaigns and had to obey the beglerbegi (who was not a Kurdish chieftain but an appointee of the sultan), and they had to transfer part of the revenue of their sanjaqs to the state treasury (some details on the distribution of revenue will be given for the case of Bitlîs in the next section). When central authority was strong and the sultan's troops nearby, these Kurdish sanjaqbegis usually fulfilled their obligations. At other times they tended to go their own way and not to care about their military and financial obligations. This is, by the way, what is generally meant when chroniclers mention a Kurdish vassal's "rebellion": the simple refusal to pay tribute or to send military assistance when demanded.

The Kurdish sanjaqs were, like ordinary sanjaqs, divided into timars and zeamets, the holders of which had the same obligations as all sipahis. If they forsook their obligations the fief was taken from

them but had to be given to a son or other relative; it could not be given to strangers (!)¹⁰³ So these fiefs were apparently given to local people only; their granting amounted to a fixation of the distribution of power and influence at the time of registration. The "hükumets" did not have zeamets and timars, nor did they seem to supply regular regiments to the beglerbegi's army. This, of course, did not preclude the possibility of occasional requests to their rulers of military participation in campaigns. As said before, these rulers did not pay any revenue to the central treasury either. Evliya Chelebi has the following comment: "Their governors exercise full authority, and receive not only the land revenue, but also all the other taxes which in the sanjaqs are paid to the possessor of the zeamet or timar, such as the taxes for pasturage, marriages, horses, vineyards and orchards"¹⁰⁴. According to Evliya, again, the eyalet had in his time (ca 1660) 730 sipahis or, together with their jebelüs, 1800 men, but only a short time before, under Sultan Murad IV (1623 - 1640) it had provided 9,000 men¹⁰⁵.

Similar arrangements (both as "Ekrad beyligi" and "Kurd hükümeti") were later made in other parts of Kurdistan. This is apparent from, among other sources, the Sharafname, Evliya and later travel reports, and von Hammer's summary review of the administrative division of the empire in his time (early 19th century). On the eyalet of Şehrîzor, for instance, he writes (after enumerating its 20 sanjaqs): "In these sanjaqs there are also some Ashiretbeyi or princes of tribes, who are not subordinate to any sanjaqbegi but have an independent existence, without standard or drum (the attributes of the sanjaqbegi). They go to war together with the sanjaqbegis, and after their death their dignity is inherited by their sons; only in the case that the family dies out is this granted to strangers by the government"¹⁰⁶. Also A. Birken's survey of the provinces of the Ottoman Empire (1976), a compilation of data on the sanjaqs from the 16th through the 19th century, provides some

useful insights. Thus it becomes clear that in later times more districts of Diyar Bekr were governed by hereditary rulers than in 1550¹⁰⁷: an indication of the weakening of central authority. The same happened in other provinces, although - due to the very weakness or complete absence of central authority - it is in many cases ill-documented. One example be sufficient:

The Armenian principality of Samtskhe (in the Caucasus, north of Kars, now in Soviet territory) became a vassal state of the Ottoman Empire in 1514. In 1578/9 it was fully incorporated into the empire as the eyalet of Childir. Its rulers received the position and title of beglerbegi. In the 17th century Childir consisted of 15 sanjaqs, of which 4 were "nomadic" or "hereditary" - which can hardly mean anything but that they were governed by Kurdish tribal chieftains.⁺ Around 1800 22 sanjaqs are mentioned, of which 3 ordinary ones, and 19 Kurdish sanjaqs with hereditary begs!¹⁰⁸ Apparently the beglerbegi of this frontier province could not assert sufficiently strong authority, so that Kurdish petty chieftains made themselves independent. And thereupon administrative division was adapted to the de facto power relations.

Beside the institution of the Ekrad beyliği and the Kürd hükümeti another policy is ascribed to İdrîs Bitlîsî: the late-19th century traveller Lynch was told that Kurdish tribesmen had, after the battle of Çeldiran, been moved from their original habitation in Diyar Bekr to the Armenian plateau, near the Georgian and Persian frontiers: "It is said that they were granted a perpetual immunity from taxation on the condition that they would act as a permanent militia upon the border which had been given them to guard" (Lynch, 1901: II, 421). Lynch supported this claim with a quotation from an earlier traveller, consul Taylor (mid 19th century), who noticed that the Kurds of the Armenian plateau "were originally immigrants from the vicinity of Diyarbekr; and there is only one tribe, the Mamekanlû - said to be descended from the Armenian Mamikoneans - who are natives of the soil" (ibid.). There is little reason to doubt that the Kurdish tribes of the plateau have been brought

⁺Samtskhe was inhabited by settled Armenians and nomadic Kurdish tribes.

there as frontier guards, but it is unlikely that Idris did this; the available evidence¹⁰⁹ suggests that this took place much later. This practice was quite general in the Middle Eastern empires, and there are many examples of Kurdish tribes in the role of frontier guards. An earlier example was the Germiyan, consisting of both Turks and (yezidi) Kurdish tribesmen, who had been brought to western Anatolia by the Saljuqs as a militia guard against threatening Turkish tribesmen¹¹⁰. Two other examples will be treated below: the Kurdish tribes that were sent to Khorasan by Shah Abbas in order to protect Iran against Uzbek invasions (section III. i), and the Hamidiye militias that were formed by Sultan Abdulhamid to police the eastern provinces of the empire (section III. m). Such militias, however diverse their origins, apparently always acquired the characteristics of a tribe or tribal confederation.

Once the administrative incorporation of the Kurdish emirates into the Ottoman Empire was a fact, there were few important changes until the 19th century, when modernizers in the Ottoman administration attempted to establish effective central control and abolished these emirates.

III. h Internal organization of the Kurdish emirates

The recognition of local Kurdish rulers and their appointment as sanjaqbegis or autonomous rulers inevitably affected the internal organization of their chiefdoms (emirates). Because of the hereditary rights given to the ruling families of the time, the distribution of power was, as it were, frozen. With the Ottoman court and the Ottoman state as foci of orientation, the local rulers imitated these. Possibly the chiefdoms became more "state-like", in that some institutions of the (Ottoman) state were borrowed. That is, however, difficult to ascertain. Several of the "state-like" institutions present in the emirates in the 16th and 17th centuries may have been present for centuries. "State-like" emirates, fully independent or vassal to one of the great Middle

Eastern states, existed long before there even was an Ottoman state. The meliks of Hisnkeyf, it has been said before (p.172), were descendants of the Eyyubids. Their emirate was, in fact, an Eyyubid successor state, of reduced size, but with most of the apparatus of the Eyyubid state. However, as some Kurdish dynasties ruled virtually uninterruptedly for centuries as vassals of the Ottoman sultans, their rule took on progressively more features of the Ottoman state.

In this section I shall collate information about two emirates, in different periods of Ottoman domination: Bitlîs in the 16th / 17th century, and Baban in the early 19th. About none of the emirates is sufficient information available to sketch their development over a long period of time. Comparison of these two emirates cannot, therefore, give more than an impression of progressive Ottomanization. The Baban court of 1820 resembled the Ottoman court more than that of Bitlîs did in 1650, but that may largely be due to the special conditions of both emirates. Also the personalities on whose descriptions we have to rely had different interests and preoccupations. The following descriptions do not, therefore, have the pretension of being a basis for valid comparisons; I give them mainly to put some flesh on the skeleton drawn in the preceding section.

III. h. 1.

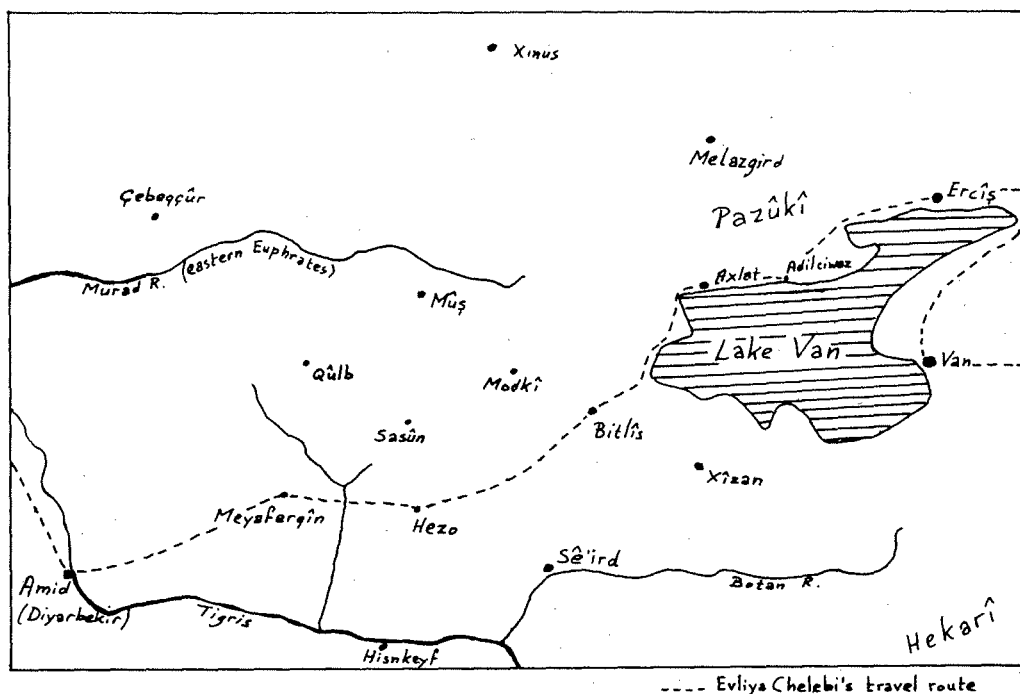
Bitlîs

This is the emirate on which we have the best and most useful accounts from the 16th and 17th century. One of its mîrs, Şeref (or Şerefedîn) Xan, was the author of the Sharafname (1597), which contains a long section on the history of the emirate. In the 1650's the famous Turkish traveller Evliya Chelebi spent much time in and around Bitlîs. He went there with his maternal uncle Melik Ahmed Pasha, who had been appointed vali of Van, to which eyalet Bitlîs then administratively belonged. On their way to Van the new vali, his nephew, and the 3,000 soldiers accompanying them were

hospitably entertained by the mîr, Ebdal Xan. Not long after, however, Ebdal Xan raided neighbouring territories and showed in other ways his contempt of the Pax Ottomanica. Melik Ahmed Pasha sent a punitive expedition against Bitlîs, put Ebdal Xan to flight, confiscated his belongings, and had the inhabitants of Bitlîs elect one of Ebdal Xan's sons as a new ruler. Evliya was there to witness it all. He spent a third period in Bitlîs on his way back to Istanbul. Ebdal Xan chose that time to return to Bitlîs and take the reins of power into his own hands again. Evliya was forced to stay for some time as his "guest" (i.e. as a hostage). A large part of the 4th and 5th volumes of his Book of Travels are devoted to these events¹¹¹. Around the same time as Evliya also the French traveller Tavernier was a guest at Bitlîs. What little information he gave confirms Evliya's account¹¹².

History

In the period under discussion the emirate included the districts Bitlîs (center), Axlat, Mûş, and Xînus. A high proportion of the inhabitants (especially of the fertile plain of Mûş) were Armenians. In fact, until quite late Armenians had remained virtually the sole inhabitants of these lands. They had been conquered by the Saljuq Turks, but these had never settled there in any considerable number. (Saljuq settlement took place on the northwestern shore of Lake Van, in Axlat, only). If there were Kurds here at all in Saljuq times, they stayed in the mountains; towns and plains remained Armenian. Apparently, Kurdish nomads took possession of the mountains of Bitlîs in the 12th century. Their contacts with the town still consisted mainly of raiding. The Mongol invasions (1231, 1259) resulted in the partial depopulation of Bitlîs. This invited new Kurdish invasions from the southeast; several tribes in Bitlîs still retain memories of having come from the southeast; the Sharafname gives such traditions for the most important tribes. Around 1375 at last they took possession of the plains and towns¹¹³ - which they had undoubtedly been raiding at intervals for quite some



Map 9 Bitlîs and its surroundings

time. It seems that many Kurds settled early. Şeref Xan wrote that the plain of MÛş was spotted with numerous Armenian villages, but that the villages of the surrounding hills were inhabited by sedentary (or semi-nomadic) muslims. These must either have been former nomads who had taken to agriculture here, or Kurdish cultivators who had migrated to MÛş from less fertile lands. The fact that they, muslims, lived in hill villages while the more fertile plain was left to the politically inferior christians, suggests that they combined agriculture with shepherding¹¹⁴.

If Şeref Xan may be believed in this respect, his ancestors ruled Bitlîs from the beginning of the 13th century. According to legend, their leadership of a large tribal confederation even predated their appointment as governors of Bitlîs by one of the Eyyubids (ca. 1200). This confederation is called Rojekî or Rûzikî. As popular etymology has it, the confederation (Şeref Xan calls it an "eşîret") was constituted in a single day ("rojek" in Kurdish)

when 24 subtribes ("qebîle") joined together and chose themselves a paramount leader. Thereupon they conquered all of Bitlîs and of Hezû (further west). The conquered lands were partitioned. It was said that whoever did not receive a share of land at that time was not a true Rojekî (Sharafname II/1: 229). Thus, "true Rojekî" were an elite, even among Kurds. The mîrs did not belong to any of the Rojekî subtribes. The tradition is that, when the first paramount chieftain died without issue, the Rojekî sent for two brothers who descended from the Sasanians (a former ruling dynasty of Persia) and had also otherwise good credentials. They invited them to become their rulers; one of them, Êzdîn ('Izz ad-Din) was made prince of Bitlîs, his brother Ziyadîn ruler of Hezû (Sh. II/1: 230).

The tribes and the mîrs

There was an implicit "contrat social" between the tribes and the rulers. The Rojekî had the reputation of being more loyal to their mîrs than any other tribe of Kurdistan, but when they were dissatisfied with any particular mîr they deposed him, and appointed one of his relatives in his stead. Such already happened to poor Êzdîn. The Rojekî of Bitlîs after some time decided that they preferred his brother; so they took Ziyadîn to Bitlîs and sent Êzdîn to the much less attractive Hezû.

At times when there was no mîr at Bitlîs, as when they were imprisoned or sent into exile by such stern sovereigns as Uzun Hasan the Aqqoyunlu or Shah Isma'il the Safavi, chaos and confusion reigned among the Rojekî. Aghas of the big tribes attempted to help members of the ruling family escape and to bring them back to Bitlîs to restore unity among its tribes. Restoration and maintenance of peace and harmony among the tribes was one of the main reasons why the tribes needed the mîr. For, obviously, within such a large confederation of tribes dominating so rich a province as Bitlîs, there were perpetual rivalries. Not always could the mîr check the inter-tribal conflicts. For, not unnaturally,

it could happen at times that there were two or more candidates for rulership, and that the big tribes, in rivalry, supported opposite candidates, allying these to their narrow interests (see below, p 201).

The tribes of Bitlîs

The name Rojekî is used ambivalently in the Sharafname. It gives a list of Rojekî tribes, but because legend demands their number to be exactly twenty-four¹¹⁵, tribes are included of which it is said in another context that they lived already in Bitlîs at the time of conquest by the Rojekî. The list consists of 5 tribes which were "original inhabitants" (Qîsanî or Kîsanî, Bayiqî, Modkî, Zewqî, Zeydanî) and two conquering tribes, the Rojekî proper (Bilbasî and Qewalîsî). The latter are subdivided into 19 subtribes¹¹⁶. In the historical narrative of the Sharafname the Qewalîsî and Bilbasî appear as the "king-making" tribes. In cases of conflict the other tribes usually allied themselves with either of these (see the illustrative example below, p 201). Subtribes of the Bilbasî and Qewalîsî are rarely if ever mentioned separately in the Sharafname; only a few times one of their aghas plays a role in the events narrated. The paramount chieftains of the two tribes, however, were the mîr's closest advisers. They are called AXa so-and-so Qewalîsî or Bilbasî, they are never named after their own subtribe. This seems to suggest that these tribes had chiefly lineages that did not belong to any of the subtribes (as the Begzade lineage among the Caf, see p. 80). Evliya's narrative confirms that the Rojekî were an elite among the Kurds of Bitlîs. The mîr was the supreme lord of no fewer than 70 large and small tribes¹¹⁷ (eşîret and qebîle), of which the Rojekî alone numbered 40,000 (Evliya's figures are often inflated). The latter lived in town, and lacked the courage so typical of other Kurds. They were very cultured people with religious and mystical inclinations (Evliya IV, 1162). The military might of Bitlîs was constituted by the other tribes, among whom especially the Modkî stood out, who could muster 700 soldiers with rifles (ibid.). Altogether these tribes could put a considerable number of soldiers

in the field. Both Evliya and Tavernier estimated them at several
tens of thousands ¹¹⁸.

The mîr's control of the tribes

During Evliya's visit 70 tribal chieftains were present at the mîr's court (ibid. 1156). It seems probable that these had to remain there as guarantors of their tribes' obedience. The Persian shahs followed the same policy towards the large tribes/confederations of their empire. Old people in the Tor Abdîn mountains - which had been incorporated in the emirate of Botan - told me this had been common practice there. Each tribal chieftain had to send one (or more) of his brothers or sons to the mîr's residence, where he had to remain. "Xizmetê mîr", "in the service of the mîr", was this called. These chieftains were, in fact, well-treated hostages. The fact that they were at the mercy of the mîr gave him some control of their tribes.

The mîr had yet another means of control: the exploitation of conflicts and rivalries among the tribes of the emirate. As pointed out before (p. 63), blood feuds and other conflicts between tribes can only be terminated through the intervention of someone whose authority is recognized by both parties. For tribes that live close together and that have a community of interests it is thus of advantage to be able to call upon such an authority. This explains the story (whether true or symbolical) of how the Rojekî sent for Êzdîn and Ziyadîn to become their rulers (above, p 198). It is possible that the mîrs even willfully maintained a certain rivalry and balance between two tribal coalitions, centred around the Qewalîsî and Bilbasî, respectively. Similarly, the mîrs of Hekarî divided the tribes of their emirate into those of the left and those of the right, as some local people still remember. This method of maintaining control is a precarious one, however. It may easily run out of hand, as indeed it did several times. At periods when there were several candidates for the position of mîr, each of the tribes or coalitions of tribes might choose its own candidate, with the

result that the emirate weakened considerably through intestine strife¹¹⁹.

This happened, for instance, after a period of absence (exile) of the mîrs under the Aqqoyunlu. Several attempts by tribal chieftains to bring them back and help them reconquer Bitlîs (from the Aqqoyunlu troops who held it occupied) had failed. At the end of three decades, only two scions survived: Şemsedîn, living as refugee in neighbouring Botan, and his (patrilateral) cousin Şah Mihemed, in exile in Iran. An agha with a strong loyalty to the family¹²⁰ brought first Şemsedîn back to Bitlîs; a devoted army of Rojekî warriors was waiting for him, ready to take the town and put Şemsedîn on his ancestral throne. However, he was killed in the ensuing fight with Turkish troops. His cousin Şah Mihemed was more fortunate. The tribes helped him regain Bitlîs and he became the lord of town and province. Not much later he died (1497). Both cousins had left young sons. Şah Mihemed's son İbrahim succeeded his father, but since he was too young, the affairs of the state were handled by Ebdurehman Axa Qewalîsî and other aghas of the same confederation. Şemsedîn's son Şeref (grandfather of the author of the Sharafname) was made governor of Mûş. Apparently the Bilbasî did not like the fact that the politically important offices were all held by Qewalîsî aghas: their chieftain Şêx Emîr Bilbasî went to Mûş, with his large tribe, to pay homage to Şeref, against the explicit wishes of Mîr İbrahim and Ebdurehman Axa. Relations between the cousins rapidly deteriorated. Mîr İbrahim ordered Şeref to come to Bitlîs, intending to blind him; Şeref, warned by a dissident Qewalîsî notable, refused. İbrahim then sent all the tribes that he could mobilize against Mûş; Şeref received the support of the Bilbasî and one or two sections of the Qewalîsî, as well as part of the Pazûkî, a neighbouring confederation or principality. İbrahim's units were in the majority, and he carried the day. However, several of his allies (aghas) were in secret negotiation with Şeref, whom they apparently preferred without daring to say so openly. The next day, they turned all of a sudden against İbrahim. Now it was Şeref who had the initiative: he pursued his cousin, and laid siege on Bitlîs. İbrahim negotiated a partial surrender: Şeref could have Bitlîs (centre) and Axlât, and he would content himself with Xînus and Mûş. The cousins agreed and made peace. But Şêx Emîr Bilbasî (who apparently had his private interests to defend) had İbrahim incarcerated at the day of reconciliation. He was to stay in jail for seven years. Şeref was the sole ruler of the emirate - for some time. (Sh. II/1: 277 - 283).

One cannot help getting the impression that the rivalry between the members of the ruling family, to which Şeref Xan gave full weight,

were but an epiphenomenon of power-struggles involving not only the tribes of Bitlîs itself, but also other tribes (the Pazûkî) and, almost certainly, other external powers. Unfortunately our aristocratic author gives little information on tribal affairs, so that we can only guess what the background of the vicissitudes in the mîrs' lot are. After the events described above it took a long time before stabilization finally set in. Ottoman - Safavid rivalries (Bitlîs was a frontier province) and internal contradictions and rivalries were inextricably intertwined during most of the 16th century. The mîrs alternately proclaimed obedience to, and received titles from, sultan and shah. For a long time they lived in Iran and occupied high offices there, until in 1578 Şerefedîn (the author of the Sharafname) was invited back to Bitlîs by Sultan Murad III and reinstated as its ruler.

Revenue and military obligations

Bitlîs was a rich province: it possessed fertile agricultural lands (especially in the plain of Mûş) and mountain pastures that are famous all over Kurdistan. The town of Bitlîs was an important centre of trade. It is strategically located: the main trade routes of the area have to pass through it. Some very important merchants lived in town; most of them were jacobites, Syrian christians. Bitlîs was also an important centre of craftsmanship. Evliya was especially impressed by the weaponsmiths, but also mentioned taylors, weavers, dyers, tanners, etc. (Evliya, IV: 1184). The Sharafname speaks of no fewer than 800 shops and workshops (Sh. II/1: 217). Evliya, half a century later, gave the number of 1200 (Evliya, IV: 1164). These were owned by Armenians, Jacobites, and Arabs.

Bitlîs thus represented an important source of revenue. An indication of the degree of independence is the high share of revenue that the mîr was allowed to keep for himself - much more than other sanjaqbegis had. To begin with, there was his khass, the sources of revenue set aside for him by way of salary for his office of sanjaqbegi. According to the imperial edicts instating him¹²¹ this consisted

of the revenue of a number of villages and of the market taxes (ihtisab) of Bitlîs itself, altogether amounting to over 500,000 aqches. Five years later, in 1533, the sultan added part of Mûş, with a revenue of 200,000 aqches to the mîr's khass (Sh. II/1: 434). Furthermore, the mîr kept half of the jiziye levied from his 43,000 christian subjects. The other half he remitted to the vali at Van, who used it for the upkeep of the troops there (Evliya, IV: 1162). As said before, ordinarily all jiziye belonged to the central treasury. The jiziye was no mean sum: according to the Sharafname the christian subjects paid in "jiziye and kharaj" 70 aqches per head annually (Sh. II/1: 224)¹¹⁴.

Ebdal Xan could take even more than his predecessors: as a young man he had pleased Sultan Murad IV (1623-1640) so much that this ruler granted him for life the kharaj of the entire district of Mûş (Evliya, IV: 1161/2). This again was a considerable sum. We get an impression of its order of magnitude from a (not strictly comparable) figure in the Sharafname. A census made in the reign of Sultan Süleyman (1520-1566) established the revenue of Mûş at 1.5 million aqches. This figure included the jiziye and kharaj of 4,000 christian reaya (at 70 aqches each); excluded were those villages that were vaqf or belonged to the crown domains (Sh. II/1: 224). According to Evliya the mîr used the kharaj of Mûş to pay the salary of the commander of the fortress and the 200 soldiers of its garrison (Evliya, IV: 1162). Finally, the mîr also received the road tolls from caravans coming into town (Evliya, IV: 1161).

Besides, he took, as is only implicitly clear from Evliya's account, an annual tax from all flocks in Bitlîs. This was probably a traditional due of tribesmen to their agha, such as now still exists. Apparently these dues were not always given voluntarily: the mîr sent a body of armed men around to collect them. Not infrequently these men trespassed beyond the mîr's territories and plundered the subjects of other mîrs as well. All other Kurdish mîrs complained with the governors of Van and Erzerûm about Ebdal Xan, saying

that "he should have been killed 40 years ago". When 10,000 (?) of his men trespassed into Melazgird and drove off 40,000 sheep, killing 300 men in the process, the mîr flatly told the vali of Van that his men had been collecting the tax on flocks, and might have made a few mistakes (Evliya, IV: 1237-1242).

The mîr was not the only local man to take revenue. According to Evliya, there were 13 zeamets and 214 timars in Bitlîs, held by tribal men. Some of these had the military ranks of alaybegi, jeribashi and yûzbashi in the sipahi army. According to the legal stipulations (see note 80), these fiefs should supply 3,000 jebelûs. In case of war these were to join the army of the vali of Van, under the standard of their own mîr. (Evliya, IV: 1162). These 3,000 men Bitlîs supplied to the Ottoman army were but a fraction of the numbers the mîr could bring together for his own purposes.

A third local consumer of revenue were the pious institutions. The Sharafname suggests that an important number of villages were vaqf. Reading Evliya, one understands why. In the town alone, there were 5 large mosques, and a great number of minor ones, 4 medreses (religious training centres), no fewer than 70 primary schools (mekteb), and some 20 tekiyes (dervish "lodges"). Altogether the town had 110 mihrabs (prayer niches) (Evliya, IV: 1162/3). All these institutions were endowed: revenue of certain lands was set aside for their upkeep. The same was true for smaller conveniences such as the 70 fountains and 41 public wells. Possibly a part of the Kurdish population of Bitlîs, the cultured and pious Rojekî, whom Evliya watched playing chess in the mosque, and who did not seem to do any productive work, were also indirectly supported by the vaqf lands.

The remaining revenue went into the state treasury. The kharaj aghasi, inspector/collector of the kharaj, was one of the two officials who were not appointed by the mîr himself but by the vali. Some lands (e.g. in the plain of Mûş) belonged to the crown domains, and all revenue from these went into the state treasury; from the other lands kharaj was taken, as well as some minor taxes. The

jiziye, as said before, was divided equally between the mîr and the vali of Van.

Other military troops

There was a Janissary regiment stationed at Bitlîs. Its commander was the other official who was appointed by the vali instead of the mîr. Furthermore Evliya mentioned 10,000 retainers (?)¹²³ of the mîr in town, armed with sword, shield and club, and dressed in colourful uniforms. In his description they resemble a private slave army (Evliya, IV: 1184). The number of 10,000 seems absurd, however. These permanent standing troops were in addition to the troops that the mîr could levy from the tribes in time of need: 20,000 or more horsemen and at least as large a number of foot-soldiers. (compare note 118).

Offices; jurisdiction

As said before, only two officials were appointed by the vali of Van: the kharaj aghasi and the commander of the Janissaries. All others were appointed by the mîr. Evliya enumerated the most important ones: a qadi, a müfti, a naqib ül-eshrâf¹²⁴, the military commander of the castle, collectors of road and market tolls, and a number of minor officials.

Judicial authority was officially vested in the qadi. It seems unlikely, however, that for the punishment of disobedient subjects the mîr ever had recourse to the qadi. The latter's role in Bitlîs was probably limited to affairs of less direct concern to the mîr. The qadi could hardly afford to act independently (as qadis in other sanjaqs did), since it was the mîr, and not the central authorities, who appointed him - a highly anomalous situation. And, as Evliya subtly remarked, the qadi's already quite high salary¹²⁵ could increase considerably if he had a good understanding with the mîr (ibid. 1162). Thus, in the field of jurisdiction the mîr was independent of Istanbul, and had very strong control. This independence is also affirmed by the fact that the müfti, the legal expert,

belonged to the Shafeite ritè (which most Kurds follow) and not to the hanefite as elsewhere in the empire (even in towns as Mekka, Medina and Jerusalem, where the majority of the population were non-hanefites, müftis could only in a few cases follow the rulings of any of the three other rites; Bitlîs is exceptional)¹²⁶. Executive and judicial powers were thus not strictly separated (to put it mildly), while in the interpretation of the sheriat also independence of the Ottoman state was asserted.

Thus Bitlîs appears like the capital of a vassal state rather than a province of the empire. A high degree of independence had been granted to the ruling family; when possible they arrogated even more. At the time of Tavernier's passing the mîr recognized neither Ottoman nor Safavid sovereignty, and both empires found it necessary to entertain seemingly cordial relations with him, because of the strategically important location of Bitlîs (Tavernier, I: 303). Melik Ahmed Pasha, freshly appointed vali of Van, tried with superior military power to show Ebdal Xan the limitations of his independence. The effects of this campaign were not lasting, as Evliya was to experience (see p. 196).

Social stratification

The emirate of Bitlîs was a rather highly stratified society. Its stratification paralleled that of the Ottoman Empire on a smaller scale.

- (1) On top the mîr and his family;
- (2) immediately below him the aghas of the tribes, and other notables. Advisers were drawn from this class, as well as some of the higher officials. A number of the tribal elite held fiefs, which gave them an independent income; many of these lived in town (Evliya, IV: 1185). Others probably had to live on their flocks (herded by shepherds) and gifts from their tribesmen. Those staying at the court were probably supported financially by the mîr.
- (3) A similar, but non-tribal elite consisted of high officials,

men of arts and sciences (in the pay of the mîr), and religious dignitaries: shaikhs, seyyids, melas, etc.

(4) Among the common tribesmen one might distinguish two strata, although the distinction was probably a very fluid one, and mobility may have been high: those with horses and those without. The most excellent of these horsemen were selected as jebelüs by the fief-holders. Together with the "slave"-soldiers ("nöker") the tribesmen constituted the military class. It is unclear how the nöker were recruited

(4a) A considerable number of Kurds (whom Evliya identified with the Rojekî) lived in town. They were not warriors like the other Kurds but rather refined people. Their occupations are unclear.

(5) There was a Kurdish peasantry (reaya), living in the hills and mountains. We know no details about them and their relations with the tribes.

(6) The motor of Bitlîs' economy (beside the nomads' flocks) were the christian reaya (mainly Armenians, also some jacobite Syrians). The sedentary peasantry was largely Armenian; also a large fraction of the town's population was Armenian¹²⁷. Politically they had a low status, but many of them may have been quite well-off: there were excellent craftsmen among them, and big merchants; others had laid out artificial orchards that yielded high incomes.

Statistics of the ethnic composition of the population of Bitlîs at that time are not readily available (data are probably to be found in the still largely unexplored Ottoman state archives). A vague indication is given by Cuinet's statistics (late 19th century). Before the Armenian massacres still 40% of the population of Bitlîs (within the boundaries of the former emirate) were Armenian. 15 - 20% of the Kurds were still nomadic¹²⁸.

The political elite of the emirate consisted of the groups (2) and (3). This became clear when Ebdal Xan had been expelled by Melik Ahmed Pasha and a successor had to be elected. Out of 3 sons of Ebdal Xan one was chosen by a special assembly. Beside the tribal

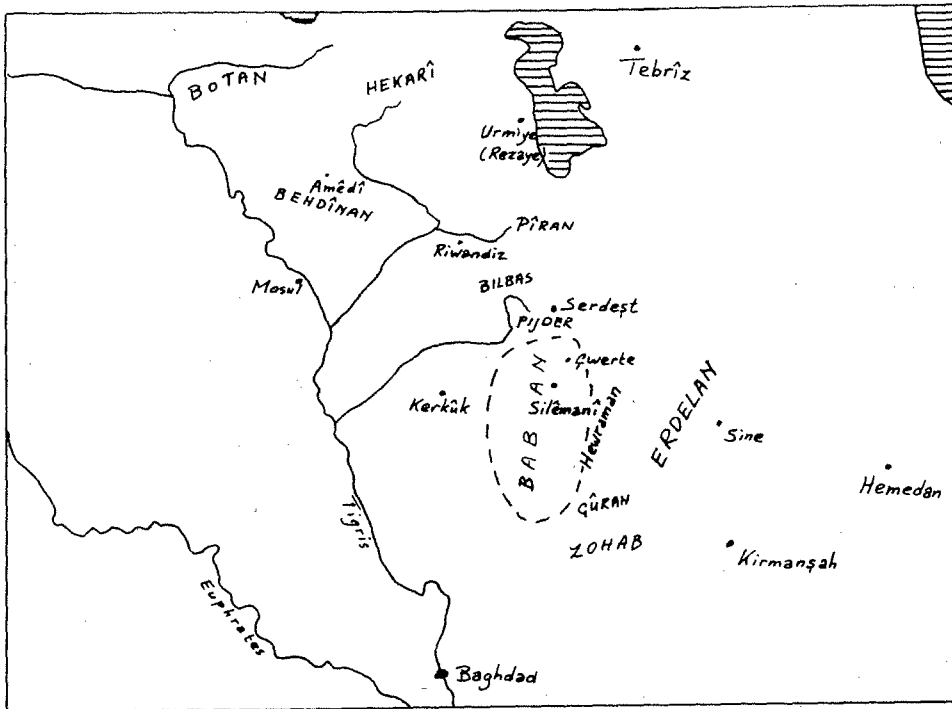
chieftains, also the scholars and clergymen, the shaikhs, the "notables" (a'yan) and the seyyids of Bitlîs were present (Evliya IV: 1273/4). The christian subjects had no say at all in political matters, and were never, not even in times of crisis, permitted to play a military role¹²⁹. The Sharafname only mentions them as a source of revenue.

Only once, when a mîr was faced with desertion by most of his tribes, and with the threat of attack by foreign (Ottoman) troops, one of the faithful aghas advised him to arm his Armenians and let them participate in the defense. Şeref Xan, even in retrospect, considered this proposal sufficient proof of the agha's foolishness and ignorance (hamâqat va nādānî). The mîr's other counsellors had similar opinions. As a consequence, the Kurds were honourably and totally defeated. For some time, the Armenians had to pay tribute to another lord (Sh. II/1: 314/6).

III. h. 2

Baban

The emirate of Baban played an important part in the history of what is now Iraq from ca. 1550 to ca. 1850¹³⁰. Almost all that time it belonged (nominally) to the Ottoman Empire. It participated in several invasions of Persia - preferably at the expense of the twin emirate of Erdelan, which was usually pro-Persian. Its rulers always aspired to greater independence, and to this end they collaborated sometimes with Iran. Both the vali of Baghdad and the Persians intrigued and interfered with family quarrels of the mîrs, in order to increase their influence in Baban. From early in the 17th century on, its mîrs received the high Turkish title of pasha (which then but few of the sanjagbegis carried; later that century it was granted to many more sanjagbegis). They ruled over a large territory, with both tribal and "non-tribal" population. The former were governed through their chieftains, the latter through governors appointed by the mîr, who each had a district in tasarruf (usufruct)¹³¹. Sometimes the appointees were chieftains of nomadic tribes that used the district as their winter-quarters, sometimes chieftains from elsewhere, sometimes relatives of the mîr himself. All belonged, of course, to the "military" or "tribal caste". These districts



Map 10 Baban and surroundings

changed hands rather frequently: as another branch of the ruling family succeeded to (or conquered) the throne, they appointed as governors their own clients. Each of these governors brought his own clientele with him (Rich: I, 90). British visitors to Baban noted a few examples of such appointments in the early 19th century. Rich related that his host Mehmûd Paşa, the then ruler of Baban, conciliated an uncle (Ebdulla) who had been scheming against him, by giving him some of the best (most productive) districts as an appanage (Rich: I, 149). In another case a chieftain of the Pîran tribe (outside Baban territory), Selîm Ağa, had been invited to the district of Çwerte (an outlying Baban dependency), and "was installed on a feudal basis as a warden of the marches". In 1919 his descendants still were the uncontested squires of the non-tribal villages there (Edmonds 1957: 101).

With his vassals the mîr had sometimes the same troubles that the sultan had with his Kurdish vassals on the frontier. Yûsuf Beg, who administered the Pijder district by appointment of the Baban,

went to Tebrîz and paid homage to its governor Abbas Mirza (the Persian crown prince) who was then in the ascendancy. He retained the governorate of Pijder - but now as a vassal to Abbas Mirza, who furthermore added Serdeşt to Yûsuf's dominions (Rich: I, 321/2).

This had happened a short time before Rich's arrival in 1820. Not long afterwards, Mehmûd Paşa himself, who had managed to retain a large measure of independence by balancing Ottoman and Persian influences, but who nurtured more Persian than Turkish sympathies, offered his submission to Abbas Mirza as well, which precipitated a war between the two neighbouring empires.

Virtually the only source on the condition of the emirate in the early 19th century is Rich, who stayed a long time in its capital Silêmanî (in 1820). Fraser and Ainsworth, who passed a decade and a half later, have little to add. Rich's observations on the court are most pertinent. He met chieftains of most of the important tribes there, which suggests that the Baban pashas used the same method mentioned above for Bitlîs to keep the tribes obedient. More interesting maybe is the list of court officials one can extract from his text. The titles of these officials point at a deliberate imitation of the Ottoman court (or the court of Baghdad, which itself was an imitation of that of Istanbul).

Officials mentioned by Rich:

- "prime minister"; a hereditary function (Rich: I, 115). The prime minister wielded much formal as well as informal influence: all persons of any rank were to be found in his dîwanxane. (One cannot help being reminded of the Köprülü family, of which many members held the office of Grand Vizier to the Ottoman sultans, and who were both the real makers and the executors of the sultans' policies).
- "selikdar, or sword-bearer" (probably: silahdar); this, too, was a hereditary function. In 1820 its incumbent was a young boy; until his adulthood someone else had assumed the position in his name (Rich: I, 115). (In the Ottoman Empire one of the three highest officials of the inner palace service was the silahdar agha; he handled all communications to and from the sultan.

Shaw (1976): 115)

- "ishiq aghasi, or master of ceremonies" (Rich: I, 168).
- "harem aghasi, or guardian of the women's quarters". Rich noticed to his astonishment that this man and his assistants were not eunuchs but "stout bearded Kurds" (Rich: I, 284). (In the Ottoman Empire, the chief eunuch was one of the most powerful men of the entire empire¹³²).
- "imrahor, or master of the horse" (Rich: I, 366). (the stable-master, emir-i akhor, was one of the high officials of the sultan's outer service. Shaw (1976): 117).
- a non-administrative but nonetheless important official was the münejjim bashi, chief astrologer/astronomer (Rich: I, 136). (Also at the Ottoman court the münejjim bashi was one of the high (clerical) officials. Shaw (1976): 117).

The administrative organization of the emirate was not Rich's primary interest; he noted the above offices only in passing. His descriptions suggest that the Baban court was very elaborate indeed.

On economic matters, including the collection and distribution of revenue, Rich is less informative, unfortunately. He noticed that the large, rich and powerful Caf tribe (several thousands of families) paid an annual tribute of 30 purses, sometimes even less. Compared to what other tribes paid, this was very little, he remarked (Rich: I, 281n). Clearly, it is difficult to levy much tribute from such a powerful tribe without getting into trouble.

The governors appointed by the mîrs squeezed as much out of the peasantry as they could, since they were not sure of tenure of their office. Rivalries in the ruling family, combined with Ottoman and Persian intrigues, caused sudden changes. And as a new mîr came to power, he brought new officials. This uncertainty of office resulted in over-exploitation, never moderated by patronage relations. It was one of the ugliest features that the emirate had in common with the empire at large. A tribe agha told Rich that this insecurity was the main reason why the tribes did not settle to agriculture

(which might improve their lot): why should they sow if they did not know whether they could ever mow? Instead, the tribesmen aggravated the burden of the subject peasantry (gûran), from which they took whatever they could, without regard for the legal stipulations (Rich: I, 89, 96).

After an invasion by the Persian governor of Kirmanşah (prince Muhammad Ali Mirza), the exploitation increased even more, because also the Persians demanded their share. Then at last, the peasantry left en masse, to places with but a single lord to exploit them (Fraser 1840 I, 177).

It is quite unclear how much revenue Baghdad's or the central treasury received from Baban. Certainly it was less than at the apex of Ottoman power. At that time, according to the Sharafname, the Baban lands belonged to the imperial domains, i.e. they were not given out as fiefs but revenue was collected by salaried state officials. At that time, each of the tribal chieftains paid to the treasury of the eyalet of Şehrîzor 4 donkeyloads of gold annually (Sh. II/1: 144). Baban had apparently become more independent of the central state apparatus. The exploitation of the peasantry, however, had nothing but increased in the process.

III. h. 3

Some comments

At this point I want to make some short comments on the material presented so far:

1. The emirates described had a number of institutions in common with the Ottoman Empire as a whole. For instance, Bitlîs had a timar system and a "retainer army" (the noker), which resembled the qapuqullari armies. This does not necessarily mean that the emirates borrowed these institutions from the Ottoman Empire or that they had been established in the emirates by the Empire. Similar institutions had existed in previous Middle Eastern states, both in small states and in large empires; they were part of the common cultural heritage of the Middle East in which both the emirates and the Ottoman and Safavid empires shared (in fact, the Ottoman Empire grew out of a similar emirate).

After incorporation into the Ottoman Empire, emirates and Empire influenced each other's institutions: the empire retained some of the institutions it encountered locally, but integrated them into a more unified legal-administrative system. Rights and duties of the different "classes" in the emirates were brought into line with those elsewhere in the Empire - at least, in legal theory (see the remarks on taxation, p. 186f).

2. The emirate of Baban, as described by Rich, showed the same symptoms of decline that were noticed for the Empire as a whole in those days. The most salient of these are the frequent change of officials and the over-exploitation of the peasantry. Apparently, the economical and political organization of the emirate declined in a way parallel to that of the Empire (and under the influence of the latter, although this should not be thought to be a mono-causal process).
3. The descriptions (especially that of Bitlîs) make clear that integration in the Empire was very partial only. An important indication is the high proportion of the revenue that the mîr kept for himself; another, the discrepancy between the number of troops put at the disposal of the Ottoman army and the numbers that the mîr could mobilize for his own purposes; a third, the mîr's jurisdictional independence, with a qadi who appears as his client. The mîr had this independence in spite of the fact that the Empire had the physical power to defeat and depose him (as happened to Ebdal Xan). His independence can only be understood from the frontier position of the emirate. Not only is Kurdistan, due to its natural constitution difficult to keep permanently under control without the consent of its inhabitants, it also lay at this time between two competing empires. In order to ensure the emirates' loyalty the Ottomans had to grant many privileges to the mîrs (Şeref Xan of Bitlîs had even been in Safavid service, and was invited back by the Ottomans who needed him to control Bitlîs, and gave him privileges in exchange). It is doubtful, in fact, whether the mîrs would ever have been

able to achieve and maintain such power over their emirates as they had, if they had not been able to balance two empires against each other. To date, little attention has been given to the flourishing of such semi-independent political units in the periphery of empires or in the buffer zone between two empires. Eisenstadt, in his important work on the political systems of empires (1963), does not even mention this phenomenon. Historical bureaucratic empires (among which he reckons the Ottoman Empire) distinguish themselves in his view from patrimonial and feudal political systems by having, among others, a "clear territorial centralization" (1963: 23). The description of the Kurdish emirates shows that the territorial centralization was not at all so clear.

4. The discussion of the timar system and the tax regime showed that Ottoman legislation protected the peasantry (including the non-muslims) from over-exploitation. This suggests that as effective central control by the state was established, exploitation of the peasantry decreased. This seems to be the reverse of what is generally seen to happen in recent times. This is indeed the case, but it is only part of the story. In the 16th century, Ottoman legislation did lighten the tax burden on the peasantry. It is not clear whether in actual practice the tax rate was reduced in the Kurdish emirates also, but it does not seem to have been very heavy. As central control weakened (in the 17th and 18th centuries), exploitation of the peasantry increased tremendously (through the iltizam system etc.). When, in the 19th century, the central government reasserted its authority and started to levy taxes directly, this meant this time not a reduction, but a further aggravation of the burden on the peasantry: the government was strong enough to take its own taxes, but not sufficiently strong (or willing) to prevent tribal chieftains from taking theirs as well, so that the peasantry was doubly taxed.
5. The timar system also made (a part of) the peasantry legally

subservient to certain tribesmen. The eşîret / reyets distinction did not find its origins here (it was much older), but it was legally sanctioned and consolidated; laws ensured that a "caste" barrier was maintained.

6. The mîrs maintained control of the tribes in their emirate by balancing groups or confederations of tribes against each other ("divide and rule") and by keeping tribal chieftains under close supervision at their courts. Recognition of their position by the state solidified their rule. But this by itself is not enough to explain the loyalty to the mîrs' families. I am aware that the term "charisma" is only a label, not an explanation, but I find I have to stress the charismatic character of the mîrs' authority. More than a century after the abolition of the last emirates (see below, section III. k) people everywhere still speak with respect of the former mîrs' families. Actual political power may have been in the hands of advisers, the tribesmen were, however, loyal to the mîr, and no adviser could ever take the place of the mîr himself.

III. i Intermezzo: the emigration to northeastern Iran

Not all of Kurdistan was incorporated into the Ottoman Empire; quite a few Kurds preferred Persian to Turkish sovereignty (or were forced to accept it by conquest). I do not intend here to analyze in depth the differences in policies towards the Kurds as pursued by both empires, but shall confine myself to a few remarks on a group of Kurds that illustrate one aspect of Safavid policy. In northern Khorasan, Iran's northeastern province, live some hundreds of thousands Kurds. Some are still nomadic, most are settled now. Their numerous tribes are arranged into three groups (called îl): Şadlû, Ze'firanlû, and Keywanlû. Their language is still recognizable as Kurmancî (the northern Kurdish dialect group), but it has undergone much influence from the Turkish spoken by the surrounding ethnic groups; some tribes even speak exclusively Turkish. Unlike most Kurds of Kurdistan, they are all shiites. According to their own traditions,

the majority of them came here as one large tribal confederation, called Çemişkezek, sent here in 1600 by Shah Abbas to guard the frontier against the Uzbeks and Turkomans. Smaller groups of Kurdish tribes had already been there for some time; others were to be sent there by later shahs. Nadir Shah (1730 - 1747) especially was very active in moving tribes from one part of his empire to another. I intend to write a detailed history of these tribes later; here I shall only sketch a few of the developments that are relevant in the present context¹³³.

The Safavids had two powerful sunni neighbours, who both found in Iran's shiism a convenient excuse for attempts to conquer her: the Ottomans in the west, and the Uzbeks in the northeast. The border with the former was guarded mainly by Turkish Qizilbash tribes. Kurds were also thus employed, but their loyalty was always doubtful, even if they had shiite learnings. Frontier tribes and emirates let expedience decide to whom they should show "loyalty". One year this might be the Safavids, the next year the Ottomans. Even those shiite Kurds from western Kurdistan who had come to Iran with the other Qizilbash (such as the Çemişkezek, see p. 165) might suddenly decide to rejoin the Ottomans. It is understandable, therefore, that the Safavids preferred to use the Kurds' military abilities on the other frontier, where there was less danger of defection. Another aspect of Safavid policy was the (partially successful) attempt to re-organize these Kurds (as well as other Qizilbash groups) into new tribes or confederations (îl), the chieftains of which owed their positions originally to appointment by the shah. As such, people who both had a personal tie to the shah and were acceptable to the tribes were selected.

The Çemişkezek were, as said before, not the first Kurds to be sent to Khorasan. The Sharafname mentions a tribe Gîl (or Kîl) there, and describes how the Çeknî went there¹³⁴. This tribe was one of the most spirited of Persian Kurdistan. In the 16th century it lacked a paramount chieftain; subtribes were dispersed throughout

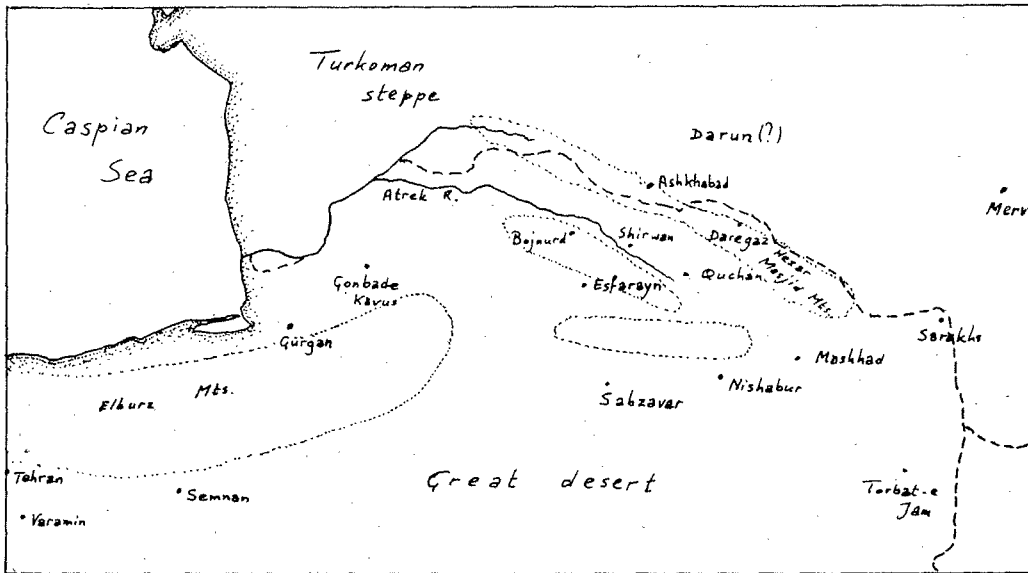
most of western Iran, where they had a bad reputation as robbers and raiders. When the government issued orders for their suppression, a group of aghas of the Çeknî started to move eastward with their followers, intending to go as far as India. On arriving in Khorasan (which was partially occupied by the Uzbeks then) they entered the service of a rebellious governor of Herat. Shah Abbas (1588-1629) ultimately suppressed the rebellion, but decided that the warlike Çeknî might be very useful in his reconquest and safeguarding of Khorasan - if properly directed. In his corps of bodyguards (gorchi) there was a Çeknî from a leading family, BudaĀ Beg. He appointed BudaĀ as emir (military commander) of a section of Khorasan, around Khabushan (Quchan), and sent him to his tribesmen to lead them. The arrangement worked. The Çeknî had now imperial sanction to continue their old practices. What had previously been called looting or theft had turned into a form of taxation. Everybody was (relatively) happy, even the peasantry, for although the Çeknî undoubtedly were a heavy burden on them, they protected them from the Uzbeks with whom they had even worse experience.

Shah Abbas' predecessors had allowed the empire to decay, and parts of the northeastern and northwestern provinces to be conquered by Uzbeks and Ottomans (who were in league with each other). Abbas reconquered the lost territories and made some additional conquests as well. In the east he repelled the Uzbeks (in which the Çeknî played a role, too). In order to consolidate the situation on the northeastern frontier he needed a sizeable body of frontier guards spread out in the southern zone of the "Turkoman" steppe. This is when the forced migration of the "Çemişkezek" took place. There were at that time some 40,000 or more Kurdish families living in Khar-e Varamin (a district south-east of Tehran). They were mainly pastoralists, living under the tent. Some of them were Çemişkezek, who had probably come to Iran with Hacî Rustem Beg (see p. 180) and remained there. Also other tribes from eastern Anatolia were represented (for instance, the name of one of the present subtribes in Khorasan, Hesenanlû, suggests a relation with the Hesenan tribe

of Xinus). Many others, however, were Caucasian Kurds. There were numerous small Kurdish tribes in the southern Caucasus, some of which were known at that time by the collective name of Yirmidört (Turkish for "twenty-four"). Some of these fled into Iran at the time of Ottoman occupation of the Caucasus (1576) or during the subsequent Ottoman-Safavid wars there. They were not received hospitably; there were doubts about their trustworthiness. Shah Abbas forced some of them to settle in Gilan, others were sent to Khar-e Varamin, where they joined the already present Çemişkezek. Shah Abbas appointed a Çemişkezek chieftain, Şah Elî Xan, as their paramount leader (mîr); that is probably why later the entire group is referred to as Çemişkezek. In 1598 a number of these Çemişkezek, under their mîr Şah Elî Xan, participated in Shah Abbas' campaign into Afghanistan. In 1600 the shah ordered 40,000 families to migrate into northern Khorasan (to Darun, near present Ashkhabad). Şah Elî Xan was appointed governor of that district, and received the title of îlخانî. The Kurds did not show great enthusiasm for their new job as guardians; many refused to go, or settled on the way; ultimately only 15,000 families arrived.

Darun is in the steppe, and the Kurds found it difficult to fight the Uzbeks in such terrain. Rather soon, therefore, they retired southward into the mountains around Khabushan (Quchan), a more congenial habitat. Coming there, they partly replaced a settled Turkish (or turkicized) population, not without bloodshed. Possibly the Çeknî of Pîr BudaĀ Beg merged with the more numerous Çemişkezek then, for we hear no more of them in later years.

In 1627/8 Shah Abbas appointed a new mîr to the Çemişkezek: Yûsuf Soltan, a Georgian by birth, educated as a muslim at the court, and a member of the shah's corps of bodyguards (qorchi). Yûsuf became also governor of Khabushan. If this was intended to break the power of Şah Elî Xan's family, it was not very successful: many of the tribes continued to consider Şah Eli's grandson Mehrab Beg their leader. Thus there were two ruling families now. Yûsuf married a Kurdish woman of the Şadî tribe; his descendants and their followers



Map 11. Khorasan

--- present international boundaries
 - - - - - mountain chains

are thence called Şadlû. After some time the ruling families agreed to a geographical partitioning: the Şadlû tribes the western part, with Bojnurd as the urban centre, the Ze'feranlû (as the tribes following Şah Elî Xan's descendants were called) further east, around Shirwan and Khabushan. Beside these two leading families, some minor chieftains emerged and gathered a number of tribes around them. At the eastern periphery of the Ze'feranlû territory a confederation called Keywanlû was at times autonomous (and remained under Ze'feranlû influence at other times). In later times also a few other large tribes are mentioned as independent (of both the shah and the two "big families"), e.g. the Emarlû (brought here by Nadir Shah) and the Qeraçûrlû (one of the Şadlû tribes). Their independence was, however, temporary only: only the two units whose chieftains were officially recognized persisted. During Qajar times (19th and early 20th century) both families had the title of *îlxanî* and the function of governors of their districts. They were frequently rebellious, and ruled virtually independently. They collected much revenue, of which only rarely a little was transferred to the state treasury. Most of it was redistributed in the form of gifts to chieftains of their vassal tribes, and to Turkoman chieftains (as

a means of making or keeping peace). In spite of their independence, it seems that it was the ultimate sanctioning by the state that made their rule more permanent than that of other families.

III. j Political changes in the 19th century

During the first half of the 19th century, two opposite tendencies affected the state of affairs in the Ottoman Empire. The empire, which had been decaying slowly but continuously during the preceding two centuries, had become so weak that it appeared to be on the verge of collapse. This stimulated aspirations to independence and separatism in the periphery. The great influence that the European powers commanded at the Ottoman court had become conspicuous to all, and was rightly interpreted as a further sign of its weakness. However, this European influence also stimulated administrative reform; Sultan Mahmud II (1808-1839) started vigorous efforts to re-establish central control. The tendencies of decentralization and re-centralization were thus simultaneous. This may explain why this period, that brought the abolishment of all Kurdish emirates, also saw two Kurdish emirates temporarily rise to unprecedented strength and splendour.

When Mahmud II succeeded to the throne Kurdish mîrs were certainly not the only semi-independent rulers in his empire. All over Anatolia locally influential families had arrogated the functions of government and became virtually independent rulers ("derebeyi", "lord of the valley"). Also many of the appointed governors went their own way, without paying heed to Istanbul. Egypt had, after a short French occupation (1798-1801), achieved virtual independence under its popular governor Muhammad Ali (1805-1848). In the Russo-Turkish war of 1806-1812 the empire suffered a new defeat, and an even worse one followed in 1828-1829, when the Russians temporarily took Erzerum and Trabzon (and thus parts of Kurdistan were temporarily cut loose from the empire). In 1828 too, Greek nationalists, whom Mahmud had at first successfully suppressed, succeeded in establishing a small

independent Greek state; in 1830 European powers forced the sultan to recognize the independence of Greece.

Muhammad Ali of Egypt, feeling wronged by the Sultan, occupied Syria (1831). In 1832 his general Ibrahim Pasha even defeated the Ottoman army in the heart of Anatolia (!). In 1839 a new Ottoman - Egyptian confrontation took place near Nizib (in western Kurdistan), and again the Ottomans suffered defeat.

The army that was severely beaten by Ibrahim Pasha had in the previous years been campaigning in Kurdistan and cruelly, but effectively, reduced disobedient Kurdish chieftains and punished robber tribes. Immediately after the Russian war of 1806-1812 Sultan Mahmud had energetically started his policy of centralization. He succeeded to a large extent: "by a series of political, military and police actions he overcame rebellious pashas and derebeyis alike, and replaced them by appointed officials sent from Istanbul"¹³⁵. By 1826 the Anatolian derebeyis had been subjected, and he could start the pacification of Kurdistan. His general Reshid Muhammad Pasha (former governor of Sivas, later to become Grand Vizier) was the military genius that organized the campaigns that now followed. By the middle of the century there were no emirates left in Kurdistan. Officially, Kurdistan was from then on ruled directly, by Ottoman governors. In practice, however, direct Ottoman rule was to prove very ineffective indeed. Near the cities, the governors had some power; nowhere did they have authority.

Partly as a reaction to the first attempts at centralization, partly in response to the international political situation and the Ottoman-Egyptian wars, two Kurdish mîrs revived the old glory of their emirates, conquered vast territories and rebelled against central authority. Mîr Mihemed of Riwandiz (because of an eye disease called Mîrî Kor, the blind mîr) acceded in 1814 to leadership in the impoverished emirate of Soran. Two decades later he had conquered most of what is now northern Iraq. The vali of Baghdad, not capable of stopping the mîr, recognized his conquests and granted him the title of pasha - in the vain hope of thus retaining recognition as his superior.

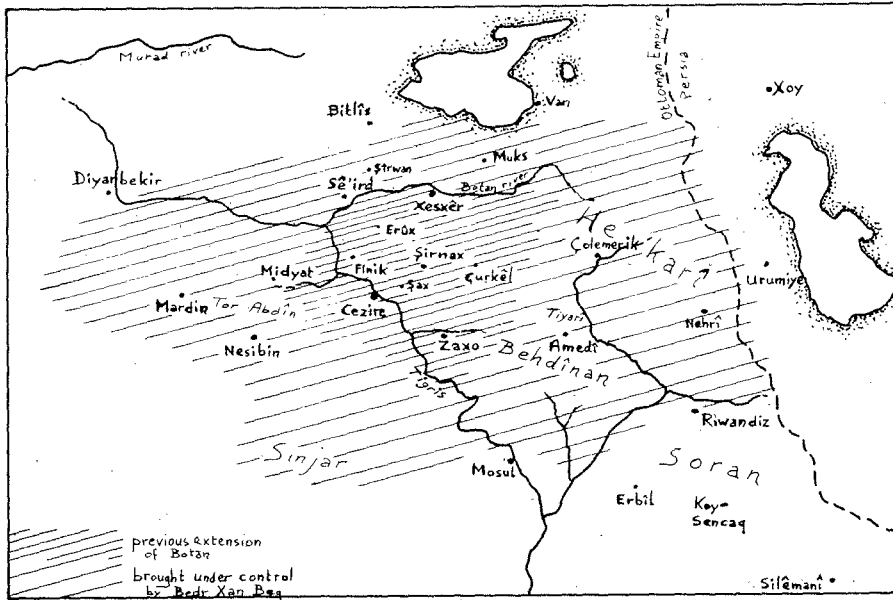
Only when the mîr sent troops in the direction of Nesîbîn and Mardîn, and was said to be in contact with the Egyptians of Ibrahim Pasha, the sultan sent Reshid Muhammad Pasha against him. The valis of Mosûl and Baghdad received orders to assist in the punitive campaign. Mîrî Kor surrendered on conditions very favourable to him: he was to remain governor of Riwandiz, but had to assert his submission to the sultan (1835). He was sent to Istanbul, where the sultan bestowed many honours upon him; on the return voyage, however, he mysteriously disappeared. His brother Resûl then was governor of Riwandiz for a few years, until, in 1847, the vali of Baghdad expelled him. That was the end of the Soran emirate: from then on, Riwandiz was governed by Turkish officials¹³⁶.

The second emirate that experienced a short period of glory before it eclipsed was Botan under its mîr Bedr Xan Beg. Many Kurds consider his rule and rebellion the first expression of modern Kurdish nationalism.

III. k The rise of Bedr Xan Beg 137
 and the fall of the emirate of Botan

Botan had been ruled for many centuries by a family that claimed descent from Khalid ibn Walid, one of the prophet's most famous generals. Once, according to the Sharafname, 3 brothers instead of competing for succession divided their territories. The most important of the 3 parts was that depending on Cezîre, the main town of the emirate. The other two parts had as centres the castles of Finik and Gurkêl, northwest and northeast of Cezîre, respectively (Sharafname I/2, 146). Sometimes the three parts made a united front - generally under the leadership of Cezîre -; at other times there were severe armed conflicts between them. Oral epics I collected in Botan suggest that the latter was the rule rather than the exception (but then, epics generally deal with extraordinary events, not with the ordinary state of affairs).

The military backbone of Botan (the Cezîre section) was formed by



Map 12 The emirate of Botan at the period of greatest expansion (1846)

two confederations of nomad tribes¹³⁸, the Şillet and Çoxsor (as Bitlîs had its Qewalîsî and Bilbasî, and Hekarî its tribes of the right and of the left). These two confederations comprised most of the tribes that are still, or were within human memory, fully nomadic. The Kurds depending on Gûrkêl were known as the Hacî Beyran (after Hacî Bedr, one of their early mîrs). They comprised a few nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes as well as fully sedentary Kurds without noticeable tribal organization. Those depending on Finik, called Dehî, had a similar composition¹³⁹. Because Cezîre commanded the strongest nomad tribes, it could often subjugate both Hacî Beyran and Dehî. Friction between the three sister emirates was unavoidable, since the migration routes of Şillet and Çoxsor crossed the lands of the other two confederations.

These confederations were not monolithic units either. The last

mîr of Gurkêl, Seîd Beg, was killed in a battle in which the aghas of Şirnax (which belonged to the Hacî Beyran) had joined the mîr of Cezîre against him. After Seîd Beg's death these aghas tried (with partial success) to take his place as collectors of revenue. They long maintained a degree of independence vis à vis the mîr of Cezîre, but never acquired enough power over the Hacî Beyran to arrogate the title of mîr.

Among the Çoxsor and Şillet two tribes played leading roles, the Mîran and the Batuan, respectively. When the mîr was not a strong personality and skilful politician, the chieftains of these tribes rather than the mîr made all important decisions. "After all", a member of the Mîran's leading family told me, "the agha is the best man of an entire tribe, while the mîr only has his position because the Turks granted it to his family as a hereditary office."¹⁴⁰ An old saying, still widely known, reflects the same conception that real power belonged to these two tribes:

"Mîran mîr in,	"The Mîran are princes,
Batuan wezîr in	the Batuan ministers (viziers),
Şillet seyên pîr in"	the Şillet old dogs" ¹⁴¹

Around 1821 Bedr Xan Beg became mîr of this unruly conglomerate. The chieftain of the Mîran, Brahîm AXa, refused to recognize his authority. He did not pay any tribute, and the fact that he had made peace in a war between the Batuan and the Hacî Beyran Kurds is still quoted as a proof that he had usurped at least part of the mîr's functions. Bedr Xan then had him killed. A war ensued between the Mîran, aided by the other Çoxsor tribes, and the other Kurds of Botan. Several hundreds were killed; in the end Bedr Xan Beg managed to impose his authority on all. At the same time he started showing signs of independence vis à vis the Ottomans. He refused for instance to send tribal contingents when, during the Ottoman-Russian war of 1828/9, these were demanded¹⁴².

Bedr Xan ruled the entire emirate (including the Hacî Beyran and Dehî sections) with iron hand. His application of severe punishments for even the lightest offenses made Botan into a haven of security.

Where formerly robbery and brigandage had prevailed, now life and property were respected. All prospered¹⁴³.

When important decisions had to be taken, the mîr convoked all the big aghas and asked their opinions. He alone, however, was the one that took the decision.

The army was slightly modernized. No longer did all tribesmen go to war under their own chieftains - although such tribal units continued to exist. There were now crack regiments, consisting of the best men from all tribes, directly under the mîr's commands. They were a permanent standing army, more loyal to the mîr than to their own tribes' aghas. People referred to them with the term "xolam", which is best translated as "retainer"¹⁴⁴. The establishment of these elite units had the side-effect of diminishing the tribe aghas' independent leverage, as they lost their best men to them. Bedr Xan also made alliances with the other two great chieftains of central Kurdistan, Nûrollah Beg, mîr of Hekarî, and Xan Mehmûd of Muks, and with a number of minor chieftains of the immediate vicinity as well as far away (as far as Mûş and Kars)¹⁴⁵.

In the series of campaigns against the too independent Kurdish chieftains general Reshid Pasha also attacked Bedr Xan's capital Cezîre and took it after a long siege (1836). Xan Mehmûd tried to come to his rescue with a large army (according to Safrastian (1948: 51) consisting of 20,000 Kurds, Armenians and Assyrians), but was prevented from crossing the Botan river because the Turks blew up its bridges. Temporarily both chieftains had to retire to their mountain strongholds.

The defeat of the Ottomans at the hands of Ibrahim Pasha's Egyptian troops in 1839 was witnessed by many Kurds. To them it was another proof of the Ottoman state's fundamental weakness. In the interpretation of later Kurdish nationalists (among whom Bedr Xan Beg's descendants played conspicuous roles, which certainly influenced the perception of their ancestor) the mîr now started planning the establishment of an independent Kurdistan. For this vision no confirmation can be found in the contemporary sources. Bedr Xan did

revolt, but probably for other reasons and with more limited intentions¹⁴⁶. Using the temporary setback of Ottoman re-centralization, he conquered neighbouring territories. In 1845 he controlled de facto (through military garrisons) the area roughly between the line Diyarbekr - Mosul and the Persian border¹⁴⁷. Two American missionaries spent four weeks with him in the summer of 1846, and noted that "nearly every chief in northern Koordistan came to make their respects to him, bringing him presents of money, horses, mules, and other valuable property. Even the Hakkari Beg (...) and Khan Mahmood (...) seemed to think themselves honoured by being in waiting upon him"; and: "The many spirited chiefs under him, though restive and extremely impatient of restraint, dare not lift a finger in opposition to him..."¹⁴⁸. The mîr also told his guests that he did not intend to break his given word of loyalty to the sultan. This makes later interpretations of his nationalist and secessionist ambitions doubtful at least¹⁴⁹. However, other events interfered with whatever designs Bedr Xan Beg may have had. The British and Americans had "discovered" the christians of central Kurdistan; a not very edifying competition for the conversion of the Nestorians had started. About half of these Nestorians were tribally organized and very independently-minded, others were peasants subservient to Kurdish aghas. All hoped for deliverance from the perpetual political domination by muslims, i.c. the Kurds. Defeat of the Ottomans by a christian power, Russia, seemed to them a foreboding of better times. They welcomed the missionaries because they expected that their governments might help them become their own masters. Inevitably, some Nestorians aspired to derive power from association with these foreigners. The Mar Shimun, the Nestorians' religious leader, arrogated a political power that he had never had before - which sowed discord among the Nestorians as well as irritation with the Kurds¹⁵⁰. The Kurds were more than irritated, in fact; they felt threatened, and the missionaries did little to alleviate their fears. In the Tiyarî district American missionaries built a school and boarding house on the top of a hill, dominating the entire area. This

fortress-like structure could only arouse further Kurdish suspicions¹⁵¹. Tension between muslims and christians rose uninterruptedly. When the Tiyarî Nestorians, among whom the Mar Shimun lived, stopped paying their annual tribute to the mîr of Hekarî, the latter asked Bedr Xan Beg's support to punish them. A large body of tribal troops was sent against the Tiyarî (1843). Many Kurds were apparently only too eager to vent their anger on the Nestorians¹⁵². An ugly massacre ensued, to be followed a few years later by an equally bloody invasion of another district.

The echoes resounded in Europe, and were to cause Bedr Xan's fall. The British and French exercised pressure on the Ottoman government to punish this chief, and prevent further christian massacres. A strong army was sent against Bedr Xan, and in 1847 he was forced to surrender. He and all his relatives were brought to Istanbul-where they were received with great show of honour - and sent into exile. Nobody was allowed to succeed him.

Botan after the disappearance of the mîr

Nearly immediately the emirate fell apart into a hodge-podge of mutually inimical tribes. Without the mîr it was not possible to keep rivalries in check. The Ottoman governors were despised and distrusted by all, and could therefore not play a conciliatory role (even if they had wished to do so); they did not have the power to impose law and order here. The security that had prevailed in central Kurdistan under Bedr Xan turned into its opposite. Travel became extremely dangerous. Mutual distrust prevailed. Feuds and other conflicts, not timely ended, broke up most tribal units. New subtribes, not existing until then, broke away. A few chieftains (e.g. the aghas dominating non-tribal Şirnex, and the chieftains of the Mîran) managed to increase their political (and economic) power in this turmoil. None, however, could take over the mîr's position: there were too many rivals. Only later, when Mistefa AXa of the Mîran was made pasha of the Hamidiye, tribal militias formed by Sultan Abdulhamid, did he manage to become the single

most powerful man of the area (in the 1890's, see p.236).

Before that time there was a short period of re-integration of the emirate immediately after the Ottoman-Russian war of 1877/8. Two of Bedr Xan's sons, Osman and Huseyn were appointed pashas and commanded troops in this war; the troops apparently comprised a large number of Kurds. When this war, too, ended in a defeat of the Ottomans, the two brothers, with their Kurds, went back to Botan and took matters into their hands. Osman Paşa, the eldest, proclaimed himself mîr. It seems that a majority of the tribes gladly submitted themselves to him¹⁵³. According to Kurdish nationalist sources¹⁵⁴ Osman ruled for 8 months over an area enclosed by the line Çolemerik - Midyat - Mardîn - Nesîbîn - Zaxo - Imadiye. His name was read in the khutbe. Armies sent by the sultan were rebuffed by the Kurdish troops; only by deceit could the mîr be taken prisoner. Disorder was restored. Even today, many people speak of the time of the emirate as a golden age. Nationalist propaganda created an even more idealized image of it.

Conclusion

Thus, most parts of Kurdistan "fell back" from a relatively complicated form of social organization (the emirates) to simpler forms (tribes of varying degrees of complexity). Was that a step back in social evolution? Or a step forward, maybe? It could be thought that the structure of the emirates had to be destroyed to make the next evolutionary step possible, the transition to the fully developed state, into which the Kurds were to become integrated instead of merely incorporated. Only by considerable distortions, however, can the concept of social evolution (as a "prime mover") be made to fit the events. The Kurds were but little by little integrated in the state; the process is not yet completed. Until the 1920's, and till much later at several places, the states dealt not with individuals but with tribes in Kurdistan. As time passed, most tribes became even less complicated social units; they moved in a direction opposite to the "ordinary" evolutionary one. For instance the Teyyan were at first integrated in the Botan emirate

as one of the tribes of the Şillet confederation. After the abolition of the emirate, the confederation also gradually fell apart. A section of the Teyyan broke away and joined the Çoxsor confederation. Not even enmity between the two large confederations could keep each of them together. After a few decades only their names remained. All tribes acted separately. At present the Teyyan tribe is not a "real" unit anymore: there is no paramount chieftain; the qebîles (subtribes) always remain separate; there is no corporate action on the tribe level.

It seems that the size of the units and their degree of complexity respond to and more or less adapt to, the administrative network of the state. As the latter became denser and more complicated, the "tribes" became less so. This is not a mono-causal process, but one contributing factor of great importance can easily be identified. The abolition of the emirates did not mean the end of indirect rule and its replacement by direct rule. In fact, indirect rule continued to be practised for a long time (it still is, in many parts of Kurdistan), but it was reduced to ever lower levels of integration. After the mîrs, tribe aghas, and later village aghas (or the mezins of a bavik) were the persons to whom government authority was delegated. I believe that this, more than anything else, determined the effective size and, therefore, the complexity of the tribal units.

III. i The new land code and its effects

This is not the place to discuss all reforms in the Ottoman Empire during the 19th century¹⁵⁵. The abolition of the emirates was discussed above; I shall now turn to another measure that greatly affected the social and economic organization of Kurdistan. The Land Code, issued in 1858, was intended to bring about a normalization of the land regime and to do away with many abuses. Much land in the empire had been appropriated as private property, both by local aristocracies and by - originally appointed - mültezims (tax farmers). Elsewhere the practice of selling the office of mültezim (by auction!) led to over-exploitation of the peasantry¹⁵⁶, with

massive land desertion as a result.

Sultan Mahmud II (1808-1839) had revoked the last fiefs (and converted them into tax-farms). The Land Code¹⁵⁷ that his successor Abdulmejid issued reasserted that the ultimate ownership of land was vested in the state (except a narrowly defined class of land that remained private mülk, and a small sub-category of vaqf-lands).

Possession of the land was to be granted to individuals by a special government agency (the tapu office: land registry), against the payment of a small fee. The possessor was to receive a title deed (tapu senedi), stating his rights to the land. All arable land was thus to be registered in the name of private persons; communal tenure was not recognized (art 8: "the whole of the land of a village or town cannot be granted in its entirety to all of the inhabitants, nor to one or two of them. Separate pieces are to be given to each inhabitant..."). The formulation of the Code reflects its European inspiration as well as the reformers' desire to break up the tribes. In fact, the Land Code was almost certainly also intended to offer nomadic tribes a bait to settle (easily acquirable arable lands). Also pasture lands could (but needed not) be privately possessed (art. 24).

Registration of land by tapu officials soon started, but progress was slow, for the task was enormous. In Iraq, where registration started in 1869 (when Midhat Pasha, a famous reformer, became governor of Baghdad), it was only partially carried through, to be continued by the British after they occupied it (South Iraq in 1914, Iraqi Kurdistan in 1918/19)¹⁵⁸. Soon after its inception, however, two tendencies became clear:

1. Possession soon evolved into full ownership. The Code had made possession inheritable, and land was transferable by gift or in exchange of money, on condition of permission from the tapu office. The holders, however, ignored whatever restrictions there were on their rights to the land, and considered it as free mülk.
2. While the Code apparently intended the actual tillers of the soil to become its legal possessors (see art 8, quoted above),

and contained clauses preventing corrupt practices, its actual execution benefited only a small elite. The "ignorance and venality of the Tapu officials"¹⁵⁹ aggravated the effects of the common villagers' fear and distrust of a government that only knew them on the day of tax collection or recruitment for military service. Thus, people who knew how to deal with government officials could have large tracts of land registered in their names. In Kurdistan, these were aghas, shaikhs, and certain classes of townsmen: merchants and higher officials, mainly. The actual tillers of the land only realized what had happened when it was much too late. Dowson, who surveyed the situation in Iraq around 1930, remarked the following on Kurdistan: "...many villages appear to be wholly or partially registered as the personal possessions of local notables, without any consideration of the immemorial rights of those who had regularly occupied and tilled the land or pastured their flocks thereon. The pinch in these cases seems to have been mainly felt when the lands were pledged, and forfeited, to town-dwelling merchants for debt. The personal touch and interdependence that existed between even the most arbitrary local chieftain and the village cultivators appears not infrequently then to have been replaced by more mechanical efforts to exploit the land from outside and by obstruction to such efforts from within"¹⁶⁰. In other cases the agha himself intensified exploitation; usually he then left the village and became an absentee landlord. Dowson's sketch, however, is certainly not true for all of Kurdistan; there are wide divergences. In many mountain villages of northern Kurdistan most, or many of the villagers have title deeds as I was assured repeatedly. In others the land legally belongs to the agha, but the villagers pay here as rent the same amount that elsewhere is given as tribute to the agha ("zekat"). In these villages it seems the land registration has not (yet) brought great changes. Large tapu holdings are very rare or absent in the mountains; in the plains they were (until recent land reforms) the rule rather than the exception. An example of a lineage that owes much of its political and economic

influence to this land registration was mentioned in Ch. II: the Dizeyî. Their ancestors (either Ehmed Paşa or his sons) had a large part of the plain of Erbîl registered in their name, and later added to their belongings by other means.

The effects of the execution of the land code may thus be summarized:

1. Reduction of the communal features of the tribal economy; individualization.
2. Increased economic stratification within the tribe. Many aghas became landlords, their followers became their sharecroppers. In the course of time this was to give some aghas inordinate power over the commoners.
3. A new class, with a new life-style emerged: the urban-based landlords¹⁶¹.
4. New forms of cooperation and patronage developed between the urban-based landlords and tribal aghas who remained in the villages. Thus, when Hay came to Erbîl (1919) he found that the urban aghas had "magnificent guest-houses". Tribal chieftains, when coming to town, always stayed in one of these: "Every chief is the client of one or other of the town aghas", a connection that may have existed for generations. In exchange for hospitality the visitor brought small gifts, and was "also expected to look after his patron's interests in the country in the event of any tribal disturbances, while the latter will sometimes act as the chief's representative in the town". (Hay 1921: 83/4).
5. In many cases the actual cultivators lost some of their traditional rights and became share-croppers or even hired labourers. The landlords could evict them if they wished¹⁶². This latter competence remained largely potential, until mechanization of agriculture made most manpower superfluous (1950's); many former share-croppers were evicted then. As the land was legally the landlords', these could even count on state support when peasants protested. Although this happened a century after the

Land Code was issued, it was an immediate consequence of this law (or rather, of the way it was executed).

Land policy of the British in Iraqi Kurdistan

Under Ottoman domination execution of the Land Code had been rather incomplete. Even where it had been executed it was not infrequently ignored, and the old relations of production subsisted¹⁶³. The British occupation revived the tapu office, because an accurate land registration was seen as a prerequisite for revenue collection. There was no desire to correct the many abuses of land registration. As the Revenue Commissioner noted, in 1919: "We must recognize that it is primarily our business not to give rights to those who have them not, but to secure the rights of those who have them"¹⁶⁴. In fact, British policy appears to have quite consciously favoured tribal chieftains as against the commoners. Sir Henry Dobbs, High Commissioner of Iraq from 1923 to 1929, made this into a cornerstone of his land policy¹⁶⁵. The effects were especially noticeable in South Iraq, where chiefs of the Arab tribes had become owners of vast holdings. Also in Iraqi Kurdistan however, the tendencies resulting from the Ottoman Land Code were strengthened and accelerated under British rule. A few other aspects of British tribal policy in Iraq will be discussed summarily in section III. n.

III. m The establishment of Kurdish tribal militias: Hamidiye

In 1876 Abdulhamid II became sultan. Although reforms, begun under his predecessors, continued under this sultan, several of his policies seemed to work in the opposite direction from these reforms. Whereas the reforms aimed at settlement of nomads and detribalization, Abdulhamid took measures which seemed in flagrant contradiction to this general line. He formed (in 1891) a tribal militia, or gendarmerie, led by tribal chieftains, to police the eastern provinces of the empire. These militias were named Hamidiye, after the sultan. The obvious result of the new competences that the appointed chieftains / officers received, was an inordinate increase

of their powers, leading to unavoidable abuses. Another effect was the strengthening of some tribes and, thereby, changes in the regional balance of power.

This, as many of the sultan's other reactionary measures, was a reaction to the threatening attitude of the big powers, especially Britain and Russia¹⁶⁶. Parts of the eastern provinces of the empire had twice, in the wars of 1828/9 and 1877/8, been occupied by Russian troops. Russia stimulated Armenian nationalism and separatism in the east, on the model of the successful Slavic example in the west. Armenians had, in fact, aided the Russian invaders in 1877/8. At the Berlin Congress(1878) Britain too had assumed an interest in the "Armenian question". In the 1880's Armenian terrorist bands became active, in Istanbul and in the east. The Kurds' loyalty to the Ottoman state was doubtful too. In 1880 a shaikh, Ubeydullah of Nehrî, had led a rebellion with the declared intention of establishing a Kurdish state, and had tried to enlist British support for his plans¹⁶⁷. In times of new crises the Kurds, as muslims, might rally to the sultan-caliph's pan-islamic appeals and oppose Armenians and/or Russians; they might as well not. It is against this background that the formation of the Hamidiye has to be seen: as a means of making it more rewarding for the Kurds to be loyal to the sultan, and as the most effective way to police eastern Anatolia¹⁶⁸.

The Hamidiye were modelled on the Cossacks. They were recruited from nomadic or semi-nomadic Kurdish tribes (and an occasional Turkish (Qarapapakh) tribe), and were grouped into cavalry regiments led by their own tribal chieftains. Some large tribes provided one or more regiments, of ca. 800 - 1000 men each; smaller tribes were joined into one regiment. Military training was provided by officers of the regular army. The Hamidiye units were not permanently mobilized. They received pay only when on active duty, but their families were exempted from most taxes. The number of Hamidiye

regiments gradually increased: there were 40 in 1892, 56 in 1893 and 63 in 1899¹⁶⁹. The direct aims of the establishment of the Hamidiye regiments were suppression of Armenian terrorism (which did not amount to much yet), and a better control over the Kurds. By thus providing paid employment of high prestige and a virtual licence to raid, the sultan hoped to install in the Kurds a strong loyalty to him personally. He was quite successful in that: Kurds considered him the sultan most benevolent to them, and called him *Bavê Kurdan* ("Father of the Kurds"). Some observers (e.g. British consuls in the area) perceived the aim of dividing the Kurds in order to rule them: "In some cases the selection of tribes for the Hamidiye was used to maintain the balance of power in the region, while in others it had the opposite effect. Weaker tribes were usually chosen where possible because the better-quality equipment and training available to them offset the greater strength of their traditional rivals."¹⁷⁰ Or, in the words of a later, outspokenly pro-Kurdish British agent, the very aim of the Hamidiye had been " (to use) tribal feuds so as to create a system which would make combination against the government very difficult"¹⁷¹. If balancing the tribes against each other really was an actively pursued aim, it was only very partially successful. It is true that in the years 1893/4 an increase of inter-tribal feuding was noticed (Duguid: 147). A more important fact, however, is that the Hamidiye gave some chieftains more power over their neighbours than they would otherwise have been able to exert. In fact, in any tribe the choice of one agha as the Hamidiye commander rather than any of his rivals ended most disputes in his favour. He had now enough spoils to distribute (paid employment of a highly valued kind; weapons) to win major sections of the tribe over to his side. And he could use the Hamidiye against his rivals and enemies. At least two chieftains rose as Hamidiye commanders to positions of such power that they posed a potential threat to the state. The first of these was *Mistefa Paşa*, of the *Mîran*¹⁷². Out of all the chieftains of the former emirate of Botan, he alone was made the

head of a Hamidiye regiment, and received the title of Pasha. Chieftains of other nomadic tribes were given subordinate officer ranks¹⁷³.

Both the Çoxsor and the Şillet tribes thus came under his command; through them he controlled the sedentary population. Lehmann-Haupt, who passed through Botan in his time, noticed that Mistefa Paşa, soon after his inauguration, had established his own petty "kingdom". The Ottoman administration had no influence there, not even in the town of Cezîre; everything was in Mistefa Paşa's hands. He also took a heavy toll from passing caravans and from the transportation rafts floating down the Tigris; his men raided the wide surroundings¹⁷⁴. Thus Mistefa Paşa acquired some of the powers that formerly were the mîr's. There were two important differences, however:

1. His power was not based on consensus but on violence. That became clear in inter- or intra-tribal conflicts. These were never brought before him (as they were brought before the mîr), but before one of the shaikhs¹⁷⁵.

2. He could maintain his independence vis-à-vis the civil administration because he had powerful protection (again, unlike the mîrs, who depended mainly on themselves). The superior and protector of the Hamidiye commanders was Zeki Pasha, commander of the 4th Army Corps at Erzincan and brother-in-law of the sultan himself. To the great annoyance of the civil officials, Zeki Pasha removed the Hamidiye from under their judicial competences and always protected transgressors. Thus there were, in fact, two parallel, and competing chains of authority from the sultan to the eastern provinces. Hamidiye units frequently broke law and order which the civil administration considered its concern, but usually they went unpunished¹⁷⁶.

Mistefa Paşa's name is still mentioned with great awe, and his family is much respected in the northern Cezîre. Major Noel, on reconnaissance there in 1919, understood that all the nomadic tribes were branches of the Mîran - a mistake that is significant for the dominance of Mistefa Paşa¹⁷⁷.

A Hamidiye commander who became of more than local renown was İbrahim Paşa, chief of the large Milan confederation (not to be confused with the Egyptian general of the same name, who operated in the same area a few decades earlier). Turkish and foreign authors have spread his fame as a robber of mythical proportions, the "uncrowned king of Kurdistan"¹⁷⁸.

The Milan consisted, at the end of the 19th century, of a fluctuating number of tribes (including, beside sunni Kurdish, a few Arab and yezidi Kurdish tribes), grouped around a small nucleus of Milan proper. There were fortified headquarters at Wîranşehr; most of the tribes were nomadic in the provinces of Urfa and Raqqqa. The chiefly family laid claims to supremacy over even more than this conglomerate. According to legend all present Kurdish tribes proceeded from two primordial tribes Mil and Zil (or Milan and Zilan). Many tribes still acknowledge belonging to either of these two groups, that were supposed to have come from the south and from the east, respectively. İbrahim Paşa claimed that his family were respected by all Mil tribes as the paramount heads. Sykes, who travelled much in Kurdistan, noticed that, in fact, İbrahim Paşa was much respected by tribes as far away as Dersim and Erzincan - although they owed him no direct political allegiance (Sykes 1908: 470). This respect in itself had never been sufficient to give members of the family actual political power. In the preceding century some of İbrahim's ancestors had acquired great powers, and built up a formidable tribal confederation; under others it rapidly declined. In the 1850's internal conflicts made the confederation fall apart, of which their neighbours and traditional enemies, the Arabic Shammar tribe, profited by conquering parts of their territory and taking tribute from tribes that were formerly tributary to the Milan. İbrahim became chieftain in 1863, and soon reunited some of the sections of the confederation. Coalitions of Arab and Kurdish tribes, led by the Shammar, made two great attacks on him, but met with failure. For the third attack the Shammar could no longer count on their Kurdish allies. The important (Kurdish) Kîkan

tribe had even changed sides, started paying tribute to Ibrahîm Paşa, and helped the Milan defeat their former allies the Shammar¹⁷⁹.

From then on, Ibrahîm expanded his dominions, subjected ever more tribes and took tribute from ever wider territories. The fact that such a powerful man was made a Hamidiye commander suggests that the sultan had other aims than that of simply balancing the tribes against each other. Ibrahîm Paşa always remained loyal to the sultan, but the provincial administration considered him their worst enemy.

His men raided a wide area, and at times even set up their tents around the city walls of Diyarbekr and harassed the town population. This led to the first open expression of protest against the sultan there (!). Young townspeople, among whom the later famous Ziya Gökalp, occupied the town's post-office until the sultan promised to send Ibrahîm Paşa to the south (as protector of the Hejaz railway)¹⁸⁰.

In July 1908 the Young Turk revolt made an end to Abdulhamid's rule. Then Ibrahîm Paşa revolted: he refused to recognize the new regime, and declared himself independent. He tried to incite entire Syria to revolt - apparently in favour of the sultan, against the Young Turks. Adequate military operations by the Turkish army, however, defeated Ibrahîm, who was forced to fly south into the Ebdulezîz mountains (between Urfa and Raqqa). Five thousand of his men offered their submission to the Turks¹⁸¹. Ibrahîm soon died. His son Mehmûd, however, remained very influential. In fact, a British "expert" in 1919 pointed him out as one of the two fittest candidates to rule the Kurdish vassal kingdom that the British then intended to establish¹⁸².

The Hamidiye also played an infamous role in the first series of Armenian massacres (1894/96). These followed an Armenian rebellion in the Sasûn area. The revolt was a protest against double taxation: by the government, that had started to collect taxes directly, and by the Kurds, who continued to take their traditional share of the Armenians' crops. The Hamidiye were sent to suppress the revolt.

All over eastern Anatolia attacks and raids on Armenian villages were carried out in its wake; mainly on orders of the sultan, but also at the Hamidiye's own initiative. Thousands, maybe tens of thousands, of Armenians were killed; many more were robbed of all they had. In spite of all brutality, however, it should be added that (unlike two decades later) there were no attempts at systematic expulsion or extermination of the Armenians. In fact, the civil administration tried to undo some of the harm the Hamidiye had wrought. A British consul reported that "Much of the booty seized by the Kurds in the Erzeroum area in August and September of 1894 was in the process of being returned to its Armenian owners by the government"¹⁸³.

When the Young Turks deposed Sultan Abdulhamid (1908) they also disbanded the Hamidiye (the sultan's loyal supporters), and demoted those sons of Kurdish chieftains who had become officers in the regular army. However, because Kurdish tribal units appeared a useful and even necessary complement to the regular army, especially in the difficult terrain of the eastern frontier, the Hamidiye were soon revived as "militias", more closely integrated in the army, but not very different from before. Such regiments fought in the Balkan War of 1912-13 (where they suffered heavy losses), and on the eastern front in the First World War and the Turkish War of Independence. It was from the ranks of the commanders of these militias, who had helped Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) regain independence for modern Turkey, that the Kurdish nationalist party Azadî ("Freedom"; established in 1923) drew its membership. We shall find these chieftains in the background of the great Kurdish revolt of 1925, which will be discussed in chapter V.

III. n Changes in the early 20th century

Trying to give a balanced account of all changes that took place in Kurdistan in the first few decades of the 20th century would be too ambitious a project. I shall limit myself to mentioning a few

withdrawn, such as the salaries. The result was a gradual weakening of the aghas' power over their tribes¹⁸⁴.

In Turkey a quite different policy was followed from the beginning¹⁸⁵. After the great Kurdish nationalist revolts (1925-31) a systematic policy aiming at detribalization and assimilation of the Kurds was adopted. Aghas were killed, chased away or sent into exile. Large numbers of tribesmen were deported to other parts of the country. Shaikhs too, were persecuted. An increase of feuds and other conflicts resulted; there were no recognized authorities who could negotiate settlements. Gendarmerie posts and schools brought the state closer to the tribesmen, and taught them that they were Turkish citizens. Everything that recalled a separate Kurdish identity was to be abolished: language, clothing, names - and, of course, the tribes themselves. Both the Kurdish identity and the tribes appeared resistant to heavy pressure, however. New chieftains emerged, others returned from exile. They are, in general, not so powerful as before, but many officials still find it easier to deal with the population through these chieftains than directly, so that the state, in a similar way as before, supports the aghas' positions. The same is more or less the case in the other parts of Kurdistan. There are no really big aghas anymore, as a result of the tightening of central control, but informal systems of indirect rule persist in the interstices of the administrative network. The aghas who know how to deal with government officials (province or district governors, gendarme commanders, public prosecutors, judges, intelligence officers) can increase their influence at the expense of their rivals. They have spoils to distribute among their followers, such as easier access to public services, work, and (in a limited number of cases) exemption from military service and dismissal of criminal charges; this of course enlarges their following. On the other hand, these officials find that the only easy way to maintain a sufficient degree of law and order is that of using some aghas and shaikhas as intermediaries. Interesting forms of symbiosis of these two types

of authorities have thus developed. The rivals of the successful aghas and shaikhs attempt to mobilize public opinion against them by adopting a nationalist stand and accusing them of collaboration or even of treason.

A favourite accusation is that of working for one of the intelligence services. I have heard nearly every shaikh of whom I know, and many an agha, be accused of receiving money from and giving information to the intelligence service of their own or an other country. The few with whom I discussed the subject personally admitted to having occasional contacts with such an agency, but claimed that they were obliged to, at the risk or reprisals, and that they kept these contacts as non-committal as possible. These same informants took it for granted that the success of their most influential rivals was primarily due to such collusion with high officials.

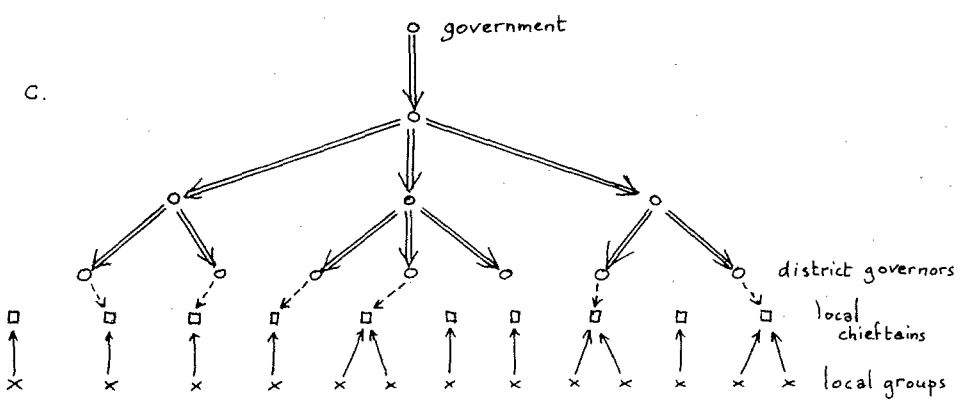
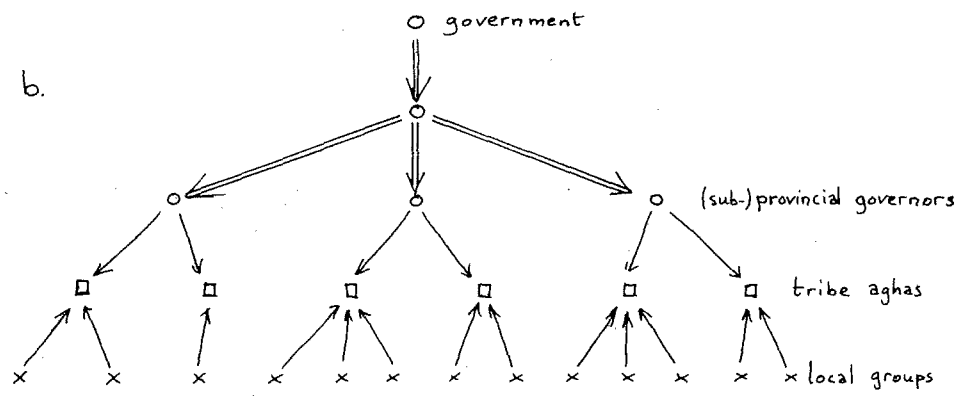
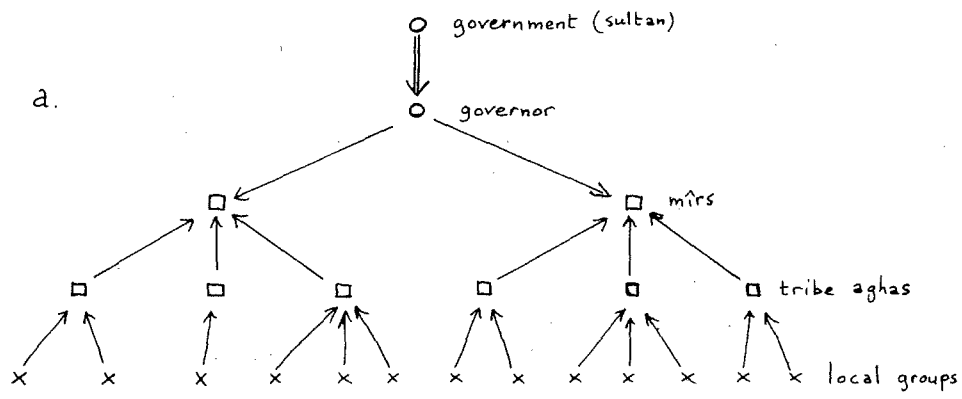
In Turkey, friendship with government officials is not the only way in which aghas may (attempt to) derive power from the state. There are free elections, both for parliament and senate and for the office of mayor (in towns and central villages). Each province elects its own Members of Parliament (and Senate). Some provinces are so small that the personal following of some aghas or shaikhs, or else of a coalition of aghas, may be sufficient to vote them into parliament. Once they are in parliament, they have the possibility to do much for their followers. They may, for instance, ensure that roads, irrigation, running water, electricity, schools etc., desired scarce goods, reach the villages of their followers rather than those of others. And they use their influence as parliamentarians in the capital to take care of the legal (and business) interests of their supporters. Villagers who are in serious trouble sometimes go to Ankara to ask "their" M.P. to do something about it (of course, those who have local influence to wield receive preferential treatment, but others too can make a claim to such assistance). The elected mayor has also, though to a lesser extent, spoils to offer to his supporters. Both have, through their position, great possibilities of increasing their local power. For this reason election time is a period of intense political struggle. Dormant conflicts are revived, new ones break out, traditional rivalries receive new impulses.

Kurdish society seems to become more "tribal" in such periods. Usually it takes more than a year before the tension generated by the elections dissipates.

III. o A few remarks to conclude this chapter

Around 1500 Kurdistan, as described above, consisted of a number of emirates, the autonomy of which fluctuated with the strength of the surrounding empires. These emirates resembled in many respects (organization and stratification) the larger states around them. There was a subject, tax-paying reaya class (peasants, craftsmen, merchants), including many non-Kurdish elements, and a "military" class of tribesmen. The latter were organized in a number of confederations of tribes, and the sources suggest that corporate action at the level of the confederation was not uncommon. At least some mîrs had an armed retinue whose loyalties to them were stronger than any tribal solidarity. Loyalty to the mîrs was certainly not restricted to his retinue alone: it was one of the factors (maybe even the most important one) that kept the emirates together. The fact that the rulership of individual mîrs might at times be questioned, but that the institution as such was not, may be related to the tradition of divinely sanctioned kinship in the Middle East: the concept of the supreme ruler was present in everybody's education and did not need further justification. The Ottoman conquest left most of the emirates intact, and consolidated the positions of the then ruling families.

In the 19th century, the administrative network of the Ottoman state was refined, and the emirates were abolished. Indirect rule continued to be practised, however, but on lower levels. In this period, chieftains of large tribes competed with each other for a following among the tribesmen and for power derived from the state. Some chieftains acquired powers such as previously no tribal chieftain had ever had, due to the backing up of their positions by an increasingly strong state apparatus. The typical political units of this period are the large tribes. The sources mention corporate action of single



○ government officials
 □ "traditional" chieftains

⇄ delegation of power within state bureaucracy

⇄ delegation of (limited) power by indirect rule

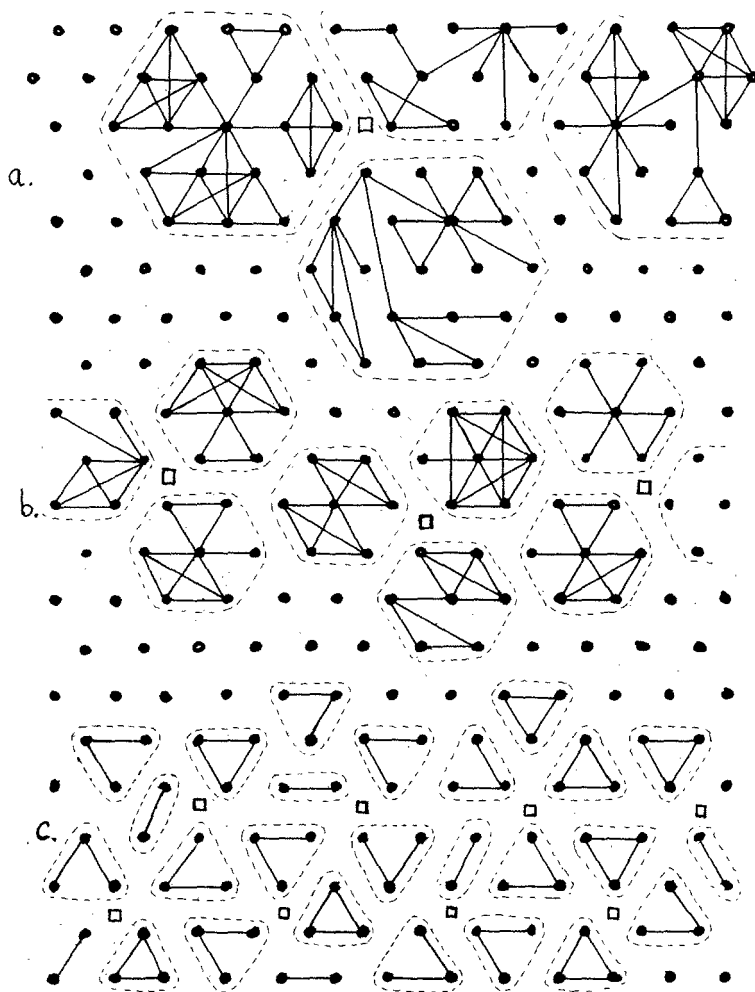
↑ recognition of authority, loyalty

Fig 6 Growth of the administrative network and the breaking up of large autonomous units in the periphery

tribes but rarely of larger groups such as previously seen. The only exception is action led by shaikhs, the only authorities enjoying the loyalties of (sections of) more than one tribe. (see the next chapter, especially sections h and o).

As in this century central state control increased further, great tribal chieftains ceased to exist. Several tribes still recognize a paramount chieftain, but he has lost his utility, he has no special functions any more. Large tribes no longer act as corporate units; only the village (the administrative unit par excellence) and the bavik (shallow lineage) do so occasionally. It is especially the village agha and the mezin (elder) of a bavik who are seen to perform political functions. This gradual atomization of Kurdish society is schematically represented in Figs. 6 and 7. As the administrative network becomes denser, the autochthonous units become smaller, and important political functions are performed by chieftains of lower levels. Concomitantly, organization becomes less complex. For large tribes or confederations (stage b) it was useful to have a ruling lineage that did not belong to any of the tribe's sections, and a retinue was often imperative. In the small tribes, clans and lineages that are now the basic political units, the chieftain is often a relative of the commoners. Where such a chieftain receives strong state support, and his position is backed up by coercive powers (as was the case with some chieftains in Iraq under British occupation) he may assume a tyrannical rule even over his relatives. In cases where less power is delegated, and only informally, the chieftain is more a *primus inter pares*. The latter is now generally the case, and has long been the case with the settled or semi-nomadic tribes of the mountainous regions.

Kurdish society has thus, during the past five centuries, passed through what are generally recognized as crucial stages in social evolution: tribe, chiefdom and (proto-) state, but in descending order. This reverse evolution of Kurdish political institutions is an immediate consequence of the development of the political institutions of the states into which Kurdistan was incorporated.



□ government representative ● local group, lineage, etc.
 Fig. 7 As the administrative network is refined, local units become smaller and less complex

It forms an interesting parallel to the processes of economic underdevelopment that are almost universally seen to occur in the periphery of developing economies. As authors as Stavenhagen and Frank have convincingly argued¹⁸⁶, the backward, quasi-feudal economies of Latin

America's peripheral agricultural regions are not remnants of a less developed past, but were brought about precisely by the development of the economic centres. Political institutions in the periphery even more clearly undergo a similar influence from the political centre (at any rate, they did in Kurdistan). With some exaggeration one might even speak of "tribalization".

Another process of formation of (quasi-) tribal units, in which the state is more directly involved is the organizing of militias, frontier-guards and the like. Somewhat related is the practice (especially frequent in Iran) of breaking up and resettling tribes¹⁸⁷. The units thus formed, were of heterogeneous origins but in the course of a few generations more homogeneous sections developed within these units, partly as a consequence of endogamy. Many large tribes may owe their existence to similar developments.

CHAPTER IV

Shaikhs: mystics, saints and politicians

IV. a Introductory remarks

In the sections on tribal leadership (especially section II.e), it has been argued that aspirants to power within the tribal domain rarely depend on their personal capacities alone. Not only do many employ retainers (a mild term for hired thugs) to give substance to their claims to respect and influence, and do they ally themselves with other contenders for power when such is opportune; they also deftly employ whatever external sources of power they may find. The last cannot be called a typically Kurdish phenomenon; it is one of the few that probably occur in all tribal societies, as well as many others. Nor is the range of external power sources significantly different from one society to the other; they can generally be subsumed under the headings of God and the State¹. Rare indeed are the individuals that rise to prominence in their own societies without having had recourse to at least one of these two external power sources. The greatest Kurdish leader of this century, Mela Mistefa Barzanî, made ample use of both, and to a slightly lesser degree the same can be said of his main rival, Celal Talebanî.

In the preceding chapter the relations between tribal politics and those of surrounding states were discussed; this chapter will deal with that part of the religious sphere that has the greatest political significance. There are several ways in which a person may derive political and economic leverage from association with the Divine. This is done most successfully in Kurdistan by the shaikhs. This chapter therefore deals in the first place with these popular saints and religious leaders, and with the dervish orders in which their followers are organized.

By way of introduction something has to be said of the context in which claims to association with the Divine have to be made: Islam and the roles it recognizes.

God incarnate

The most direct way to derive power from God would be, of course, to claim to be God. This is a rather risky affair however; even for the mystic who has attained union with the Divine it is wiser not to say so aloud, as the fate of the illustrious Mansur al-Hallaj showed². For the orthodox muslim, associating oneself so directly with God is shirk ("polytheism"), the gravest sin. Among the sunnites therefore nobody has ever seriously made this claim³. The heterodox Safavid shaikhs Junaid and Isma'il (who became shah of Iran), however, made precisely this claim, with great success. (see p. 164, 167). Of the present heterodox sects, the Ahl-e Haqq hold that God and several of his emanations have been incarnate in human bodies several times, and may also temporarily take possession of the bodily vehicle of a living human being.

Several great religio-political leaders of this sect were reputed to possess such a "divine spark". Seyyid Berake (who lived in Tûtşamî, west of Kirmanşah, early 19th century) was probably the most ambitious and successful example in recent times. He reputedly functioned as the bodily vehicle for several divine emanations, played a regionally prominent political role, and managed even to manipulate the entire Ahl-e Haqq cosmology to suit his political

among the pious Kurds to identify these two categories.

Mahdi

As I intend to limit the discussion of this chapter to sunni muslim Kurds I shall not go into the concepts of imam, bab, and others that are mainly relevant for shiism and extremist heterodox sects. But there is one that deserves discussion, because it provides, at least theoretically, a great potential for the mobilization of masses: the concept of Mahdi (messiah). This, again, is one for which no basis is to be found in the Koran. It originated in popular belief, and became ultimately accepted in official Islam, and incorporated in islamic speculative philosophy⁸ (Thus it followed the opposite way from concepts such as ghawth, which originated in speculative philosophy and then gradually filtered down into popular beliefs). My religious teachers told me that only a few hadith (traditions) deal with the Mahdi, and that, moreover, these traditions are "weak" (i.e. the chain of transmitters is not very reliable), but that the doctors of Islam have agreed that they are genuine. Rather than quoting these hadith from one of the books of collections I shall reproduce here what a Kurdish mela ("village priest") told me of the millennial expectations of Islam:

Towards the end of the times, when religion has become weak, when the pious are persecuted, when injustice rules over this world, a man of super-human qualities, the Mahdi, will arrive. He will be a man of the tribe of Quraish (the Prophet's tribe), and come from Qudus (Jerusalem). He will go through the entire world, restoring justice and religion to it; he will make all people muslims. He will then rule this world for 40 days (which will last much longer than ordinary earthly days). After these 40 days, however, the Dajjal ("swindler", "impostor"; the equivalent of the Anti-christ) will come. He too has the appearance of a human being, blind but of great power. He will try to destroy religion and - due to the power God has given him - will succeed in leading many people away from Islam again. This will be a disastrous time; there will be but little to eat and to drink; the sun will rise in the West and go down in the East.

But then Isa (Jesus) will descend from heaven to Damascus, along a white pillar (one of the minarets of the great Omayyad

mosque in Damascus is called the Jesus-minaret). Isa will call the Dajjal who, hearing his voice, will be frightened and try to escape. Isa will pursue him, and catch him in Qudus, where he will have him put to death. Thereupon it is Isa's turn to rule the world for 40 days (the first of which will be as a year, the second as a month, the third as a week, the other 37 as ordinary days), applying the laws of Muhammad. After these 40 days the gate of repentance (tobê) will be closed: who is not a believer then, cannot be saved.

The angel Ezrafil will sound his horn for the first time, and all living beings on earth will die. For 40 years the earth will be empty; it will rain, a rain that is like sperm. With a second call of Ezrafil's horn all will rise from death. Before all others the prophet Muhammad will be woken up from the grave by angels, and the Buraq (the winged horse-like animal that once had carried Muhammad through the seven heavens) will be brought. He will mount it to witness from above mankind's rise from death, the following judgement, and the separation of believers and unbelievers⁹.

Seyyids

Beside claiming divine inspiration there is another, indirect way of associating oneself with God and deriving worldly influence and power from this association: that of claiming a special relation with Muhammad, the ultimate and supreme prophet, or with his Companions (ashab). This is a much less risky affair than claiming prophetic status for oneself, but not necessarily an effective one, as is shown by the fact that the people most obviously associated with Muhammad, his descendants (seyyid, Arabic plural sadat) are generally powerless and often despised individuals. They are despised precisely because they have nothing to boast of but their descent, the genuineness of which is sometimes doubtful, and on the strength of which they make a claim to financial support by the community.

It is, of course, the inverse relation of value and numbers - which lies at the bottom of the seyids' low prestige. They are to be found all over Kurdistan and, though Arabic in descent, have been thoroughly kurdised. There is a strong pressure towards endogamy; for a seyid it is well nigh imperative to marry a seyide (female

seyyid), so that there are typical seyyid-lineages that exist among, but apart from the Kurdish lineages.

One of the seyyids whom I met told me he belonged to the taïfe of Maweloî seyyids, descendants of a certain Seyyid Ehmed Maweloî. The taïfe now consists of some 200 families, who mainly live near Mehabad (Persian Kurdistan) and are appallingly poor (due to the high concentration of seyyids, contributions of pious muslims are insufficient to improve these seyyids' lot). My informant's father and another relative had left Mehabad for Iraqi Kurdistan, where they now live among the Mengûr tribe. The seyyids were the poorest people of the village, owning neither land nor sheep; they made their living by collecting firewood in the hills and selling it in the nearby town of Qale Dize, and by doing odd jobs for the other villagers. When my informant wanted to marry, there was no seyyide available locally, and none of the villagers wanted to give him his daughter. He then eloped with a local girl and stayed in a neighbouring village until go-betweens (the elders of both villages) had pacified the girl's parents. His parents-in-law now help him occasionally: they give him foodstuffs etc.

On the present condition of the Maweloî lineage near Mehabad I have no direct information. Once, in Seqqiz, I met two of them who were from a nearby village; they too were desperately poor. They told me there were three villages nearby that were exclusively inhabited by Maweloî seyyids, and that there were a few well-to-do families among them, but that the majority were as poor as themselves.

There is a contradiction in the position of the poor seyyid. His poverty invites the contempt most societies bestow upon the unsuccessful; but his birth gives him a claim to the respect due to a descendant of the Perfect Man. Thus there is an ambiguity, an inner conflict in the attitude of most people towards him, a conflict that is often resolved in joking: the seyyid is a favourite - and usually very tolerant - object of jokes, as I noticed at several places.

Not all seyyids are poor and powerless, however; and for those who do have some power and prestige, their descent seems to add to it. The obvious example in Kurdistan are the shaikhs of the Qadiri order, nearly all of whom are seyyids, and who, according to their followers, are superior to other shaikhs because of their blood-links with the Prophet¹⁰.

In a similar way, not a few Kurdish chieftains try (or tried) to give a form of justification to their position by a (sometimes obviously false) genealogy that connects them with great men of Islam - mainly Arabs, of course. Although it is unclear in how far any of these families originally acquired its position through the prestige of its descent - possibly it gave them the leverage to mediate between quarrelling tribes or tribal sections, and ultimately impose their authority - it certainly helped them to consolidate their positions once acquired.

Many great chieftains claimed to belong to one of the following three lineages:

1. Omerî - the descendants of the second caliph, Omar (e.g. the Gîravî lineage, see p. 118)
2. Xalidî - descendants of Khalid b. al-Walid (b. al Mughira al-Makhzumi), one of the early great generals of Islam, who received from Muhammad himself the surname "Sword of God". The mîrs of Botan claimed this descent, a claim which is already mentioned in the Sharafname. Another claimant is the family Zeydan, leaders of the Pinyaniş tribe of Hekarî. The fact that Khalid is reputed to have died without issue seems never to have been an important objection to these claims.
3. Ebbasî - descendants of the Abbasid caliphs. Both the mîrs of Hekarî and of Badînan were said to belong to this illustrious family.

With the growth of Kurdish nationalism the scions of these chiefly families tend to under-stress their real or putative Arabic descent. Thus the Bedirxan family, descendants of the famous Bedir Xan Beg of Botan, derive much prestige now from this ancestor and his revolt against the Ottomans, which they like to present as the first major nationalist rising. Significantly, they now deny being Xalidî! To resume: association through descent with the Prophet or other heroes of Islam is not sufficient in itself to acquire power and prestige in Kurdish society, but it may contribute to the further success of already successful people.

Clerical Functions

Unlike shiism, sunni Islam does not have a clerical hierarchy; a framework for concerted action led by high clergymen - a well-known

factor in Persian politics - is thus absent here.

The highest religious dignitaries are the qadi and the müfti. The qadi's duty is to execute, the müfti's to preserve and develop religious law. In the Ottoman empire they formed a (strictly juridical) hierarchy parallel to, and independent of the civil administration. Until the reforms of the 19th century the entire jurisdiction was - theoretically - in their hands (in practice, especially in Kurdistan, it was often the semi-independent local rulers (mîrs) and chieftains who exercised law; see p.205/6). The müfti could issue fetvas, decrees applying or extending the shariat (religious law) to new situations (see p. 182). A müfti could significantly influence the course of political events by issuing a fetva (as an answer to a question posed to him, as it should be) at a well-chosen moment. Thus the defeat of the mîr of Riwandiz at the hands of Ottoman troops was facilitated by a fetva issued by a local müfti to the effect that anyone raising arms against the Caliph-Sultan's army is de facto an unbeliever, and according to the shariat divorced from his wife (Jwaideh: 171)¹¹.

Especially the qadi's authority (but to a lesser degree also the müfti's) though based on God's law, depended heavily on the ultimate support of the Ottoman state apparatus. Some müftis and qadis acquired riches and power through the shrewd execution of their office and joined the ranks of landed notables in the towns of Kurdistan, but - as far as I know - they never built up a personal following and rarely played a significant role in Kurdish tribal politics.[†] That remained the domain of shaikhs.

Mulla

The only really clerical office (in the western sense) in sunni Islam is that of the mulla ("priest"; in Kurdish: mela)¹¹². The mulla leads religious ceremonies at the village level, and instructs

[†]In the Young Turk period (1910's), the shariat courts came under close state supervision. In 1924, the shariat courts in the Republic of Turkey were completely abolished; the function of qadi disappeared. Müftis remained, but lost whatever influence they had held.

the village children in the Koran. Before the establishment of modern schools he was generally the village's best educated man, in religious as well as secular matters; he was also better travelled than most villagers, since the average mulla had studied (at traditional Koran schools) in at least one or two other places. But nowadays in many villages some of the young people have a better education than the mulla, and many villagers are aware that outside the purely religious sphere his knowledge and insights are painfully inadequate. In two of the villages where I stayed the mulla was a powerful personality to whom many listened because he was really wise. In the other villages, however, many people considered the mulla an old fool. (I do not know whether it is simply accidental, but in the two villages mentioned the mullas were also ardent nationalists, and not very strict in orthodoxy). I never heard or read of a mulla who attained a politically important position.

Shaikh

The last religious role to be discussed is the one with most frequent impact on politics, that of the shaikh (Kurdish: şêx). In fact, it is not one role, but a set of roles. All of the roles mentioned above have at one time or another been played by shaikhs. Their primary roles are however, that of holy man, object of popular devotion, and that of leader-instructor in mystical brotherhoods (dervish or sufi orders). It is because they are the object of a devotion that sometimes borders on worship that the roles of prophet, Mahdi and (in an extreme case) God were easily adopted by them or even forced upon them by their followers. Because of the respect they enjoy, they are ideal mediators in conflicts (which gives them political leverage). Through the dervish orders they are in contact with devoted dervishes all over Kurdistan, and are therefore potentially capable of mobilizing large masses. Many dervish orders exist in the islamic world, but in Kurdistan only two are present: the Qadiri and Nagshbandi orders. All shaikhs belong to either of these. It is to these orders and to the shaikhs that the rest of this chapter

is devoted.

IV. b The dervish and sufi orders

Mela Hesên Hîşyar, who is in his seventies now and lives in Syria, was one of the first to join the Kurdish nationalist rising of 1925 that was led by Şêx Seîd. A strong young man with military experience (in the Turkish army) and a relative of the shaikh's, he became one of the latter's adjudants. I owe much of my information on this period of Kurdish history to him. His descriptions of the shaikh are quite different from those in the Turkish press of those days, which unanimously depict him as a reactionary religious fanatic and as mentally retarded. Mela Hesên takes care to stress other sides of the shaikh's personality: his nationalism and opposition to exploitation. The shaikh once said, criticizing other shaikhs of his own Naqshbandi order who would have no dealings with the nationalists and seemed only concerned with their own interests: "That Şahê Neqşbend has established a gangster ring (şirketê gangster) in our Kurdistan!"

"Şahê Neqşbend", King Naqshband, is an honorific title of the 14th-century mystic who is reputed to have founded the order that still bears his name and that has become the most influential one in Kurdistan. Together with the rival Qadiri order it was the only organization that cut through all tribal boundaries and was independent of, even defiant of the state. It formed a network that spread across the whole of Kurdistan as well as the neighbouring parts of the Ottoman empire. The comparison the shaikh made with a criminal gang¹² is rather to the point. As far as its organisational structure is concerned the order resembles the mafia. There are hierarchical principles involved, but the entire organization is not well centralized; relatively independent regional centres exist and the extent of their influence fluctuates with the vicissitudes of the day. Both have a hard core of active members and a much larger clientele that contributes financially. It was not to these organizational features, however, that Şêx Seîd referred when he called his confrerie

a gang; it was the docility and submissiveness in which most shaikhs kept their countrymen, and the ruthlessness with which they exploited them. Fifteen years earlier Bertram Dickson, British vice-consul at Van, had expressed a similar opinion: "...some of (the shaikhs) are little less than brigands, but their power over the petty aghas is great, and they can usually force them to do their will" (Dickson 1910: 370). The same observer also noticed the intense rivalries between shaikhs of the same order (local centres in the same, decentralized network who were all trying to increase their degree of centrality). In his time the Herkî-Oramar district (central Kurdistan) was in a state of disturbance because of frictions between the followers of the shaikhs of Şemdînan, Barzan, and Bamernî - three Naqshbandî shaikhs residing in neighbouring districts who were involved in a serious power struggle (ibid.).

While Şêx Seîd was apparently critical of the order he belonged to (or at least of the other shaikhs of that order), he and the nationalist movement of which he was one of the leaders depended on this same order to gain a following. Without the Naqshbandî network he could not have mobilized so many warriors; without the belief in his sancticity they would not have fought so fanatically.

It was what I knew about Şêx Seîd's revolt that first aroused my interest in the Naqshbandî and Qaderî orders. It seemed that they could - and maybe did - perform a function similar to the one the Sanusi order had had among the Beduin tribes of Cyrenaica, i.e. to provide the organizational framework that could transcend tribal boundaries and counteract the tendency of the tribes to split into mutually antagonistic sections. Here as well as in Cyrenaica it was a "mystical" order that made the tribes overrule conflicts and act corporately, fighting a war for national independence. Later, after I had met several of the surviving participants in Şêx Seîd's revolt and had studied contemporary documents, I discovered there were many differences as well as parallels between both movements: in Kurdistan the order as an organizational framework appeared less

crucialth than I had at first thought; it was more the role of the shaikh as a holy man that mattered. The revolt will be discussed in detail in Chapter V.

There was another thing about the orders that fascinated me. It had struck me (from casual observation on previous travels, and from the literature) that the orders drew their following mainly from the lower strata of society. This is in contrast to many other orders that are rather aristocratic, even snobbish; therefore the Naqshbandi and Qadiri orders are sometimes labelled "democratic" - which is hardly the most adequate term. These orders are the only organizations open to the oppressed, and I expected that in some cases they might be used by them as an organizational framework in incipient class struggle. Reading Barth's monograph (1953) I found what seemed to be a partial confirmation of those expectations. Barth remarks that when he visited the Hemewend area the miskên "(were) accused (by the aghas) of manipulating the religious brotherhood of Dervishes for political purpose, so as to organize all the Meskjîn (sic) of the neighbouring villages in a movement of resistance" (Barth 1953: 591; see also p. 97 f above). Of course such an accusation by aghas does not mean that the order (the Qadiri order in this case) was really developing into an instrument for class struggle; Barth unfortunately gives no further information or comment. But my interest in the orders was reinforced. They seemed potential vehicles for both nationalist and class action, a most obvious object of investigation for anyone interested in problems of nationalism and class struggle.

Incidentally, I never found out in how far the miskên of southern Kurdistan ever used the Qadiri order in the way the aghas feared. Because of the political situation I could not visit the Hemewend area, and the people from there whom I interviewed did not remember any real involvement of the order in the few clashes between miskên and aghas that occurred later. True, after Qassem's coup (1958), when the Iraqi Communist Party emerged from clandestinity and landlords were attacked by the (partially ICP-controlled) moqawama ash-sha'biyya, the most influential Qadiri shaikh of the area, Şêx Letîf, suddenly appeared to be a member of the ICP - but this was obviously just a political manoeuvre

that helped him salvage his lands from confiscation.

My expectations were rather disappointed during my research in that the orders seemed nowhere to play an appreciable role in nationalism now, and that in the cases where the orders took a position in class antagonisms they chose against the interests of the disprivileged, instead of serving as a medium for their protest. But then, my experience is very limited, while Kurdistan is large. The Qadiri order in Mehabad (Iran) is not the same as in Amûdê (Syria) or Meydan (Turkey), and differences among the Naqshbandis are even wider, from the extreme fundamentalism of some branches in Turkish Kurdistan to the wild extravagancies of the Heqqe sect in Iraq¹³. It is also conceivable that even at the places where I came some covert activity was going on without my noticing it. I am therefore reluctant to extrapolate my findings and say that the orders do not (or not any more) anywhere in Kurdistan play a significant role in the mobilization and organization of people subjected to national and class oppression.

I shall describe below the functioning of the orders, and the activities of shaikhs and their murids (disciples) as I observed them or learned about them from interviews. By way of introduction, some more general information has to be given on dervish or sufi orders in general, and on the history of the Qadiri and Naqshbandi orders and their coming to Kurdistan.

IV. c Sufi and dervish orders: organized popular mysticism

In a study of the sufi orders there are two perspectives from which one can work, and they are not easy to reconcile. One is the critical approach of western scholarship, usually working from an outsider's vantage point, and basing itself mainly on written sources. The other departs from the traditions and practices current within the orders; it takes the point of view of people who believe and follow the spiritual discipline of one of the sufi orders. This latter approach is much less critical and may seem very naive to westerners, partly

because it is not so much concerned with history as it "really" was as with what it means for today's sufi practice. It is basically a-historical: whereas western orientalists show a great fascination with the development of practices and the etymology of terms and the modifications that their meanings underwent in the course of history, the "traditionalists" tend to project present practices and the way terms are used at present back into the past. On the other hand, what they say is rooted in relevant experience, even though their experience may seem to be a far cry from that of great mystics of the past. People interested in the esoteric teachings transmitted in the orders may find western scholarly studies very disappointing. On the other hand it is doubtful whether what is still being transmitted as esoteric teaching bears any direct relationship with the teaching of great mystics of the past, which may well have been misinterpreted.

Ideally, an anthropologist should combine both approaches, a difficult if not impossible task since each of them demands a study of many years. I am aware that I have not by far reached the stage where I can try to arrive at a synthesis of the two; in the rest of this chapter I shall switch rather frequently from one to the other. I made use of a number of secondary works by western scholars on sufism and the development of the orders. As for the tradition within the orders, one may distinguish a "high" and a "popular" tradition, the first primarily concerning the direct mystical experience and its interpretations, the second a complex of saint worship, watered-down versions of the "high" tradition, piety and devotion, techniques of inducing ecstatic states, etc. For a study of the social role of the orders only the second tradition is relevant: that is the one that lives among people and influences their behaviour. This is therefore the one I shall pay most attention to.

The orders represent a relatively late stage in the development, or rather, the institutionalization and routinization (Weber) of sufism. It is only in the 14th century AD that something resembling the

present orders first came into existence; in the 15th and 16th centuries they spread across the whole islamic world¹⁴. At that time sufism (islamic mysticism) had already undergone a long evolution. The earliest mystics were interested in nothing but the mystical experience itself, the experience of direct communion with God or Reality; theorizing about it, constructing speculative systems of interpretation for these experiences, was none of their concern. Generally they lived ascetic lives in desolate places, where there was nothing to disturb their meditations. People gave them the name of sufis probably because of the coarse woollen clothes they wore (Ar. *ṣūf*=wool). Occasionally, they had one or a few disciples; they did not give these any kind of formal instruction but helped them to attain the same mystical experiences themselves. In later times the sufi master became more and more of a teacher, until he ultimately came to be seen as an intermediary between his disciples (or man in general) and God. At the same time, there was a tendency to philosophize about the experience and explain it in terms acceptable to the orthodox. Theosophic systems were developed, and also more or less standardized methods and techniques of meditation and contemplation, so that disciples could in a relatively short time produce experiences that at least resembled the masters'.

Tariqa (mystical path) and silsila (spiritual pedigree)

With many great masters a specific Way or Path (tariqa) became associated. Trimingham gives an excellent summary of what a tariqa is: "...a practical method...to guide a seeker by tracing a way of thought, feeling, and action, leading through a succession of 'stages' ...to experience of divine Reality" (Trimingham 1971: 3-4). Originally "tariqa" simply meant this spiritual progress; later (13th century AD) the term acquired the meaning of school of thought and technique associated with a certain mystic. After a great sufi's death his tariqa remained, and was transmitted by disciples and disciples of disciples (or, rather, initiates, for by this time apparently the Ways had become initiatory: knowledge and techniques

transmitted were esoteric, not intended for general consumption). The chain of transmission of a tariqa was called (in Arabic) its silsila or isnad. A sufi master's silsila thus is the spiritual pedigree linking him with the founder of his particular tariqa. It gives an indication of his status, and is, as it were, his visiting-card. Later sufis took care, therefore, to include as many acceptable orthodox sufis in their silsilas as possible, and to exclude the less acceptable, association with whom might cause them problems with powerful representatives of orthodoxy (sultans, local rulers, etc.). Thus, many spurious links were introduced into these chains of transmission. Moreover, the silsilas were extended back in time from the founder of the tariqa to someone close to the Prophet, who could possibly have received some esoteric teaching from him.

Murshid, murid and ta'ifa

The sufi teacher of the 9th-13th century AD, called shaikh ("old man") or murshid ("teacher"), generally lived in a retreat or rest-house (zawiya, khanaqa), surrounded by his disciples (murid). Originally the murids were very mobile, and moved frequently from one shaikh to the other; in later stages the links with one particular shaikh became closer, the murids had to swear an oath of allegiance to the founder of the tariqa and to his deputy, their shaikh. The relation murshid - murid thus became more central: the murid owed absolute obedience to his murshid, and it was thought that a murshid is indispensable for anyone on the mystical path. This close allegiance to the shaikh and to the (reputed) founder of the tariqa also bound followers of the same Path closer together: they became like one large family, as the name ta'ifa which came to be applied implies¹⁵.

Another consequence of the increasing veneration for the person of the shaikh was that his brothers and sons began to share in the holiness ascribed to him: the position became hereditary.

Once the ta'ifas (out of which the present orders grew) were firmly established they more or less monopolized recognized mysticism. A

person who did not belong to one of the ta'ifas, who did not subscribe to a particular tariqa, would find it hard to be recognized as a spiritual instructor. There is only one way to become a shaikh of one of the existing orders: another shaikh of that order has to lend one the authorization (ijaza) to act as an instructor of the particular tariqa. In the case of sons of a shaikh it was generally taken for granted that at least one of them, generally the eldest, received his father's ijaza. Many silsilas therefore include father-son as well as teacher-disciple links.

Khalifa

Shaikhs who want to extend their personal or the order's influence over a wider area may appoint deputies (Ar. khalifa; Kurdish: xelîfe) whom they send to other places to spread the tariqa and organize the followers. It will be discussed later how a person may become a khalifa. In some orders khalifas may also become shaikhs in their own right they may act as independent instructors and appoint their own khalifas. In other orders that is not the case. The Qadiri order in Kurdistan belongs to the latter category: with very few exceptions, only the sons of shaikhs become shaikhs, khalifas never do. A khalifa's son may become a khalifa again, but he has to be invested anew by the shaikh. In the Naqshbandi order, on the other hand, it is quite common for khalifas to receive the ijaza to instruct independently. It is this factor that made its rapid growth in the 19th century possible (see below, section IV. h).

Another interpretation of the silsila

At present, the silsila is also popularly understood as the chain by which God's blessing reaches the ordinary disciple: from God to Muhammad, along the chain of saints to the present shaikh, and from the shaikh through the khalifa to the murid. At the same time, the very existence of such silsilas that act as conductors or channels for divine blessing suggests that, in order to receive God's blessing, one has to plug in to a reliable silsila, that is, have

at least a nominal contact with a shaikh. As it is still said in some parts of Kurdistan: "Who does not have a shaikh, his shaikh is Satan". This is an idea which, for obvious reasons, the shaikhs themselves encourage wholeheartedly.

Karamat

Given the circumstance that one may only receive God's blessing through the intermediary of a shaikh it becomes desirable to have independent confirmation that the shaikh one has chosen is indeed a favourite of God, so that he can really "distribute" blessing. This possibility exists, for a really holy person, a beloved of God, is thought to have the power to perform miracles, which is the external proof that he is the recipient of "special graces" (karamat, sg. karama, in Kurdish keramet). A great saint's keramet is effective even after his death: physically it is present in his tomb, which may become a place of pilgrimage, especially when the saint's keramet gives him the power to cure diseases or give divinatory dreams¹⁶. The miracles ascribed to a shaikh's keramet are of many kinds; some of them no westerner would call miracles (like curing wounds that would without treatment have healed in the same amount of time, or converting a sinner to a pious life), others belong to the realm of traditional knowledge (such as herbal medicine), others again are based on suggestion or imagination, or even on trickery and deceit. A large number would be dismissed by most westerners as pure accident (such as praying for rain; people tend to forget the many times the prayer was in vain, but remember the few times it was successful). A few remain that cannot easily be dismissed and belong to the category of paranormal ("psychic") phenomena. Some shaikhs (very few, in fact) apparently are clairvoyants or have prognostic dreams or visions (see the miracle-story on Şêx Saîda on p.326). Not unnaturally, once one has chosen a shaikh - choice is hardly the correct term, since usually entire tribes follow the same shaikh - one feels the need to convince oneself that this shaikh is a good one, in fact better than other shaikhs. This leads to a

proliferation of stories about shaikhs' miracles, more embellished every time they are retold, and also to a - sometimes very intense - rivalry with followers of other shaikhs. Examples of both will be given below.

Diversity and basic unity of the mystical paths

Whereas western scholars are usually mainly interested in the origin, meaning and development of the concepts of tariqa, silsila, murshid, and related ones, to the dervishes the silsila is the chain along which an immutable esoteric teaching is passed on. They do recognize some of the changes by which westerners are so fascinated, but find them irrelevant since they belong to the exoteric level; the esoteric - much less susceptible to research by outsiders - is eternal and unchangeable, and only this really counts. (The esoteric, to the usually ill-educated members of the orders in Kurdistan, includes beside the "high" tradition of sufism also what an outsider would call superstitions and pagan survivals). The esoteric teaching must be immutable since God is one and immutable. And since Muhammad was the last prophet, he is the last person to whom the true Paths (turuq, pl. of tariqa) may have been revealed; every silsila therefore leads back to the Prophet.

The fact that there are many different turuq seems to contradict God's oneness, unless they are equivalent Ways to the same End. And in fact, although some uneducated murids may claim their tariqa to be superior to the other ones, there is a general tendency to accept all turuq as equally valid. When attacks are launched they are not directed at the tariqa (the respectability of which is often expressly stated) but at a particular shaikh (who is then said to have corrupted the real tariqa). Several theories are current that explain why there are so many orders, each with its own tariqa; these theories have in common that they are ahistorical. One Qadiri shaikh told me that all turuq are really branches of four basic turuq, each of which was transmitted by the Prophet to one of the

four "rightly guided" Caliphs:

thus Abu Bakr received the Naqshbandi tariqa,

Omar the Kubrawi,

Osman the Suhrawardi,

and Ali the Qadiri.

The Naqshbandi and Qadiri orders do in fact lead their silsilas back to Abu Bakr and Ali respectively. My informant may have invented, however, the attribution of the Kubrawi and Suhrawardi turuq to Omar and Osman to fit his purpose. These two orders do not exist in Kurdistan; in the literature I did not find any indication that they recognize this spiritual ancestry¹⁷.

Another Qadiri shaikh explained the differences between the turuq in terms of the personalities of the four Caliphs: to each of them the Prophet had revealed a congenial path. Abu Bakr was a modest and quiet man who used to study the Qoran silently in a hidden spot; that is why the Naqshbandi order does not indulge in loud recitations and dance but practices silent meditation. Ali on the other hand was a strong and impulsive man who liked to recite the Koran in a thundering voice, challenging the unbelievers, making them angry and by this very means ultimately guiding them unto the right path. The Qadiri ritual therefore is a very loud one, with drums, shouted recitations and dance, and a spectacular show with knives, swords and poisonous snakes¹⁸.

IV. d History of the Qadiri order as an example

The developments in sufism as sketched above took place very gradually¹⁹, and not at all uniformly. It is not possible to give specific dates for any of the transitions. Dates of persons considered founders of the orders are very misleading, since often such a saint was considered the founder only posthumously, and for obscure reasons. Shaikh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani (or, in Persian and Kurdish: Gilani), after whom the Qadiri orders names itself, is a case in point. What is known with certainty about his life contradicts virtually every legend current within the order and in popular lore (especially

in Kurdistan numerous legends about his life and miracles still circulate ; his tomb in Baghdad is one of the most frequently visited). Abd al-Qadir (1077-1166 AD) was born in Gilan²⁰ and moved early to Baghdad, where he became a doctor of islamic law (of the Hanbalite school). There is evidence (see Trimmingham: 41-42) that he was in his early life quite averse to sufism and never really embraced it. In middle age he did receive a sufi training though, and for several years he lived in the desert as an ascetic; after his fiftieth he became a popular preacher - but not a sufi master²¹. The first account that presented him as a popular saint and miracle worker was written a century and a half after his death, and only around 1300 AD there is evidence of a few Qadiri centres in Iraq and Syria. The spread of the Qadiri order across the whole islamic world probably did not take place before the 15th century AD²². The connections between Abd al-Qadir and the order that bears his name in Kurdistan are obscure. An important shaikhly family, sometimes called the Sadatê Nehrî, of central Kurdistan (see the Appendix, table II) claims descent from Abd al-Qadir through his son Abd al-Aziz, who is said to have come to central Kurdistan to teach the Qadiri Way - which is rather dubious. Somewhat more confirmation there is for the origins of the most important family of Qadiri shaikhs in Kurdistan, the Berzencî (Appendix, table I). Around 1360 AD two seyyid brothers, Seyyid Mûsa and Seyyid Îsa, came from Hemedan to Şehrîzor, where they established themselves at Berzenc. They are said to have introduced the Qadiri order into southern Kurdistan. Seyyid Mûsa died childless; from Seyyid Îsa the Berzencî shaikhs descend²³. In fact, except for the Sadatê Nehrî and the Talebanî family all Qadiri shaikhs that I know of in Kurdistan have Seyyid Îsa (sometimes called "Qutb al-Arifin", "Pole of the Gnostics") in their silsilas.

I reproduce below a typical example of such a silsila (as usual, only the most important persons in the chain are mentioned). It is that of the khalifa Haj Seyyid Wafa Salami at Sine, Iran, as he dictated it to me (and as it is recited during the weekly ceremonials).

I write the names in the Persian form that he also used.

The origin of everything is, of course, Allah: that is why the silsila begins with Him. Allah revealed - through the angel Jabra'il - to Muhammad not only the Koran but also its esoteric meaning, and all the turuq. Muhammad instructed his nephew and son-in-law Ali in what is now known as the Qadiri way. From there the silsila continues to:

- 3 Hasan-e Basri
- 4 Habib-e Ajam
- 5 Daud Ta'i
- 6 Ma'ruf-e Karkhi
- 7 Junaid-e Baghdadi
- 8 Abu Bakr Shibli
- 9 Ali Hakkari
- 10 Abu Yusuf Tarsusi
- 11 Abu Sa'id Maghzuni 'l-Mobaraka
- 12 Abd al-Qadir Gilani (qutb)
- 13 Abd al-Jabbar (son of Abd al-Qadir)
- 14 Ahmad-e Rifa'i (qutb)
- 15 Ahmad-e Badawi (qutb)
- 16 Ibrahim Dasukhi (qutb)
- 17 Isa Barzinji & Musa Barzinji
- 18 Isma'il Wuliani
- 19 Ali Qos-e Dolpembe
- 20 Husain (son of Ali Qos)
- 21 Haji Solh Abd as-Salam (son of Husain)
- 22 Haj Seyyid Wafa Salami

This is a relatively short silsila; sometimes much more elaborate ones are given, sometimes even shorter ones. Of course, as in ordinary genealogies, only the most important or famous people are mentioned, but there is another reason why there may be a gap of centuries between two succeeding links in this chain. A person may

get his sufi training and ijaza from a shaikh with whom he has studied, but it frequently happens that he gets a vision of a great shaikh of the tariqa, long dead, who initiates him. This spiritual link is then considered more important than any other, and the persons that were physically / temporally in between are eliminated from the silsila. Evidently, in this way one could also absorb in one's silsila shaikhs who never had any "real" relation with the tariqa, but who have earned a great reputatation or who were very orthodox and association with whom might be a useful protection, a façade behind which heterodox practice may safely hide. The line between an honest conviction of a spiritual link because of a (spontaneous or induced) vision on the one hand, and conscious manipulation on the other is very thin. The presence of Junaid of Baghdad in this silsila may be an example of early manipulation. Junaid, the master of sobriety and orthodoxy, figures in the silsilas of many orders, in contrast with his contemporary Abu Yazid of Bistam, prototype of the ecstatic and intoxicated mystic who loudly gives vent to his experience in unorthodox, shocking language - and who is conspicuously absent from silsilas, although his influence was and is at least as great as Junaid's²⁴. The silsila down to Junaid is identical with that given in quite a few other orders (see e.g. the early silsila reprinted in Trimmingham (1971): 262). Trimmingham, incidentally, notes that Ali was not included into silsilas until the 11th cent. AD. According to the earliest preserved silsila Hasan-e Basri received the tariqa from the traditionist Anas ibn Malik, who had received it from Muhammad (ibid.: 261).

In two other khanaqas (in the same town Sine, and in Mehabad, respectively) I elicited an alternative silsila, where Abd al-Qadir Gilani is linked with Ali not through the above saints (whom sunnites and shiites alike venerate), but through the first seven Imams of the twelver shi'a. This in itself is not amazing, since the seyyids Îsa and Mûsa are said to have been descendants of the seventh Imam Musa al-Kazem, so that this silsila may be thought to represent the genealogical rather than spiritual ancestry of the two brothers²⁵.

For shiites however, the imams are carriers of esoteric knowledge par excellence. It may well be for this reason, and out of political considerations (Iran is a shiite state, and Sine has a large shiite population, though nearly all Kurds there are sunnis) that some shaikhs have opted for this silsila rather than the other one. The Qadiri, especially those of Sine, have a reputation of being very tolerant to shiism; they and dervishes of the (shiite) Ne'matollahi order visit each other's meetings sometimes. They explain this tolerance, so contrasting with the prevailing mutual contempt of sunnites and shiites, by saying that the differences between sunna and shi'a exist only on the superficial, exoteric (zahiri) level, but that on the esoteric (batini) level, the only level at which a dervish should consider things, there is no difference at all.

Abu Bakr Shibli, a pupil of Junaid, also figures in the Qadiri silsila given in Brown (1868: 50-51), as does Abu Sa'id Maghzuni 'l Mubarak (the name as given is obviously a corruption of Abu Sa'id Mubarak Mukharrimi, a Hanbalite theologian who instructed Abd ul-Qadir; not in a sufi path however, but in Hanbali law and theology). The intervening two saints, Ali Hakkari and Abu Yusuf Tarsusi (numbers 9 and 10) however, do not figure in any other silsila I have seen; nowhere in the literature I consulted were they mentioned.

In all silsilas that I collected the two centuries between Abd al-Qadir's time and the introduction of the order into Kurdistan remain rather obscure. Abd al-Jabbar is Abd al-Qadir's son, on whom the literature is virtually silent. The reason why he is included may be that his tomb is so conspicuous: situated at the entrance to his father's mausoleum, it is like a guardian to this popular place of pilgrimage. The next three probably have nothing to do with the Qadiri order: Ahmad ar-Rifa'i, a contemporary of Abd al-Qadir (he lived 1106-1182) was a popular saint in southern Iraq who had a large following in his own time and can rightly be considered the founder of the Rifa'i order (called "howling dervishes" because of their loud dhikr and extraordinary ecstatic states in

which they walk on fire, cut themselves with skewers and knives, etc.²⁶). Tradition claims that there was a relation between Abd al-Qadir and Ahmad ar-Rifa'i, who are sometimes called uncle and nephew (Brown, 1868: 52). In Rifa'i legends Abd al-Qadir also figures as Ahmad's spiritual preceptor, but the historical evidence suggests that there was no relation whatsoever between the two²⁷. Ahmad Badawi (15) and Ibrahim Dasuqi (16) were both founders of Egyptian orders that apparently remained restricted to Egypt alone. They are said to have been disciples of Rifa'i, although chronology makes this improbable²⁸. Why the latter two are included is a mystery to me; they are absent from the other Qadiri silsilas I collected. Ahmad ar-Rifa'i may have been included because of the similarity of Rifa'i and Kurdish Qadiri practices: a very loud dhikr, which is recited while standing, and is accentuated by violent jerks of the body; the cutting oneself with skewers, knives and swords, the swallowing of broken glass, iron nails, poison, etc. (see the description of Qadiri meetings in section IV. i). It is the Rifa'i order, and not the Qadiri, that is especially known for these practices. Brown, in his voluminous work on the dervish orders of the Ottoman empire (1868) never mentioned such practices for the Qadiri order, nor have I ever heard or read of Qadiri dervishes indulging in them elsewhere than in Kurdistan. It is, therefore, not inconceivable that the Kurdish branch of the Qadiri order underwent (later) influence from the Rifa'i order²⁹. There are, to my knowledge, no Rifa'i khanaqas in Kurdistan proper, but there may have been in the past (as some people told me), and there still are a few not far away from Kurdistan in Syria and Iraq.

This silsila (as well as all others) thus leaves it a mystery from where and how the brothers \hat{I} sa and M \hat{U} sa Berzenc \hat{i} received the tariqa³⁰. The Kurdish branch of the order is not mentioned in Trimmingham's elaborate list of Qadiri groups and offshoots (1971: 271-273), nor have I found clues elsewhere in the literature. This apparent isolation from the other Qadiri branches may also account for the peculiarities of the Kurdish Qadiris.

It seems that at least from Seyyid Îsa down the tariqa was only transmitted from father to son (not from shaikh to any of his disciples). According to Edmonds (1957: 70) all Qadiri shaikhs of southern Kurdistan (except the Talebanîs) trace their (genealogical) descent from a certain Baba Resûl Gewre, who is in the 9th generation from Seyyid Îsa. Baba Resûl had 18 sons, through 6 of whom his line continued; all 6 had also arrogated the title of shaikh. The following generations also left a considerable progeny, so that at present there are many branches of this family, living all over Kurdistan, each of which can boast a number of practising shaikhs. The lower part of the silsila thus indicates how the shaikh is related to the other branches of the Berzencî family.

In the Appendix to this chapter, a family tree of the Berzencî shaikhs (largely based on information from Edmonds (1957) is reproduced as Table I. Ali Qos of Dolpembe (number 19 in the silsila) is seen there in the third generation from Baba Resûl.

The relations with the other branches of the family are immediately clear.

IV. e Other saints of Kurdistan

By the beginning of the 19th century the Qadiri order was the only one active in Kurdistan, and Qadiri shaikhs were apparently the only religious leaders of importance.

In earlier times several sufi orders were present in the towns of Kurdistan, as is apparent from Evliya Chelebi's Seyyihatname (passim). Besides, there always were other holy men (also called shaikh, or ewliya, saint), who did not have a direct association with any particular order, but performed the same roles as the "tariqa shaikhs": spiritual preceptor, miracle worker and mediator in conflicts. Some saints who became famous all over the islamic world lived in Kurdistan, where their shrines are still places of pilgrimage. I visited, for instance, the tombs of the following:

- Uwais al-Qarani (called Wêsulqranî by the Kurds): a Yemeni contemporary of the Prophet who never met him, and, accord-

ing to legend, was initiated by the Prophet's spirit after the latter's death³¹. (Kurdish informants told me that Muhammad saw Wêsulgranî in heaven when he made the mi'raj, the nightly voyage through heaven). His shrine near Bitlîs (Turkish Kurdistan) is one of the most frequented places of pilgrimage in Turkey.

- Abu 'l-Wafa (d. 1107), a Kurdish former highway robber who after his conversion became so famous a saint that he was called Taj al-Arifin, "Crown of the gnostics". It was through him that the Baghdad sufi tradition influenced the Turkish popular mysticism of Anatolia (Trimingham (1971): 49/50, 70). People still visit his grave in Siirt.
- A person who would have become very famous if he had written in Arabic instead of his native Kurdish was Şêx Ehmed, generally known as Melayê Cezerî (d. 1160). He was a great sufi, and left a diwan of very fine mystical poetry which is still very popular among the (educated) Kurds. People still tell that when Şêx Ehmed was giving spiritual instruction the stone on which he sat became so hot that women could bake bread on it. His tomb in Cizre (in the medresa sor, the red school) attracts pilgrims, though it is not reputed to have miraculous powers³².
- In the village of Tillo (now renamed Aydinlar) near Siirt, came to live the 18th-century (Turkish?) scholar and mystic Ibrahim Haqqi Erzurumlu whose Ma'rifatname is one of the last encyclopaedic works of science, philosophy and gnosis. From this work it is clear that he had embraced the Naqshbandi path, though he does not seem to have transmitted it to others.

Beside these great persons there were many lesser figures, some of them true ascetics who were permanently lost in contemplation, others ruthless, power-greedy individuals who consciously manipulated the pious religiosity of their simple fellow-men, most of them combining a certain measure of both features.

Most minor towns and important villages have one or more shrines of local saints. Often their names are forgotten and they are simply called "the shaikh". Their shrines are the objects of a devotional piety: people visit them to say an especially effective prayer, or because they hope for cure of a disease or a protection against danger. Some shrines are thought to have general keramet, others are especially effective against specific diseases, or barrenness. These shrines (and also other places possessing keramet; see also note 16) are generally called "ziyaret", (place of) pilgrimage. The visitors usually leave some money, and tie a rag or a strip of their clothes to the shrine or an adjacent tree, but are reluctant to tell why

they do this (possibly because the answer, if they thought about it, would be hard to bring in line with orthodox Islam).

Some of the local shaikhs may have wielded considerable influence during their lives, if only as advisers to powerful local rulers. However, they did not, as far as I know, establish dynasties or send out khalifas, and therefore the impact they had on society remained limited in time and place. After their deaths people may have continued to visit their shrines, but this became an increasingly meaningless pious act.

There were then, around 1800, only two lasting shaikhly dynasties in Kurdistan, and both were associated with the Qadiri order: the Berzencîs and the Sadatê Nehrî.

IV. f Qadiri shaikhs in Kurdistan

Several factors contributed to the greater and more permanent influence of these shaikhly families. In the first place, as Qadiris (and, as they claimed, even descendants of the great Abd al-Qadir) they shared in the prestige of the great shaikh, whose reputation had only increased after his death. He was and is popularly known as the ghawth or highest saint in the muslim spiritual hierarchy³³ and it had become common practice for people on their way to Mekka for the great pilgrimage (hajj) to visit his shrine in Baghdad. Secondly, the Berzencî family (and to a much lesser degree also the Sadatê Nehrî) managed to implant themselves in several parts of Kurdistan.

Influence, power and riches acquired by one generation were passed on to the next, which could consolidate and increase them. Inheritance of the shaikhly status may in their case have been seen as more justified and more natural than with other shaikhs since they were seyids (and even, maybe, descendants of Abd al-Qadir himself), and thus possessed already another inheritable status.

Thirdly, in addition to the functions other shaikhs also performed, they led the only dervish brotherhood in Kurdistan. (The urban orders had disappeared, and the Naqshbandi order was to be (re-)introduced

after 1808). They (or their khalifas) presided the weekly meetings where dervishes performed a collective ritual. The real dervishes constituted only a small proportion of their followers, but they were very devoted and excellent propagandists for their shaikhs. The practice of sending khalifas into areas where the order had not yet spread its influence covered at last the whole of Kurdistan with a Qadiri network that had a small number of local centres: the leading branches of the family. The network was not fully centralized: a number of branches refused to recognize the authority of the central branch at Berzenc³⁴. The Berzencî shaikhs managed to acquire tremendous amounts of land and considerable worldly power, if only because of their influence over tribal aghas and feudal lords. Early this century one of them, Şêx Mehmûd (see Appendix, Table I, nr 10), gained world renown as a Kurdish nationalist leader and anti-British politician, who in 1922 even proclaimed himself King of Kurdistan.

Şêx Mehmûd's revolts

Şêx Mehmûd was at that time the head of the Berzencî family and as such probably the most influential man of southern Kurdistan. The British, who had occupied Iraq in the First World War, planned after the Armistice (Oct. 10, 1918) the establishment of a number of semi-independent Kurdish buffer states between Mesopotamia and what was left of the Ottoman Empire. Şêx Mehmûd was an obvious leader to be selected for a key position in this system of indirect rule. The shaikh was thus appointed as a ruler (hukmdar) of a large part of Kurdistan, to be "assisted" by a (British) political officer. His first adviser, major Noel, with whom there were apparently no serious conflicts, was soon (April 1919) replaced by the strongwilled major Soane, who thought he knew best what was good for the Kurds, and who was known to hate the equally strong-willed shaikh. The result was an anti-British revolt in which all the local tribes (with exception most sections of the Caf) participated. The shaikh set himself up as an independent ruler. It took a large-scale military expedition to put down this revolt; the shaikh was sent into exile. In 1922, however, the British saw themselves forced to bring Şêx Mehmûd back to Silêmanî because the Turks seemed quite successful in their anti-British propaganda among the Kurds. British and Turks

(Mustafa Kemal's nationalist) were then engaged in a fierce propaganda battle for the favour of the Kurds. The real issue of the competition was whether the oil-rich province of Mosul (which included most of southern Kurdistan) would be included into republican Turkey or into a British-mandated Iraq. Kurdish nationalists demanded the creation of an independent state. The British promised (semi-) independence and hoped to regain Kurdish loyalties by reconciling Şêx Mehmûd. The fear of losing Mosul's oil made them overcome their fear of new rebellions by the shaikh: "...we had despaired of keeping out the Turks with our own resources and had brought back Mahmud to consolidate Kurdish national feeling as the sole means of doing so...", the political officer Edmonds wrote in an unusually lucid statement (1957: 304). To the great indignation of the British, the shaikh continued his attempts to carve out an independent Kurdish state under his own leadership, trying to play Turks and British against each other and maintaining intensive communications with nationalists in other parts of Kurdistan. Just over a month after he had been appointed ruler of Kurdistan he assumed the title of King of Kurdistan (Nov. 1922). He had established secret contacts with the Turks, and by Feb. 1923 he was in open rebellion against the British again. His capital Silêmanî was bombed by the RAF and troops were dispatched. In May the shaikh had to retire across the Persian frontier, from where his tribal troops continued to make forays into Iraq. In June 1927 he made his submission to the British³⁵.

Except the Caf (who were not and are not under the religious influence of the Berzencîs), all tribes of Silêmanî district supported the shaikh in these revolts, as well as several tribes north of that district³⁶. The revolts would have been more generalized and much more difficult, if not impossible, to put down if not a century earlier the Berzencîs' virtual monopoly of religio-political influence had been broken. In Kerkûk province the vast majority of the population (80%, according to an Assistant Political Officer's report³⁷) had rejected the British proposal of bringing the province under the authority of the then newly appointed Şêx Mehmûd. When the shaikh revolted, only a very small part of the population there (in a territory adjacent to Silêmanî) supported him. An important reason was that in this province another dynasty of shaikhs had established itself, the Talebanîs, and most inhabitants of the province of Kerkûk owed (religious and political) allegiance to them rather than to

the Berzencîs.

The Talebanî shaikhs

From British sources it is clear that at that time the Talebanî family was the most influential one of the province (e.g. Edmonds 1957: 269-271); they were rivals for power with the Berzencîs. Since the latter often took an anti-British stand, it is not surprising that the Talebanîs were rather pro-British. In the 1920's several districts of the province had a resident shaikh of this family, who lived surrounded by relatives and dependants, much in the style of a tribal chieftain.

A British report of the time³⁸ gives the strength of the family; "including peasants attached to the family, as follows:

- Shaikh Hamid: 700 houses, 300 horse, 400 foot
- Shaikh Muhammad Ra'uf: 200 houses, 50 horse
- Shaikh Tahir: 150 houses, 60 horse"

The family thus commanded some military strength as well. These three are not the only Talebanî shaikhs. The most influential shaikh of the family is not even mentioned in this list: Şêx Elî (succeeded later by his son Mihemed Elî), who resided in the town of Kerkûk, where he was the most influential notable.

Although most of the family's influence at this time seemed tribal rather than religious, it was due in the first place to the religious influence of past generations³⁹. Their position was rather recent. Towards the end of the 18th century Mela Mehmûd, the founder of the dynasty, received ijaza to teach and transmit the Qadiri tariqa from an Indian shaikh Ahmad who had travelled to these parts. Mela Mehmûd, a commoner of the Zengene tribe, then gained such a fame as a shaikh that the paramount chief of his tribe gave him a daughter (or granddaughter) in marriage. Religious status was thus linked with tribal "nobility", which made it easy for his descendants to succeed to their ancestor's position. It is not very clear whether the authority of the family ever went far beyond the large Zengene tribe, nor whether they ever had their followers organized into a regular dervish order (the evidence seems rather negative here). One member of the family, Celal Talebanî (of the Koi Sencaq branch) rose to great

prominence in the Kurdish nationalist movement of more recent times. He was a member of the political bureau of the Democratic Party of Iraqi Kurdistan and became a distinguished guerrilla strategist, and ultimately Barzanî's main rival for paramount leadership of the Kurdish nation. The successful start of his career was undoubtedly due partly to the fame of his family (beside his undeniable personal qualities). Another member of the family, Mukerrem Talebanî, is a leading member of the Iraqi Communist Party and at present (1977) an Iraqi cabinet minister.

This family thus evidently curtailed the influence of the Berzencîs in Kerkûk province; there is a branch of the Berzencî family in this province (at Kripçîne), but apparently it has most of its murids in other parts of Kurdistan (it has many khalifas in Persian Kurdistan!)

A more severe blow was dealt to Qadiri - and therefore to Berzencî - influence when the Naqshbandi order was introduced into Kurdistan, early in the 19th century. This order spread in an amazingly short time all over Kurdistan. Some Qadiri shaikhs were converted to the Naqshbandi path, at other places new shaikhs appeared, who in turn were to send their khalifas into the surrounding areas. Soon a large part of the common people had transferred their pious respect and veneration - as well as their financial contributions - from the Qadiri to the Naqshbandi tariqa, or from Qadiri to Naqshbandi shaikhs. All this is attributed to the activities of one exceptional person, Mawlana Xalid. He had, after an initiation in the Qadiri path, travelled to India where he had received ijaza to instruct and transmit the Naqshbandi path. Upon his return to Kurdistan he instated many shaikhs and sent them out to all corners of Kurdistan.

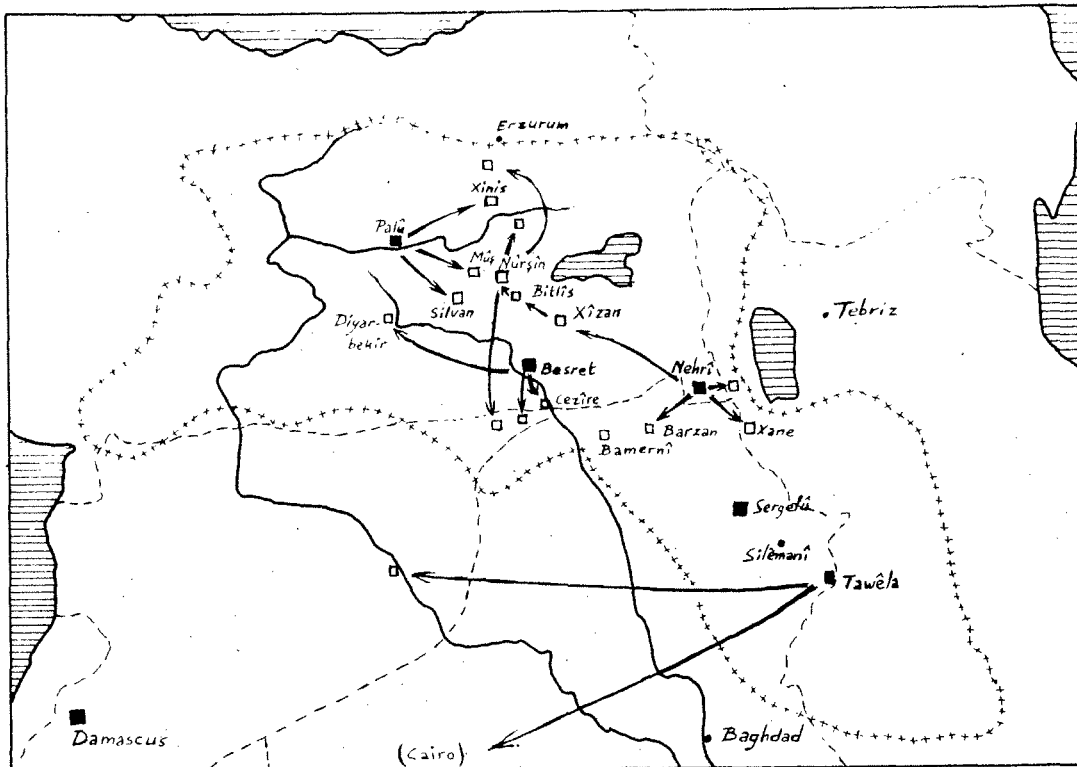
IV. g The Naqshbandi tariqa and the Nashbandi order

The Naqshbandi tariqa finds its historical origin in central Asia. The shaikh from whom it derives its name, Baha ad-Din Naqshband (1318-1389, of Bukhara), was neither the inventor of the tariqa nor the first organizer of the order. The association of the path with

him is however more justified than in the case of Abd al-Qadir, since he is known to have been an important reformer of this tariqa, which already existed in his time and the rules of which had been laid down for the first time by Abd al-Khaliq Ghujdawani (of Ghujdawan, near Bukhara, d. 1220). Baha ad-Din acknowledged this spiritual ancestry⁴⁰, and in many texts of the order Abd al-Khaliq and Baha ad-Din are considered as co-founders of the order. The official silsilas of the order have to trace the tariqa back to Muhammad, of course (see p. 265); they do this through (Caliph) Abu Bakr. The person who brought the tariqa from the central islamic lands to central Asia is Yusuf Hamadani (1049-1140; see also note 30 for his reputed relation with the Qadiri order). Abd al-Khaliq is called Yusuf's fourth khalifa⁴¹. This official pedigree of the tariqa cannot conceal the undeniably central Asian (more specifically, Buddhist) influences in the mystical techniques used. Some of the eight basic rules formulated by Abd al-Khaliq as well as the three Baha ad-Din later added to them⁴² are nearly identical to some of the instructions given to buddhist meditators, (especially in Tibetan buddhism) while they are not at all like what I encountered in the other islamic orders^{42a}.

As said before, in Baha ad-Din's time the path existed, but an order had not yet been organized; this was done - as is generally assumed - by a rather obscure disciple of the second generation, Nasir ad-Din Ubaidallah al-Ahrar (1404-1490). Later disciples spread the tariqa to India and Turkey (around 1500 AD). It is in Delhi, and not in Turkey (or in Mekka, the major center of Naqshbandi propaganda), that Mawlana Xalid received his initiation in the order, from the shaikh Abdallah Dehlawi⁴³.

Mawlana Xalid (or, as his real name was, Ziyadîn Xalid; Mawlana is an honorific title) was a Kurd of the Caf tribe. After a religious education in medreses at Sine, Silêmanî and Baghdad he became a mulla at Silêmanî. Kurdish Naqshbandis still tell the story of how an inspired dream sent him on a quest for mystical knowledge to India. On his way to India, or maybe shortly before, he spent a period at



- - - - - Approximate boundaries of Kurdistan
 ■ residences of Mawlana Xalid's khalifas
 □ residences of other Naqshbandi shaikhs (khalifa of khalifa, etc.)
 → shaikh-khalifa relationships

Map 13 Important centres of propagation of the Naqshbandi order

the feet of Şêx Ebdullah, the head of the Sadatê Nehrî (see Appendix, Table II), who initiated him in the Qadiri path. It is significant that it was with Şêx Ebdullah, and not in his hometown Silêmanî where the leading Berzencî shaikh resided that Ziyadîn received the Qadiri tariqa. His tribe, the Caf, was also in later times antagonistic to the Berzencî shaikhs, and the leading shaikh of this family, Şêx Me'rûf of Nodê was to become Mawlana Xalid's deadly enemy. In Delhi Ziyadîn studied for several years with Shaikh Abdallah; after he had received ijaza to transmit the Naqshbandi tariqa he returned to Iraq (ca. 1808), where he lived alternately in Bagdad and Silêmanî until in 1820 he had to fly from the latter city and established himself in Damascus⁴⁴. He was an extremely effective missionary for the Naqshbandi tariqa: he succeeded even in converting some Qadiri shaikhs to it, among whom his own former instructor Şêx Ebdullah, and Şêx Ehmedî Serdar of the Sergelû branch of the Berzencî family (both lineages have remained Naqshbandis ever since). Moreover, he attracted large numbers of disciples⁴⁵, some of whom he instated

as shaikhs of the order. These new shaikhs in turn became secondary centres for the spreading of the order: they too appointed khalifas of whom some became shaikhs in their own right. Thus a rapidly expanding network was laid over Kurdistan (see map 13, where only those shaikhly families that became very well known are drawn in the map; they represent but a fraction of all Naqshbandi shaikhs in Kurdistan). The influence these families acquired made them later play key roles in Kurdish nationalism. Şêx Ubeydullah, Şêx Seîd of Palû and Mela Mistefa Barzanî, leaders of important nationalist movements, were/are descendants of shaikhs that received the Naqshbandi tariqa from Mawlana Xalid.

As might be expected, the rapid growth of the Naqshbandi order caused much jealousy among Qadiri shaikhs, notably with those who had before been the most influential persons of Kurdistan and now lost that position. Şêx Me'rûfê Nodê, head of the Berzencî family at Silêmanî, became Mawlana Xalid's sworn enemy. He was in league with the clergy of that town, who were not very happy either with the great influence and superstitious veneration Xalid commanded. A certain amount of rivalry and mutual jealousy always remained between Naqshbandi and Qadiri shaikhs.

IV. h Why did the Naqshbandi order spread so rapidly?

Nearly all authors who wrote anything about the orders or about shaikhs in Kurdistan have commented on the rapid spread of the Naqshbandi order immediately after it had been introduced by Mawlana Xalid. None have however tried to give an explanation of this remarkable phenomenon that took account of more than the extraordinary personality of the shaikh. Unsatisfactory as personality characteristics are as an explanation for any social phenomena, the shaikh's personality becomes certainly irrelevant when we try to understand why the order was to play such an outstanding political role in Kurdistan after his death. In my opinion, an explanation has to be sought for in either or both of the following two factors:

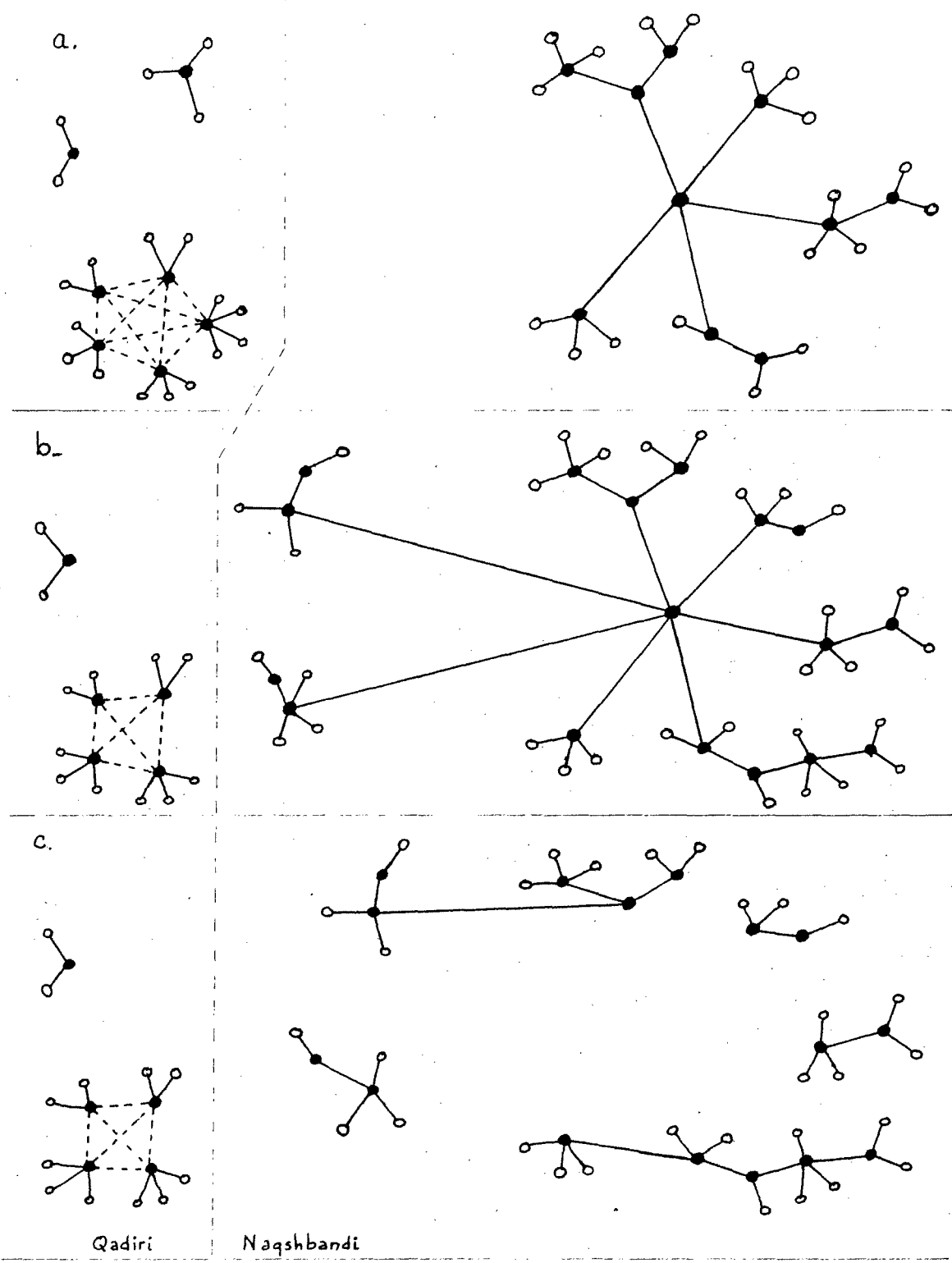
1. the characteristics of the Naqshbandi order (that distinguish

- it, for instance, from the Qadiri order); or
2. the particular social situation of Kurdistan at the time of the introduction of the order.

1. Relevant characteristics of the Naqshbandi order

In the opinion of many Naqshbandis the rapid spread of their order is due to the spiritual superiority of the Naqshbandi tariqa and the moral superiority of their shaikhs. Although I personally share their conviction that the Naqshbandi meditations, especially as practised under the guidance of a really wise and enlightened man as Şêx Osman of Durû (see p.319), have greater spiritual value than the gross techniques of inducing ecstatic states that are practised in the Qadiri order, to me that can never be an explanation. There is no reason why worldly success might be due to moral or spiritual superiority. Moreover, I think that for social phenomena one should attempt to find a sociological explanation⁴⁶. Of primary sociological relevance is, of course, the organizational pattern of the order. It is conceivable that the Naqshbandi order is organizationally more efficient, and more prone to autonomous growth than the Qadiri. One difference that was noted before may be relevant: the khalifas of Qadiri shaikhs do not, in general, become shaikhs themselves, nor do their sons automatically become khalifas again. Shaikhhood was restricted to the Berzencî seyids and the Sadatê Nehrî; the Talebanî family is the only case known to me of Qadiri shaikhs who had recently received shaikhly ijaza. Several of Mawlana Xalid's khalifas however also became tariqa-transmitting shaikhs, that is, they could appoint their own khalifas, who in turn could appoint khalifas again. This possibility was however used to a limited extent only. Most Naqshbandi khalifas did not become "transmitting shaikhs" and most shaikhs appointed only few khalifas. This difference between the two orders can be represented graphically (Fig. 8a). Lineages of tariqa-transmitting shaikhs are represented by black dots, their khalifas by open circles, connected with them by a line. The three structures on the left represent the three families

of Qadiri shaikhs in Kurdistan with their khalfas. As one of these families, the Berzencî, has several branches, I have represented them by a number of black dots. The broken lines between them indicate that their connections are not strong ties of allegiance as exist between khalifa and shaikh⁴⁷. The difference between the graphs of Qadiri and Naqshbandi orders is that with the first the dots on the periphery can not become secondary growth centres, while the latter resembles a crystal that by its very presence precipitates further crystallization on its periphery and may swallow smaller crystals. This graph makes it understandable how the Naqshbandi order could pull some Qadiri shaikhs with their followers to its side and incorporate them into its structure (Fig. 8b). Although the principle of growth is rather adequately represented, these graphs suggest more integration than really exists, both for the Berzencî family and for the entire Naqshbandi order. Soon after Mawlana Xalid's death, conflicts between Naqshbandi shaikhs that lived too close to each other became apparent⁴⁸. At present the links with the centre of the graph are virtually non-existent. There is no generally acknowledged head of the Kurdish branch of the Naqshbandi order, none is recognized as the successor of Mawlana Xalid. According to some, the shaikhs of Biyare/Tawêla are Mawlana Xalid's successors; others recognize Şêx Ehmedê Keftêr at Damascus as the nominal head of the order, in no case has this any organizational consequences. Murids visit only their own shaikhs, and show respect to their shaikhs' murshids (or their descendants), not to any more central person. Thus, the order has broken apart into a number of regional clusters that continued to act as centres of propagation. The present situation is represented in Fig. 8c. Some parts of the network are completely unconnected with others. In fact, very antagonistic relations may prevail between shaikhly lineages. On the other hand, some lineages cemented very intimate ties with favoured others by sending their sons to study with each other and by establishing marital ties. The Appendix gives family trees of important shaikhly lineages, which show some of these ties.



● (lineages of) tariqa-transmitting shaikhs
 ○ (not transmitting) khalifas
 — shaikh-khalifa links

Fig. 8 Structure and phases of development of the Qadiri and Naqshbandi orders in Kurdistan

The partial disintegration of the Naqshbandi network is one of the reasons why the order never achieved in Kurdistan what the Sanusi order did among the Beduin of Cyrenaica: unification of the segmentary tribal society by superimposing a centralized structure on it. But the fact remains that the Naqshbandi organization has an inherent capacity for more rapid growth than the Qadiri and that it permits - temporarily, at least - greater integration. Moreover, locally or regionally some Naqshbandi shaikhs did achieve what the order failed to do for the whole of Kurdistan: they provided a focus for less particularistic loyalties of tribesmen (see the discussion of Şêx Seîd's revolt in Chapter V).

Thus the organizational structure of the Naqshbandi order facilitated its rapid expansion, partly at the expense of the Qadiri order; but does it really explain it? I do not think so. In fact, this organizational structure is not unique for this order; it is rather the Qadiri reluctance to make anyone a shaikh who is not a shaikh's son that is special. The Naqshbandi tariqa as well as other turuq have been represented in Kurdistan before by some shaikhs,⁴⁹ but this never gave rise to the development of the order into a network that encompassed the whole of Kurdistan or considerable parts of it. The conclusion seems inevitable that something in the social situation must have changed, which suddenly facilitated the spread of the order and/or the proliferation of shaikhs.

2. Socio-political changes in Kurdistan (early 19th century)

It is not difficult to find a suggestion of what this change may have been: the first half of the 19th century was a period of great upheaval and important political changes in Kurdistan, especially in those parts that belonged to the Ottoman Empire (see also p. 220 ff.). Rich, whom I had occasion to quote many times already was an exponent of one of these important changes (that carried the others in its wake): the penetration of European imperialism. From 1808 to 1821 he was the Resident (balyoz) of the British East

India Company at Baghdad⁵⁰. It is of course not a coincidence that he is our best contemporary source on Kurdistan in that period. He was soon to be followed by a long series of European explorers of Kurdistan, most of whom had beside their missionary or scientific concerns also the commercial and political interests of their respective countries as their charges. The christian missionaries especially left a deep imprint; they stayed longer than the others, and their actions - among which the building of (fortress-like) churches and schools - were more conspicuous. Rumours and fears that the European powers (mainly Britain, France and Russia), whose great influence on the Ottoman administration did not pass unnoticed, were allying themselves with the local christian groups (in an obvious identity of interests) against the muslims⁵¹ led inevitably to an exacerbation of the tension between Kurds and the christian groups of Kurdistan. In such circumstances it is evident that religious leaders, by manipulating anti-christian and anti-foreign feelings, can easily gain influence. That is exactly what happened.

These developments were closely interrelated with another one: the destruction of the semi-independent Kurdish emirates (German officers helped the Ottoman army on a few occasions to accomplish this⁵²). Since the incorporation of Kurdistan into the Ottoman Empire (early 16th century) the Ottomans had pursued a policy of indirect rule over large parts of Kurdistan through local dynasties (see Chapter III). In the 17th and 18th centuries central control had weakened rather than increased, but early in the 19th century the sultans - beginning with Mahmud II (1808-1839) - introduced a series of military and administrative reforms which aimed at centralization and direct rule. Centrally appointed governors broke the power of the dynasties one by one. With these dynasties (who had kept relatively large territories together under their powerful and severe, but generally just rule) order and security also disappeared. The emirates fell apart into many quarrelling tribes led by petty chieftains who were all equally eager to fill as much as possible of the power vacuum

left by the departure of the mîrs. The harsh, but reliable rule of the mîrs made place for lawlessness and insecurity. The entire country became haunted by feuds and tribal disputes. The Ottoman administration was as yet not capable of restoring equilibrium: chieftains resented its presence, and for the commoners it was too much a foreign institution to be trusted. The only thing the Ottoman officials could do was to execute, imprison or send into exile the chieftains that made too much trouble. Pacification, however, is not the same thing as restoring peace. In such periods of crisis and anomy an understandable and common response of people is to (re-) turn to religion in order to find there the peace and security that is so lacking in worldly daily life.

As noted several times before, shaikhs are the only indigenous, non-governmental authorities who are generally outside the tribal organization and are, therefore, capable of playing a mediatory, tension-reducing role. In such a period of sudden tribal antagonisms and rampant power rivalries there is a desperate need for shaikhs, the only ones who may check complete chaos. And shaikhs - except the few who have exclusively other-worldly interests - are only too eager to make use of such situations in order to further extend their own influence. The unrivalled description of such political manipulation by a shaikh is "The tale of Suto and Tato", a true story told to Nikitine by the scribe of the shaikh in question (Mihemed Sidîq of Nehrî), and translated in Nikitine and Soane (1923).

But of course shaikhs are not always automatically available when and where needed most. They may seem God-sent, but there is always an human agent involved. The agent in this case was Mewlana Xalid, who had come at a fortuitous time (arrival from India to Iraq in 1808, death at Damascus in 1826). The power of most mîrs was already waning when he started his propaganda, but a few emirates experienced a last period of splendour: Botan, Hekarî, Baban, and Soran (see p.221f). At that time the need for shaikhs thus does not seem to have been very pressing. Where mîrs ruled, law and order (the mîr's law and order, not the Ottomans') generally prevailed, as several

reports make clear⁵³. And, indeed, the first generation of shaikhs, sent out by Mewlana Xalid himself, do not seem to have had the enormous influence that their sons were to acquire.

Central Kurdistan was "opened up" by missionaries from 1835 on, after Reshid Muhammad Pasha, at the head of a large body of Ottoman troops, had suppressed Mihemed Paşa "Mîrî Kor" of Riwandiz, and the ambitious and tyrannical, but effective Muhammad Pasha "Inje Bayraqdar" had been appointed vali (governor) of Mosul province (which included most of central and southern Kurdistan). Muslim - christian relations in Kurdistan now grew rapidly worse. In 1843 Kurds of the Botan emirate invaded the Tiyarî district (populated by tribal Nestorian christians), killed nearly 10,000 men and carried many women and children away as slaves⁵⁴. As even Layard admitted this massacre was at least partly provoked by the construction of a fortress-like school and boarding-house by American missionaries⁵⁵. But Layard blamed especially for the anti-christian feeling among the Kurds of Botan the fanatical Şêx Taha who lived at the court of Bedr Xan Beg, the mîr of Botan⁵⁶.

Meanwhile the subjugation of semi-independent Kurdish rulers was continuing at full pace. In 1834 the mîr of Riwandiz was taken prisoner. Behdînan, which had been conquered by him, did not regain autonomy but was from then on ruled directly by the vali of Mosul (who did not prevent, but even incited tribal strife in a deliberate divide-and rule policy). The German Von Moltke accompanied in 1839 Ottoman military campaigns that reduced a number of minor Kurdish rulers. In 1845 the Ottomans, urged by British protests at the atrocities against the Nestorians by Bedr Xan Beg's Kurds managed - be it with great difficulties - to subdue this powerful ruler and his ally Nûrullah Beg of Hekarî. Finally, in 1847, the last Baban ruler, Ehmed Paşa, was defeated militarily by the vali of Baghdad. In the general chaos and lawlessness that followed the destruction of the emirates the shaikhs flourished. Whereas previously none of the shaikhs of whom we know was predominantly a political leader,

from this period on nearly all important political leaders in Kurdistan were shaikhs or at least belonged to shaikhly families. A closer look at the most important shaikhly families of Kurdistan shows that their political ascendancy closely followed the collapse of the emirates (see also the Appendix for more details).

1. The Sadatê Nehrî. For some time already the mîr of Şemdînan and these shaikhs seem to have exercised a form of double rule in this district (south of Hekarî)⁵⁷. Şêx Seyyid Taha I became quite influential in the emirate of Botan by playing on the religious emotions of the Kurds and inciting them against the christians. After the capture of Bedr Xan Beg he escaped to Nehrî, residence of the minor Mîr of Şemdînan, Mûsa Beg. In 1849, when Layard visited Nehrî, Mûsa Beg was probably the last mîr who had not formally subjected himself to the Turks. His position was precarious however, and he was losing his influence to Seyyid Taha (Layard 1853, I: 376). In the time of Taha's son Ubeydullah all worldly power had passed into the hands of the shaikh⁵⁸, who came to rule over a large territory. In the late forties there was another new authority rapidly gaining influence to the south of Şemdînan: the new chief of the Zîbarî tribe, Nemet Axa. Formerly this tribe had belonged to the emirate of Behdînan, but when Nemet Axa succeeded his father it was the vali of Mosul who sent him a cloak of investiture (and thus formally made him into a vassal; this is, incidentally, the earliest example that I found of such a relation of indirect rule where a tribal chieftain is involved, not a mîr). This chief rapidly imposed his power on neighbouring tribes as well⁵⁹, and even on parts of Şemdînan. Chiefs of other tribes paid tribute to the vali of Mosul through him. It was possibly to counter the rise of Nemet Axa that Seyyid Taha dispatched his khalifa Ebdurrehman Barzanî (also known as Tacedîn) to the village of Barzan in the Zîbarî territory. Ever since, until the present day, the shaikhs of Barzan and the aghas of the Zîbarî have been sworn enemies.

2. Barzan is located at the southern edge of the Zîbarî country, bordering on the territories of other, minor tribes: an ideal spot for a shaikh to establish himself, physically between groups between which he might mediate to settle conflicts. Soon the Zîbarî aghas saw the Barzanî shaikhs as their most dangerous rivals; the history of Barzan is largely one of wars between the shaikhs and the Zîbarî aghas. It is significant that by 1910, however, the main rivals of the then shaikh of Barzan, Ebdusselam II, were apparently not the Zîbarî aghas but two other shaikhs: Mihemed Sidîq of Nehrî and Behadîn (?) of Bamernî⁶⁰. I have not been able to trace the latter's origins. He was also a Naqshbandi shaikh and (in the words of a British political officer) had "a great spiritual influence throughout the hills, which he to a certain extent, and his son Rauf to a greater extent, have used to further their own private ends, and enrich themselves at the expense of the Christians"⁶¹. Badger, who wrote extensively on the political intrigues in the Behdînan district after the dissolution of the emirate, did not mention any shaikh. The rise of both shaikhly families there thus post-dates the fall of the emirate with some time.
3. A strong point in favour of the hypothesis is that not only the Naqshbandi shaikhs but also the old Qadiri shaikhly family of Berzencî achieved its most significant political power only after the eclipse of the Baban emirate. For, as Edmonds informs us (1957: 73/4), it was not Mewlana Xalid's jealous rival Şêx Me'rûf but his son Kak Ehmed who achieved great prominence and from whom dates the leading role the family played in the area's politics. Its ascendancy thus coincided pretty well with the decay and collapse of Baban rule.

A directly related fact is that all shaikhly families who achieved some political prominence in the past century resided and had their followers in the parts of Kurdistan with the highest degree of "trib-ality", i.e. areas inhabited by small tribes with a high incidence

of blood feud and other tribal conflicts. Among large tribes with a strong leadership (such as the Caf, who never came under the influence of the Berzencîs and most of the time even opposed them⁶²), and in the purely feudal areas (such as the plains of Diyarbekir and Erbîl), where tribal conflicts do not or very little occur, no shaikhs of great influence ever arose. This seems to contradict the observation that shaikhs often recruit their most devoted followers from the most exploited, the lowest strata of society, notably from among the non-tribal peasantry. The shaikhs of Barzan became the champions of the exploited, non-tribal peasantry against the Zîbarî (and other) aghas. As Barth noted, the Hemewend aghas were afraid the miskên might use the Qadiri order to organize themselves against them. I found also that the most active and devoted dervishes were generally small or landless peasants, lumpen-proletarians or petty craftsmen. It might be thought therefore that the "feudal" areas, with a large population of exploited peasants, are ideal places for shaikhs to settle and mobilize a following. However, these low-class followers are of little importance in the rise to power of a shaikh (with the possible exception of the Barzanî shaikhs). Virtually all shaikhs are rather aristocratic: they deal preferably with tribal chieftains. Manipulation of these chieftains and their conflicts is the most effective way of manipulating entire tribes, and this is the course usually taken. The great shaikh Ubeydullah of Nehrî, for instance, had much power because many chieftains (and therefore, entire tribes) owed him allegiance; the same was true for Şêx Mehmûd Berzencî. Frequently shaikhs marry daughters of tribal chieftains; for the shaikh this means a recognition of his high status, for both parties it is some guarantee (not a reliable one, however) that they will not treat each other too ruthlessly in power rivalries and will assist each other against third parties. Once a shaikh's power has been established, and a network of local groups of followers who meet regularly has developed, this existing network may conceivably be used by members of the order for other purposes, even for class-based action. This is, however, not a factor in the

establishing of the shaikh's power. Moreover, it is hard to believe that the shaikhs would allow their murids to transform the order into a means of class struggle. Şêx Letîf Berzencî himself, the murshid of Barth's revolutionary miskên, was one of the biggest land-owners of the province.

A third important socio-economic change that took place somewhat later, was to consolidate the position of a number of influential shaikhly families: the land registration (tapu). This was one of the major administrative reforms introduced in the Ottoman empire, in the second half of the 19th century (see Chapter III, section 1). It was the aghas, shaikhs, rich merchants and local government officials who profited from this measure. They were the persons with whom the tapu officials came into contact, and they managed to have most land registered in their own names. The lands that shaikhs acquired in this way were supplemented by land grants from followers. It had been age-old practice to endow land for pious foundations (vaqf): the proceeds of the land (or a part thereof) were to pay for the upkeep of a mosque, shrine, etc. (see p. 184). Shaikhs who were granted vaqf lands usually treated them as their privately owned lands. Thus the Berzencî shaikhs became some of the richest landowners in the Silêmanî district. Their riches in turn increased their political power.

The argument of this section may be summarized as follows: Due to Mewlana Xalid's proselytizing activities, the number of shaikhs in Kurdistan had increased during the first three decades of the 19th century. Missionary activity and fears of christian domination due to European influence made the Kurds especially susceptible to propaganda stressing their muslim identity and directed against christians. The general chaos and lack of security that followed the decay and collapse (or destruction) of the Kurdish emirates made many people turn to religion (i.e. to the shaikhs) to find the security and assurance that was so lacking in their daily lives. Thus the influence of shaikhs among the population at large increased. Due

to the absence of the strong authority that the mîrs had formerly provided, there was a dramatic increase in the number and seriousness of tribal conflicts and of power rivalries between competing petty chieftains. Shaikhs were the only authorities who, by virtue of their being outside the tribal organization, could bring such conflicts to an end. By doing so they often managed to add to their own influence and riches at the expense of the rivalizing parties. Thus, shaikhs became the most influential indigenous leaders of Kurdistan, and the obvious foci of nationalist sentiment. The land registration gave many shaikhs the opportunity to consolidate their worldly powers and become recognized landlords.

IV. i Rituals of the Qadiri order

Up to this point, I have only dealt with the history of sufism and of the dervish orders active in Kurdistan. In this and the following sections I shall describe how the orders operate at present in Kurdistan.

My first contact with dervishes, on a previous trip (1973), was with a group of Qadiris in the town of Mehabad (Persian Kurdistan). Twice a week, on Thursday and Monday night (for muslims, who reckon the day from sunset to sunset, these are the nights of Friday - the religious holiday - and Tuesday), the Qadiri dervishes of Mehabad come together in their meeting place (khanaqa or tekiye) for a ritual meeting (majlis). There are two khanaqas in town, one of the murids of Şêx Ebdulkerîm of Krippîne, one of those of Şêx Baba's descendants of Xewsabad (see Appendix, Table I, nrs 7 and 11 respectively)⁶³. Only on special occasions - such as a visit by a shaikh from another town - do the dervishes visit each other's khanaqas. Since both shaikhs reside elsewhere, the ceremonies here are led by their deputies (khalifa). I attended majlises in each of the khanaqas several times. I shall describe here the interior of the Krippîne khanaqa and the proceedings of one majlis there. Inside it looks like a simple mosque: there is a mihrab (prayer niche, directed to Mekka), but no minbar (pulpit, as present in

mosques where the Friday prayers are performed). On the same wall hangs a drawing representing the prophet Muhammad, and two other portraits, of Şêx Ebdulkerîm and his grandfather. There is also a green flag with the names of Allah, Muhammad, and the four (rightly guided) Caliphs (Abu Bakr, Omar, Osman and Ali) embroidered on it. All other khanaqas that I visited looked more or less like this. Some have more portraits, flags and the silsila of their shaikh in writing on the wall. In theory a majlis can be held anywhere, even in a private room. But all Qadiri groups I met had a specially built khanaqa, paid for from contributions by the dervishes and other disciples of the shaikh. Portraits of shaikhs, flags, frame- and kettle-drums, and the sharp objects used during the ceremonies (see below) distinguish the khanaqa from an ordinary mosque. Naqshbandi khanaqas are generally more austere. Naqshbandis moreover quite often hold their majlis in ordinary mosques.

The majlis was to begin after maghrib, the sunset prayers. One by one the dervishes came in - those with lowest status first, those claiming a higher status by virtue of professional or financial position taking care to arrive somewhat later than the others. When entering, everyone gave a "salam aleykum!" to those present already, went to the wall with the mihrab and kissed the mihrab and the green flag (a kiss with the lips, followed by a quick reverent touch with the forehead). Some also kissed the wall under the portraits of the shaikhs and of Muhammad. Then they sat down with the others, smoked a cigarette (!), drank a glass of tea (which had meanwhile been prepared by a boy), and talked quietly about the events of the day. When the khalifa entered all stood up, to sit down again only after he was seated. They were sitting roughly in a circle, the khalifa in front of the mihrab; the better dressed people sat closest to the khalifa. After a while the khalifa gave a sign that he wished to start; cigarettes were extinguished, tea-glasses carried away. The khalifa opened with a short prayer (in Arabic): one of the standard prayers for the Prophet and his people, for his Companions and the early saints of Islam. He then continued to invoke divine blessing

on the Ghawth-e A'zam and the entire silsila of the Qadiri order, as well as over the silsilas of the Naqshbandi, Suhrawardi, Kubrawi and Chisti turuq. During these prayers he left some moments of silence for everyone to whisper his own (but equally standardized) prayers. After these prayers all dervishes joined in the zikr (Ar. dhikr: "remembering", recitation of the divine name). Formulas such as:

"yā hū, yā hū, yā man hū, yā man laise allāhū"

"yā allāh, daīm allāh"

"yā allāh, mawlām allāh"

were loudly and rhythmically recited. A blind dervish with a strong and beautiful voice led this invocation, indicating which of the many formulas to recite, and how many times. I had seen this blind man every day, sitting in the street opposite my hotel, and begging. It had struck me that he never indulged in the (moderate) self-humiliation so common among beggars, especially in Iran; here in the khanaqa he possessed undeniably a great dignity, as his strong and self-assured voice sang - in accentless, classical Arabic - the zikrs. He was the only one who seemed to have put on clean clothes for the occasion; the others wore their everyday working clothes. His white turban indicated that he had achieved a certain degree of formal religious learning (it is one of the mulla's attributes). On a long tesbih ("rosary") he counted the number of times each zikr had to be recited (some ten different zikrs, most of them recited seven times). Then followed the silsila of Şêx Ebdulkerîmê Kripçîne, recited by the same blind dervish. The only irregularity in this silsila was that it also included Baha ad-Din Naqshband (which suggests that Şêx Ebdulkerîm also has an ijaza to instruct in the Naqshbandi path, for in ordinary Qadiri silsilas Baha ad-Din is never mentioned).

Then again a zikr (called the zikrî heqq): the dervishes recited the shahada (confession of faith), "lā illāha illā 'llāh" (there is no God but God"), several hundreds of times, standing up now, and swaying the upper part of the body in cadence with the incantation. (on the "lā illāha" bowing to the left, on the "illā 'llāh"

to the right⁶⁴). The incantation alone had a hypnotic effect on me; for the participants this effect must have been much stronger, combined as it is with rapid, rhythmical breathing and movements of the head and upper body. The "lā illāha illā 'llāh" gave way to the shorter "Allah, Allah, Allah, ...". Drums joined in, the bodily movements became ever wilder. By now the dervishes had one by one pulled off their turbans and untied their long hairs (Qadiri dervishes generally let their hair grow long; normally it is tied up and hidden under a turban, but during the zikr they undo it, which adds fierce looks to an otherwise already quite impressive performance). Some now experienced (or feigned) a form of ecstasy, and uttered wild shrieks during this zikr. When, after several hundreds of "Allah, Allah"s the recitation was stopped, the drums continued and the dervishes' movements became even wilder. Suddenly one jumped up, grabbed a skewer (some 40 cm long, 5 mm in diameter, with a wooden head to which short metal chains were attached), and, shouting loudly, carried it around the khanaqa, holding it up, so as to draw everybody's attention to it. Though he seemed to be in a state of trance he made sure the khalifa and I, the foreign visitor, took good notice. He then kneeled down in front of me and, opening his mouth widely and pulling his head far backward, put the skewer with its sharp point on the back of his tongue. Pressing strongly he pushed the skewer through his lower jaw, so that its point came out under his chin. He got up and walked around the khanaqa. After some 5 minutes he pulled the skewer out again, and pressed the wound close with his thumb. There was not more than just one drop of blood. A few minutes later we shared a cup of tea. Meanwhile others had taken similar skewers, bared their trunks and put the skewers through their sides. Another had taken a sword and started beating his bare chest with its sharp edge, inflicting himself superficial wounds. Again another swallowed a handful of iron nails, washing them down with a glass of water. All this - though spectacular enough in itself - was done rather artlessly, and it was evident that there was no trickery involved. Later, in other khanaqas, I was to see more

similar acts: glass was chewed and eaten, poisonous chemicals (desinfectants) swallowed, bare electric wires touched - sparks showing that the wire was live indeed. Or two men would hold the sword horizontally, with its (very) sharp edge turned up; a third would, with bared torso, bend down over it and let a fourth climb on his back, so that the weight pressed his belly deep over the sword's sharp edge. The sword later had to be removed very carefully, and left a noticeable scar. The khalifa would then press the skin together again and put some of his saliva on the wound. Abd al-Qadir is said to have first applied this method of healing wounds thus inflicted. It was his keramet that made the method work, and Qadiri khalifas may apply it successfully because of Abd al-Qadir's keramet, that is transmitted along the Qadiri silsila.

Not all dervishes inflicted themselves wounds. Some only performed a hopping dance in front of the others. Others again did nothing special at all, and just continued their rhythmical movements and rapid breathing. When at last the drums stopped, all sat down and fastened their hairs and turbans again. Tea was brought, and the atmosphere was very informal and relaxed again. After a while one of the dervishes took a frame drum, and accompanying himself on it, sang a religious poem. After a few more poems - during which some dervishes showed again the signs of entering a trance - the khalifa ended the meeting with a short prayer and all went home.

The Qadiri majlises that I attended (at Mehabad, Sine and Bane in Iran, and at Amûdê in Syria) all followed more or less the same pattern. During the zikr the lights are usually subdued or completely extinguished, which probably facilitates entering a state of trance. Though the trance states seemed very genuine (in the few cases where they were not genuine that was obvious, and people visibly suffered pain), the dervishes usually took care to attract as much attention for their acts as they could, uttering loud shrieks before starting. Many made sure that I, the outsider, saw every detail. The most important audience, however, was obviously the khalifa (who represents

the shaikh, who represents Abd al-Qadir, who represents Muhammad, who represents God). The khalifa, on the other hand, made sure that the dervishes did not do themselves any serious harm under trance. If so, he told them to stop, touched their wounds, and smeared some saliva on them. None of the dervishes I saw ever inflicted himself any really serious wounds: vital organs were avoided. The only amazing thing is that no one gets dangerous infections: the skewers, knives and swords used are never thoroughly cleaned, leave alone desinfected. The dervishes themselves believe they are protected from harmful consequences by the keramet of the very holy Abd al-Qadir, which is transmitted to the present shaikh and khalifa. As they say, only after a person has received permission from the shaikh or his khalifa can he perform these dangerous acts. Anyone else who will inflict himself such wounds with skewer or sword, will surely die.

The question why the Qadiri dervishes indulge in these self-mutilating practices can be approached on different levels. The historical origins of the practice are lost in darkness. It may have come from India or Central Asia, as some think, but there is no compelling reason to believe so. The dervishes do not inflict themselves wounds by way of self-torture or self-mortification, nor is this done with the intention of inducing ecstatic states. This seems to distinguish the Kurdish practice from Central Asian or Indian practices, where these intentions are generally present (this does not of course, prove that the practice is not borrowed). A number of rationales of the practice are current among Qadiri adepts. One shaikh called the performing of self-wounding "a very high 'hal' (mystical state), that only certain people can attain". He hastened to add that he never had such a 'hal' himself; it is a sign of special grace. The shaikh, obviously, received other graces. At any rate, this shaikh apparently meant that these actions are done unvoluntarily, that it is divine compulsion that makes the dervishes pick up swords or skewers.

Most Qadiris whom I questioned agreed that there are two reasons why in their tariqa this practice is given such importance. On the one hand, it shows to adepts as well as to outsiders that Islam is the one true religion and that especially the Qadiri path is blessed with supernatural powers (for it was Abd al-Qadir who received the ability to miraculously heal such wounds). Indeed, after several spectacular performances I was invited to convert to Islam now that I had seen how God protects His faithful.

Once I even had trouble to escape an involuntary circumcision: the khalifa believed the performance had been so convincing I had no other choice but to become a muslim. When I refused he wanted to help me do one of the sword-acts, in order to give me additional proof of the power of religion as ministered at his hands. This was not simply joking or teasing the outsider: he put similar pressure on local boys who had also come to see the majlis.

On the other hand, the dervish who dares to perform these acts shows thereby his trust in God and in his tariqa, and thus proves himself somehow spiritually superior (trust in God, tawakkul, is according to classical sufi literature a stage on the mystical path).

This point brings us to another level on which the question ("why?") can be - partially - answered. Not all enter a state of trance, and not all who are in trance go for skewers or sword. Invariably those who do so are the poorest people, those with lowest status in everyday life: jobless, petty craftsmen, petty traders. Here in the khanaqa they can compensate for their low status, and be superior to others - with a superiority that is mainly other-worldly, but in their perceptions not exclusively so.

One of the dervishes I know well is a newspaper-seller - not a very lucrative job in a place where hardly anyone reads newspapers. He is not very bright, and wherever he comes people tease and mock him. Once when I sat talking with some young people he came by, and greeted me. One of my companions, to my embarrassment, made a mocking, rather insulting remark, which visibly hurt him. I ignored this remark, answered his greeting as normally as I could, and made some small talk with him. He then invited me to come to the khanaqa that night: "If you come I'll show you something really good. They (indicating my companions) don't

understand anything of those matters".

The dervish believes that he does these things for God, ultimately, but he wants the other dervishes, and especially the khalifa, to see them too. For what good is it to know oneself superior if one cannot share that knowledge with others? (This is also a reason why I, an outsider, never had any difficulty in being admitted to the majlis).

Twice I attended a majlis to which the khalifa could not come. The dervishes performed the zikr, and sang and recited a lot of poetry, but skewers and sword remained in a corner⁶⁵, and even the signs of ecstasy were very modest. On the other hand, one day when two shaikhs were guests in the Āewsabad-khanaqa in Mehabad many dervishes, of both local Qadiri groups, came to the majlis, and the zikr was the most ecstatic one I have seen. Many performed their most spectacular acts - including a feeble old man who was not properly in trance and well nigh fainted with pain after the sword was removed from his belly.

Shaikhs and khalifas stress this aspect of compensation for worldly inferiority in their instruction to the disciples. My presence was often the occasion for lengthy discussions before and after the majlis proper, between the khalifa or shaikh, myself and those dervishes who stayed. I was told repeatedly (and the dervishes reassured) that, sure enough, there are worldly riches and worldly knowledge and science (ilm), but that these have only ephemeral value. What really counts are spiritual treasures and the science of the heart, which are to be found in the khanaqa only.

The order thus provides an outlet for frustrations, induces a quietistic attitude, and has in general a counter-revolutionary function. This is not necessarily so, maybe: also a number of messianistic movements - about which our knowledge is unfortunately very scanty - were associated with the orders (see below, section IV. o). Most of these movements, however, can only be called "revolutionary" by stretching the meaning of this term. They were all characterized by the absolute obedience of followers to the shaikh, for whom they

would happily have themselves killed: an attitude basically identical to that of the dervish who thrusts skewers through his body.

A last remark on trance states: entering such a state is not so easy for everyone, most people have to learn how to do it; some have strong inhibitions or fears and never arrive. Possibly common belief is correct in assuming that "simple" people enter trance relatively easily and "educated" people only with difficulties or not at all. My impressions, at any rate, confirm this. This might be another reason why it is always the "simplest" people who perform the skewer and sword acts. Entering trance becomes easier with experience, so much so that trained dervishes can apparently enter trance at will whenever they want, and frequently even do so unvoluntarily: trance may be "triggered" by a drum rhythm alone, or by a religious poem, as I have witnessed several times. The sword-and-skewer acts seem to become equally "automatic". Sometimes I saw dervishes who had unexpectedly (?) entered a trance make movements as if they were cutting or piercing their bodies.

A Ne'matollahi dervish told me a rather amusing story concerning this seemingly involuntary inclination to hurt oneself when in trance. The Ne'matollahi are a shiite, aristocratic dervish order who also have a khanaqa in Sine; one of the Qadiri khalifas there has very good relations with these Ne'matollahi dervishes. He and his murids sometimes visit the central Ne'matollahi khanaqa in Tehran, where they find an enthusiastic audience for their singing of sufi poetry. One of these Qadiri dervishes had become a Ne'matollahi, and participated in their weekly majlises in Sine. Once he suddenly entered a trance during a recitation of poetry; he looked around him for something sharp, but since the Ne'matollahi order frowns upon self-mutilation, nothing of the kind was available. He then jumped up and thrust his head violently against the wall; the frightened Ne'matollahi dervishes were too slow to stop him. When he fell back they feared for his life - the collision made a sound as if his skull had burst. When he came to, he appeared unharmed, however; the sound had been that of a crack appearing in the wall.

I witnessed something similar during a zikr in Amûdê (Syria), but I am not sure whether what I saw was not an attack of "ordinary" epilepsy. A young man suddenly started rolling

spasmodically over the ground and beating his head against the wall. His strength was extraordinary: it took 3 strong men beside myself to keep him from knocking his brains out. There was nothing anymore of the (semi-) voluntariness: it was completely compulsive.

Some dervishes are probably "real" epileptics, i.e. their sudden loss of conscious body control is due to some biological malfunctioning. Most have learned to go into trance easily, and their behaviour in these states is often similar to or identical with that of an epileptic during an attack. It is probably due to this external similarity of these two different states that epileptics are often held in high esteem by dervishes and pious people.

The songs and poetry used in the ritual are of several kinds. Some are poems from the "high" sufi tradition (e.g. from Rumi's *Diwan-i Shams-i Tabrizi*), or poems by shaikhs of the order imitating the style of this tradition. Others relate important events from the history of Islam, or the piety and miraculous activities of some great shaikh. I even collected such a dervish song (sung by a very old Qadiri dervish) that dated from World War I, and preached holy war against the Christian nations⁶⁶.

IV. j The Naqshbandi ritual

The majlis of the Naqshbandis is quite different from the Qadiri majlis. Naqshbandi majlises also usually take place once or twice a week, between the sunset and night prayers. I shall describe the ritual (called *khatma* among Naqshbandis) as I observed it in Durû, the village of Şêx Osman (see Table III, nr 3 in the Appendix). The *khanaga* there is at the same time the village mosque. People come to the mosque for sunset prayers, led by one of the mullas who are permanently or temporarily residing with the shaikh. After these prayers - during which, as usual, everybody is lined up in parallel rows facing the qibla (the direction of Mekka) - they sit down in a circle, the lights are extinguished and the *khatma* starts. The shaikh himself is not always present (in fact, he usually isn't),

and even when he is, he does not play any overt role in the ritual. The inner experience of those present is much stronger, though, when he attends - as everybody claims.

One of the mullas, or several alternately, recites prayers for the Prophet and koranic texts, chosen rather arbitrarily. In between there are silences in which the participants recite silently ("with the inner voice") certain suras or ayyats (chapters or verses from the Koran). The mulla who leads tells them which ones to recite; each is recited a number of times.

Then follows a meditative part, the "contemplation of death". In silence the participants are imagining their deaths, or rather, what follows after death: lying in the grave, being interrogated by two angels about one's life. This contemplation lasts 5 to 10 minutes. The silence is broken by loud sighs and sobs (much louder than one would normally cry; I suppose they are signs to the others of how vivid one's imagination is, and how painful the awareness of one's imperfection; also they create an atmosphere that helps people to come in the right mood for this contemplation).

The next and most important meditation that the mulla who leads the ritual announces is the "rabite şêx" (Ar.: rabita = tie, connection), in which the murids present (attempt to) establish a spiritual link with the shaikh. With closed eyes the participants visualize the shaikh in front of them and, when the image is clear and sharp enough, imagine that the shaikh leads them before the Prophet Muhammad, who in turn leads them near the Divine Presence. This meditation takes some 10 to 15 minutes and is usually done in complete silence here. Recitation of some more suras and of the silsila ends the Naqshbandi part of the majlis. Because Şêx Osman has also a Qadiri ijaza, a short Qadiri zikr is added to the ceremony, (Şêx Osman is, to my knowledge, the only Naqshbandi shaikh who combines both zikrs in one ceremony. Other Naqshbandi shaikhs calim to have an ijza of the Qadiri tariqa, but never have the Qadiri zikr performed). The shahada ("la illaha illa 'llah") is said, rhythmically, some 100 times; then a long-drawn and wailing "allah,...", some 200 times;

and a staccato "állah, állah, ...", again 200 times. No spectacular show of ecstasy is admitted; swords and skewers are said to belong to a vulgar and reprehensible conception of mysticism, and have no place here. When the khatma is over it is nearly time for the night prayer. Lamps are lighted, the call to prayer is given, more people come in from the village, and collectively the night prayer is performed.

Beside the combination with the Qadiri zikr there is something else that is different in Durû from other places: the khatma is here performed twice every day, after the morning prayer and after the sunset prayer. At most other places it is done only once or twice a week.

The only other place where I was present at a khatma⁶⁷ was in Syria, in the village Helwa of Şêx Elwan (son of Brahîm Heqqî, see Table IV, nr 23 of the Appendix). This shaikh led the ritual himself, assisted by the khadim (xadim, a sort of sexton, responsible for the upkeep of the khanaqa). After the prayers for the prophet everyone was to recite (silently) some suras or ayyats. The shaikh would say, for instance, "Ikhlass ash-sharifa" (al-Ikhlass, sura 112), and then the murids would recite this sura 33 times, counting the numbers on their tesbihs (rosaries). Thus a number of verses was recited. Since the khatma started well after sunset here, the time for the night prayer had already arrived after this. The shaikh led the participants in prayer. Then everyone sat down in a circle again, and the shaikh held a sermon (fulminating against radio and television and all the Devil's other inventions that weaken people's religious zeal). After the sermon the meditations started: first the meditation on death; then the khadim ordered everybody to close his eyes for the rabite şêx. The latter lasted very long here, but did not have the intensity that is so apparent even to outsiders with Şêx Osman. Several of the murids tried to induce a trance by hyperventilating or by making rapid shaking movements with head or

hands. Towards the end the shaikh's assistant told two of the murids to get up, and the three of them walked around the khanaqa, singing monotonous hymns (in Arabic, which I did not understand). The shaikh also went around the circle, whispering in each murid's ear "Allahu akbar" ("God is the greatest"), upon which they stopped their meditations and movements, and opened their eyes. The shaikh sat down in front of the mihrab and recited his silsila. The khatma was over, the murids flocked around the shaikh to kiss his hands and ask some private questions, or just to take their leave.

The meditations in the Naqshbandi ritual

Several aspects of the Naqshbandi khatma reminded me strongly of Tibetan buddhist practices the first time I encountered them (the label "central Asian" may be more appropriate than "buddhist", since in the other buddhist schools they do not occur or take a much less important place). As I became more acquainted with the Naqshbandi order I realized, however, that they are given a quite different content here:

1. The silent recitation of koranic texts, repeated many times, reminds strongly of the recitation of mantras (in several schools of (Tibetan) buddhist meditation the students are given a private mantra, which they are not supposed to reveal to anyone else, and which they therefore have to recite silently). According to R. A. Nicholson (1963: 17), "The sufis learned the use of rosaries from Buddhist monks..."
2. The Tibetan buddhists also have a practice of meditating on death. There, the emphasis is on the inevitable, inherent decay of anything worldly. The Kurdish Naqshbandis however meditate only upon what will happen to them after death.

As a simple "sofi" told me: I imagine how after my dying my body is washed, wrapped in cloth and put into the grave. After all relatives have left the grave an angel comes and questions me: "Who is your God?" and I give the answer I

know to be correct: "Your God is also mine". He then asks "What is your religion?" and I answer: "Islam". "Who is is your prophet?" "Your Prophet and mine is Muhammad." "In what do you believe?" "In the Holy Koran." After these questions the account of my life is made. The two angels who have written all my good and evil deeds now balance them against each other. If the balance is negative I shall burn in my grave until the day of resurrection⁶⁸. On that day the decision shall be made as to whether I shall go to Hell or Paradise. I visualize all these events vividly, and that makes me reflect on my daily life..."

Among Naqshbandi murids there is less than full agreement on how one should meditate on death. Several told me their shaikh had never given them instructions on how to practice this meditation. I have the impression that many shaikhs have their own interpretations. This may be a consequence of too great missionary fervour in the past on the part of shaikhs who rather had many, half-instructed khalifas than only one or two thoroughly trained ones. This may account for the many other heterodoxies in this reputedly so orthodox order as well.

Some relatively educated murids told me that they meditate on the four questions of the angel only (every muslim is taught the answers to these questions), and on the deeper, esoteric meaning of the answers.

A shaikh in Turkey (Şêx Seyfdîn Aydin, of Inkapi, near Siirt) told me that neither of the above-mentioned are the correct way to meditate on death. He instructs this form: "I am lying in the grave, all alone, without anyone to help me. Only with God can I still have a relation, all of mankind has fallen away".

When I suggested him that this meditation may have a non-islamic origin he quoted me a hadith (tradition) according to which the Prophet Muhammad used to meditate on death every day after his morning prayer.

3. The rabita. Tibetan tantric meditation involves the visualization of the Buddha or of deities from the Buddhist pantheon, and ultimately some form of identification of the meditator with the

object of his meditations. In the rabita the murid visualizes the shaikh and the establishing, through the shaikh, of a contact with the Divine. Again, though this is the basic idea, the contents it is given vary. In the vision of some, the shaikh brings the murid before the Prophet or even before God. More usually, it is visualized in some way how God's grace falls upon the shaikh and is then reflected on to the murid. Many visualize this as a ray of light emanating from God and touching the shaikh's forehead (according to some the light, before reaching the shaikh, passes along his entire silsila), from where it is mirrored into the murid's heart. The moment that this light touches the heart, the murid says a few hundred times "Allah!" - his heart should cry out the Divine Name with exaltation - and experiences union with God. Several physical techniques may be used in addition to produce ecstasy: rapid breathing, shaking of the entire body or only head or hands, etc.⁶⁹

A meditation resembling this one does not occur - to my knowledge - in other turuq; I think a Buddhist influence can hardly be denied. There is some evidence that the Naqshbandi tariqa in its historical origins was already influenced by (central Asian) Buddhism⁷⁰. In its Indian period it may have acquired more syncretistic traits - although in India the Naqshbandi order is said to be the most orthodox (i.e. non-syncretistic) of all orders in its practice (Subhan: 190)

Whatever the interpretation one may give to this method of meditation, it is a very effective one in that it produces the strong feeling of being in communion with the Deity, and has a definite cathartic effect. In no other order is the shaikh so clearly an intermediary between God and mankind. This makes understandable the tendency to deification of the shaikh, or at least to putting him on the same level as the prophets, which is sometimes noticeable among less educated Naqshbandi murids. This is, incidentally, why the Wahhabis⁷¹ suppressed the dervish orders. They did not oppose sufism as such but attacked the saint worship

into which it had degenerated; the idea that there could be an intermediary between man and God was (is) anathema to them.

We in the West generally make a rather sharp distinction between dream or imagination on the one hand and (empirical) reality on the other - even though it is recognized that there are non-trivial relations between the two: dreams may predict future events, vivid imagination of a state of affairs may produce the same bodily effects as that state of affairs itself, as in stigmatization or certain "psychosomatic" diseases. Westerners (and westernized orientals) will generally dismiss a person's experiences during meditation as simply a product of the mind. In Kurdistan however - and, for that matter, in the entire islamic world - dreams are thought to be the experiences of the spirit when it has left the body during sleep. What one dreams has a real existence, at some other place. Against the background of such an understanding of mental phenomena it is not surprising that many simple people do not make a strict distinction between what they perceive during meditation and "real" occurrences, and that they believe their spirit is really brought in contact with the Divine, through the shaikh⁷². It is natural, therefore, that people attribute special powers to a shaikh who can apparently effect this. This goes some way towards explaining why it is especially among the (Kurdish) Naqshbandis that the devotion of the murids for their shaikh is nearly total, and their obedience to him a blind and unquestioning one. It is said of the shaikhs of Barzan that their followers would without questioning even jump off the edge of a precipice if their shaikh told them to do so⁷³. Some of the revolts led by shaikhs also gave occasion to notice the blind obedience with which an entire population followed their shaikh. Several Naqshbandi shaikhs, especially, were in periods of crisis acclaimed a prophet, or the Mahdi (Messiah) by their followers (see below, section IV. o). More than among Qadiris, extravagant forms of heterodoxy

developed in the Naqshbandi order - in particular among simple uneducated peasants.

Orthodoxy and heterodoxy

Both the most strict orthodoxy and extremely heterodox beliefs and practices are to be found in the Naqshbandi order. As said before, in India (where the Kurdish branch of the order has its roots) it has the reputation of being the most orthodox of sunni orders. In Kurdistan also, some Naqshbandi shaikhs preach an orthodox, legalistic conception of Islam. More conspicuous, however, are those around whom heresies flourish⁷⁴. A sect as the Heqqe, for instance, which was established by the Naqshbandi shaikh Ebdulkerîm of Sergelû, is accused of sexual promiscuity and ritually impure practices; the sect established a form of primitive communism in a few villages of Iraqi Kurdistan (see the notes to Table I of the Appendix). The followers of Şêx Ehmed of Barzan were in the 1920's accused of eating pork and drinking wine; his family has a well-established reputation for extravagancies (see Appendix, Table II). More wide-spread than such practices are the heterodox beliefs, sometimes even held by the followers of the most austerely orthodox shaikhs:

- in some parts of Turkish Kurdistan it is believed that on the day of Resurrection the shaikh will put his murids into his pocket and carry them across the narrow bridge straight into Paradise⁷⁵ - a belief that seems to find its origin in a vulgarized and extrapolated interpretation of the rabita.
- Many people in Turkish Kurdistan told me that their shaikhs can fly through the air; they understood this quite literally. One shaikh had in this way assisted one of his murids who was a soldier during the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, so that he could, by himself, take 20 Greek Cypriot soldiers prisoners.
- Some shaikhs were acclaimed the Mahdi (Messiah); see section IV. o.

There are at least two factors that may have contributed to the development of such heterodoxies in the otherwise orthodox Naqshbandi order. One was mentioned above: the meditations practised lead to the attribution of supernatural powers to the shaikh. An other factor is that, in the period that the order expanded rapidly, several

disciples who were insufficiently instructed may have been made khalifas, so that both existing heterodox practices and half- or misunderstood elements from the "high" sufi tradition were incorporated into the order.

Scholars sometimes distinguish two opposing tendencies in Islam, representatives of which are, indeed, often seen to oppose each other: the emotional, devotional, mystical religious practice of (popular) sufism on the one hand and the legalistic one of the ulama (clergy), which is purely intellectual, on the other⁷⁶. In Kurdistan, however, both tendencies are often not strongly opposed, sometimes even combined. One of the most fanatically orthodox movements, the nurcu movement in Turkey (resembling the Islamic Brotherhood in Arabic countries), found its origin in Kurdish Naqshbandi circles. Naqshbandi shaikhs strongly back this movement: many of the (semi-illegal) centres of traditional legalistic religious education are connected with Naqshbandi shaikhs. This may in part be due to Atatürk's closing the tekiyes and persecuting the shaikhs, so that these assumed the only role of religious authority that remained: that of mulla⁷⁷. But also where the orders can freely function there is often a combination of both tendencies in Islam: in Durû Şêx Osman has many mullas around him, and the village is a centre of orthodox learning as well as of mystical practice. Several Qadiri shaikhs also double as ulama: thus members of the Berzencî family at Silêmanî, and some shaikhs at Amûdê (Syria). These shaikhs have among their followers some rigidly orthodox as well as people who worship them as saints and hold heterodox beliefs about them.

IV. k Shaikh and khalifa; relations with other shaikhs

A shaikh may appoint one (or more) of the most zealous and loyal of his disciples as his khalifa and send him to another area to spread the tariqa, or rather, the shaikh's influence. The formal requirements for becoming a khalifa are not many: one has to have a certain degree of scholarly religious education (like a mulla's), and one

has to perform a çille or xelwet, a forty days' period of seclusion, passed in worship and meditation, fasting in the daytime, and eating and drinking minimal amounts at night.

It depends on the shaikh, apparently, whether anything more is required. He may, after the murid has performed a çille, give him the ijaza (permission) to teach the tariqa, and to lead the majlis. Among Qadiris this includes permission to let dervishes cut themselves etc., and the competence to cure their wounds. The khalifa continues to owe obedience to his shaikh. As said before, among the Qadiris khalifas do not, in general, become shaikhs in their own right, and cannot appoint their own khalifas. Among the Naqshbandis this is possible, but it is not at all clear to me under which circumstances a Naqshbandi shaikh allows his khalifa to become a shaikh. It seems to be against the shaikh's economic and political interests, for when the khalifa becomes a shaikh in his own right, he becomes more independent and a competitor of his murshid. In the loyalties of the murids (which find financial expression), he takes preponderance over the original shaikh, who continues to exert indirect influence only. I know of two cases where a khalifa became a shaikh against the wish of his murshid. Ebdurrehman Barzani (Tacedîn) was a khalifa of Seyyid Taha of Nehrî. When he died his brother Ebdusselam succeeded him against the wish of Seyyid Taha, and even proclaimed himself a shaikh. And among the Heqqe sect, leadership has been taken over by Mamê Riza's khalifa Hame Sûr. In these cases the actual power balance was decisive: the khalifa had a power base independent of his shaikh and could thereby make himself independent. This is, however, not the rule: many khalifas were made shaikhs by their preceptors. A relation of respect, allegiance and even obedience should ideally continue to exist, also in later generations. Thus, some families of shaikhs are socially superior to other families, because an ancestor of one family was the murshid of an ancestor of the other.

One of the shaikhs whom I know told me that the intelligence service of a Middle Eastern country once attempted to put pressure on him through the son of his father's murshid,

who worked for it. My informant experienced a strong crisis of conscience, because he felt it almost impossible not to obey this superior shaikh and at the same time, as he said, found it revolting to do so.

No such checks exist on conflicts between shaikhs who are not murshid and khalifa originally. Where such shaikhs live so near each other that they have to compete for the same murids, rivalries are the rule rather than the exception. Rivalries may be so intense as to lead to open warfare, as between Şêx Ehmed Barzanî and Şêx Reşîd Lolan, spiritual leader of the big Bradost tribe (both were Naqshbandis). Fights occurred periodically from the 1920's to the late 1960's, when they were a confusing factor in the Kurdish nationalist war: the Bradost, because of their traditional enmity with the Barzanîs, sided with the Iraqi government⁷⁸.

Most shaikhs are mild in their attitude to their rivals; they can afford to do so, for their murids are much more fanatical in denouncing other shaikhs and extolling the virtues of their own. It is they who blow up rivalries to serious proportions.

The murids of Şêx Ehmedê Xiznevî, for instance, avoid contact with other muslims, whom they consider impure. It is especially the murids of rival shaikh Brahîm Heqqî and his sons who are considered unclean. If one of them has drunk water from a cup, the murids of Xiznevî will refuse to touch it, they consider it polluted. One of Brahîm Heqqî's murids took revenge: he went to Şêx Ehmed's village Tell Ma'ruf, drew a pail of water from the village well, drank from it, and threw the now polluted water back into the well...

IV. 1 The shaikh and his followers

The following of a shaikh is much wider than the group of people who regularly visit his or his khalifas' khanaqa and participate in the majlis. Often an entire tribe considers itself murids of a certain shaikh. Thus, of two important tribes around Mehabad, the Mameş and the Mengûr, the former are "murids of Xewsabad" (i.e. of Şêx Baba Seîd and his successors), and the latter of Xaneqa (a village of another local Qadiri shaikh). As far as I found out, no tribe of this area is entirely murid of Kripçîne; the Kripçîne khanaqa in Mehabad draws only (poor) townsmen.

The relation of most tribesmen with "their" shaikh is a rather shallow one: if the shaikh does not live too far away most will visit him once or twice a year and bring him a gift in money or in kind. If a child is ill, a woman barren, or when a long voyage has to be made (e.g. on entering military service), they visit the shaikh and ask him for a prayer and/or an amulet. Again, in case of conflict (from minor quarrels over inheritance up to full-blown blood feuds involving a number of murders) they may go to the shaikh for mediation or arbitration. Many shaikhs have their followers among several tribes, so that they can play a role in settling inter-tribal disputes (not infrequently they choose a strategic spot for their residence, on the boundary of two or three tribal territories).

In spite of the use of the term "murid" (which implies a spiritual relation with the shaikh) the relation of the common tribesmen with their shaikh is almost entirely devoid of spiritual content - among Qadiri even more so than among Naqshbandi, it seems to me. People do not visit the shaikh in order to receive spiritual instruction but to get an amulet that might protect them or their children from danger and disease, or to receive other benefits ("blessing") from contact with the shaikh. For this reason, it is important for shaikhs to have a reputation for miracle-working. Some shaikhs are successful practitioners of herbal medicine, some are clairvoyants, many are accomplished practical psychologists that know how to make an impression on people; these may attract visitors from far away.

Murid in a stricter sense are those followers who practice a spiritual discipline. "Sufi" and "dervish" are the terms used throughout the islamic world for such people; the terms largely overlap. In Kurdistan, however, the term "derwêş" is used for the followers of the Qadiri tariqa and the vagrant "begging monks", whilst the term "sofî" denotes followers of the Naqshbandi path (the latter term is also generally used to address old and pious men). Naqshbandis are quite outspoken in refusing the title "derwêş", which to them has negative connotations of backwardness and superstition.

A person who wants to become a dervish or sufi has first to do penitence (tobê, Ar. tawbah). This is a conversion to a purer life and a forswearing of all sins. Tobê has to be done in front of a shaikh or khalifa, whose murid one is from then on. In the Qadiri order it is usual that after his tobê the dervish receives permission to use sword and skewers without risk of harm; from that moment on Abd al-Qadir's keramet protects him.

Some shaikhs let only those murids do tobê who are ready to devote their further lives to a spiritual discipline (in general, elderly men). Other shaikhs let everyone do tobê, independent of age; I suspect they do this to consolidate the flock of followers. Especially where there is much competition among shaikhs, such as in the Syrian Cezîre, they spend much time and energy travelling around and taking tobê from as many people as possible. The original conception of tobê as a one-time conversion, a turning away from the world, such as is to be expected from older people only, has been changed there. Five or six-year old children are forced to do tobê, and not just once, but every year again - apparently a confirmation of their allegiance to the shaikh. In the perception of the common believers tobê here has become a periodical ritual purification. It is a common sight here to see a shaikh and his most intimate followers, most of them with long black beards and wearing impeccably white clothes, tour the countryside in a row of automobiles. In every village they stop and the shaikh invites people to come and do tobê - and also receives financial contributions from them.

Doing tobê is here very much a matter-of-fact thing. I saw a group of people do tobê in a Qadiri khanaqa in Amûdê. The shaikh stood with arms outstretched, five murids (among whom an eight-year old boy) put their hands on him and repeated word for word a prayer the shaikh said. The shaikh paid hardly attention to these murids; after the prayer he immediately continued joking with others present, although the ceremony wasn't over yet. A can of water was brought, which the shaikh consecrated by saying a prayer over it, sipping some water, saying a second prayer and blowing or spitting in it. Then the shaikh and the five murids each took a sip from the can, whereupon the can was passed around the others present, who also each took a sip.

For some ceremonies here, such as the rain prayer (which is only rarely performed nowadays⁷⁹), it is said that the participants have to be tobêdar (i.e. in the state of purity resulting from penitence, not yet broken by new sins). The shaikhs who led these ceremonies used to take tobê from all participants first.

IV. m The economic power of shaikhs

As said before, many shaikhs combine a reputation of piety and holiness with a shrew commercial and political insight. A reputation of having much keramet ("special graces", the ability to work miracles) is in fact one of the surest ways to become rich: the holier one is said to be, the more murids one gets and the more daily visitors, who, on the one hand, have to be served tea and food, but on the other bring gifts in money and kind. Many shaikhs also own considerable tracts of land, from gifts, sale or usurpation.

Because working for a shaikh is said to be especially meritorious, shaikhs can afford to exploit their peasants even more than other landlords do, and continue to demand "seigneurial" services while tribal aghas can no longer do do. Sons of peasants have to work in the households of the shaikh and the resident murids, wait on the guests etc., generally without any reward other than the blessing of being in the shaikh's presence.

Shaikhs may own other economic resources as well. The shaikhs of Xîzan for instance own many grainmills in a wide area north of Lake Van (far from their own village). Some of these are still water-run, but most of them are motor-driven - shaikhs only object to modernization when it conflicts with their interests. Villagers take turns working in the shaikh's mill, without payment (for who would dare to demand payment for a service to the shaikh?). And there are many paying customers: people prefer a shaikh's mill to any other because it is thought to confer a certain bereket (blessing). The network of khalifas that the shaikh has in this area also provides him with supervisors whom he can trust.

Economic power of a shaikh and his political influence reinforce

each other. An obvious example is provided by the land registration (see Chapter III, section 1). Shaikhs who had political leverage at the time that registration was carried out succeeded in becoming the owners of large tracts of land. Being rich and respected, they are desirable sons-in-law for tribal chieftains. Marrying into chiefly families in turn increases their political prestige and potentially also their influence. Moreover, since they are allowed to marry four wives, a marriage does not necessarily ally them to one specific tribe only.

Having intercourse with chiefly circles, they may be called upon in cases of conflict, which a clever shaikh can always turn to his advantage. The shrewder ones may even stir up conflict between two chieftains, in order to dominate them both. An excellent example of how a shaikh may thus even succeed in appropriating a chieftain's possession's is the (true) tale of Suto and Tato (Nikitine and Soane, 1923).

It is probably not the manipulation of chieftains, but the (over-) exploitation of peasants that may ultimately lead to the downfall of shaikhs. In 1959 rebellious peasants, stimulated by the Qassem government, chased many landlords, including a number of shaikhs, from Iraq into Iran⁸⁰. Below, in section IV. p, a revolt of peasants against a shaikh (in Bamernî) will be discussed in more detail.

IV. n Two shaikhs: Şêx Osman of Durû and Şêx Saîda of Cezîre

Şêx Osman

Durû is a small village in a fertile valley in Persian Kurdistan, near the Iraqi border, just northeast of Hewraman. It has some 30 houses beside the shaikh's buildings. Since the Persian land reform some land has been distributed among the villagers, but most of it is still owned by the shaikh: fields of cereals, orchards, vegetable gardens. During the short time that I spent in the village people were not very forthcoming with information on the exact ownership relations and the division of the crop between the shaikh and

his share-croppers. There are a few shops whose owners make a decent living because of the large numbers of people who come to visit the shaikh and stay for a couple of days. There are two khanaqas and hostels for the shaikh's visitors. In winter a modern and spacious complex of buildings outside the village, in the plain, is used, in summer one resides in the cooler village on the slopes overlooking the plain.

The permanent residents include, apart from peasants and shopkeepers, the shaikh with some relatives, a number of close murids and a number of mullas and students of theology. The shaikh has made his village a centre of orthodox learning as well as a place of pious pilgrimage. There are fluctuating numbers of faqihs (students of the shariat), from all sunni groups in Iran - mainly Kurds and Turkomans. Two bodyguards (one the son of a Hewramî chieftain) and a few servants form the last category of permanent residents. Peasants and their children also act as servants, when required. The resident murids include not only Kurds from all over Iraqi and Persian Kurdistan, but also a converted ex-christian (Assyrian), Turkomans from north-eastern Iran, Arabs from Libanon and even an American convert to Islam who had been sent here by an Egyptian shaikh. Among them there are a few elderly men who seem not to have any interest in mysticism but stay here mainly because of the security of living at the expense of the shaikh, without the risk of being thrown out. These murids spend their days reading the Koran, or just sitting and doing nothing. A considerable amount of time is spent in prayer, since they perform not only the obligatory number of rak'ahs, but also the not-obligatory-but-advised ones, each of which they perform without haste (unlike most common muslims, who rather hurriedly perform their prayers). After the prayers they say tesbihs, i.e. recite short Arabic phrases as "Allahu akbar", "istaghfirullah", "al-hamdulillah", 33 times each (or a multiple of that number), counting them on the rosary⁸¹.

There is a khatma here twice every day, at dawn and after sunset. Most of the resident sofîs and some of the temporary visitors attend.

Most common villagers come to the khanaqa-mosque for ordinary prayers only, and do not participate in the khatmas.

The resident murids do not receive any extra attention from the shaikh; there are no special hours of spiritual instruction, as with other shaikhs (the American murid complained that the shaikh spent all his time receiving visitors who just came to kiss his hand; none of the oriental murids complained, however). Just being near the shaikh, experiencing his spiritual presence in the rabita, and regularly exchanging a few words with him should apparently be enough.

The resident mullas instruct the students in Arabic and fiqh (islamic jurisprudence). They also have to answer visitors' questions of doctrine, and lead the khatma and the communal prayers. One of them acts as the shaikh's secretary.

Every day many visitors come to Durû: in summer some 5 to 10 a day, in winter sometimes as many as 30 or 40. Most come for their periodical ziyaret (visit), some for a special reason, such as asking for counsel, for a cure for a sick person, or for a protective amulet. A visit to the shaikh may be a time-consuming affair. Usually many people are waiting to be admitted into the shaikh's presence, jostling each other. One of the shaikh's bodyguards leaves them in, two or three at a time, during audience hours only. The shaikh takes his time: people have often to wait an entire day before they at last can see the shaikh and kiss his hand. Rich or influential persons are admitted before the others. Before a visitor can leave the village again he has to ask his leave from the shaikh, which means that he has to wait again until he is received in audience. And then the shaikh may simply refuse him permission to go.

I met persons who had been waiting to go for five days. They had urgent work to do in their fields, and everyday they asked the shaikh permission to leave. Everyday he refused because, he said, it would be better if they stayed another day. I suspected that the shaikh did this to teach them equanimity, but started to doubt my supposition when I discovered that he never let rich and influential people wait so long - but maybe that is because these people would otherwise go

without permission? One day a high government official was flown in by helicopter from Sine. All poor visitors were sent for a walk and the official was immediately received in audience, after which he left at once.

Two times the shaikh allowed me to sit next to him during his audience hours. Here too, a clear status distinction was observed: common people remained standing in front of the shaikh, the rich and influential were invited to sit down. One of the bodyguards let the visitors in and out. The shaikh chatted friendly and unhurriedly with them - most were quite nervous and had to be put at ease. He asked them who they were, whose relative they were, how they made a living, how the harvest had been, and inquired after the well-being of other people from the same village. When the visitors came for no special reason but just brought a courtesy visit, the communication remained limited to this small talk. If the visitor wished, the shaikh gave him an amulet from a pile beside him: a piece of paper with a prayer or a few ayyats from the Koran in his own handwriting (so that the effectiveness of the text itself was supplemented with the shaikh's keramet). Everyone also received a handful of sweets from a big bag: a servant passed them into the hands of the shaikh, who then gave them to the visitor: thus they carry the shaikh's bereket (blessing). On leaving, the visitors kissed the shaikh's hand, and most slipped some money into his pocket. Many visitors brought a sick person with them. The shaikh first inquired "where it hurts" and took a long and quiet look at the sick - without touching him, he just stared intensely at him, and reflected. When he had made up his mind he gave some herbs, simple drugs, bandages, etc. If the disease seemed serious he gave a note for a doctor in town who would help without asking payment. In cases he thought psychosomatic he gave the sick only a handful of the above-mentioned sweets. When I asked him how he made a diagnosis he answered that he had learned traditional medicine from his father, and that he received divine inspiration on how best to help these people.

The amulets are of several kinds. There are amulets to protect children from falling and from similar petty dangers, amulets to cure barrenness etc. They are all simply pieces of paper with a relevant quotation from the Koran. People usually sew them into a piece of cloth which they then attach to their clothing. One day I saw the shaikh prepare a rather special amulet of a famous type: a gulebend ("bullet-stopper"). Şêx Osman is one of the very few shaikhs (maybe the only one remaining) who are said to have the ability (and required holiness) to make these useful prophylactics against bullets and explosives⁸². The man who had asked for it was a Kurd from Iraq, teacher in a village that was regularly bombed (this was during the 1974-75 war). The amulet consisted of a long text, conjurations and Koran verses. The shaikh put it between two squares of cardboard, wrapped it in cottonwool, and had it sown in cloth. He told the man to tie it to his upper arm and keep it under the armpit, but turn it up as soon as there was danger.

Şêx Osman has a great reputation for curing the mentally deranged. Several were brought to him during my stay. They stayed for some days, and I have to admit that in their outward behaviour they showed a remarkable progress in these few days.

A description of Şêx Osman's milieu is incomplete without all the tales of his holiness and extraordinary feats. I shall limit myself to the two that I find personally most interesting.

A mulla of Sine who had but a vague acquaintance with the shaikh saw in a dream the prophet Muhammad (dreams of Muhammad, Fatima and Ali are rather common among the pious sections of the islamic population; they are interpreted as real apparitions of these holy persons). The prophet exhorted him to visit Şêx Osman more frequently, "for he is my beloved (habibi), remember that". The mulla at first did not pay much attention to the dream. A few days later it repeated itself in identical form. The mulla then travelled to Durû the next morning, where he related his dreams to whoever would listen (my informant claimed to have heard the story from the mulla himself).

The following is a miracle story that is also an interesting comment on how the Shah of Iran is seen by his subjects.

It was told to me by a pedlar with whom I travelled north from Durû. He was extremely sceptical about shaikhs in general ("frauds and exploiters", he called them) but full of praise for Şêx Osman. Three years before, he told me, the shaikh had been invited in audience with the shah (this is true, I could check it). In the audience room, he continued, the chairs for the shah's visitors are all "electrical", so that if any of them would try to harm the shah, the latter can immediately electrocute him by pushing a button on his arm-rest (!) The shaikh wanted to show to the Shah whom he had in front of him, and by applying his miraculous powers to his seat switched off electricity in the whole town of Tehran. Whatever technicians tried, they did not succeed in finding the cause of the black-out and repairing it. When all had failed - several hours had meanwhile passed - the shaikh smiled to the Shah, said something appropriate on man's powers and God's, and restored light to Tehran. Since that time the Shah knows that Şêx Osman is the greatest saint alive, and pays him a visit every year. Later I heard from residents of Tehran that there had, in fact, been an unexplained black-out in that town three years previously; it was generally ascribed to sabotage. Since it coincided more or less with the shaikh's audience with the shah, some murids apparently made a connection between the two events, whence this nearly classic tale of confrontation of the powers of the world with those of God found its formulation.

Şêx Saîda

Another great shaikh was Şêx Saîda of Cezîre (Cizre), who died in 1971. I spent some time with his son Nûrullah, who taught me to live as a muslim. Wherever I met Kurds from Turkey or Syria, I found that they knew and generally respected Şêx Saîda. Only young and politically progressive nationalists considered him a traitor and one of the evil powers that kept and keep Kurdistan backward. The shaikh had always kept aloof from the nationalist movement and revolts; he is even said to have informed Turkish authorities about nationalists active in the area. When Atatürk closed the tekiyes and persecuted many shaikhs for their connections with the Kurdish nationalist or with anti-secular revolts, Şêx Saîda was always left in peace. He even received a robe of honour from Atatürk (so people say). Thus he could increase his influence, at the expense of other shaikhs. His tekiye too was closed, but he continued to hold khatmas

covertly in a mosque. A medrese under his leadership could continue to function, although elsewhere these centres of traditional religious learning were closed. Nowadays this medrese still functions. It is part of the semi-clandestine network of the reactionary religious organization of the nurcus; through this medrese I came into contact with some fanatical muslim activists (see below, section IV. q). The christians (mainly jacobites) of the area were not exactly happy with Şêx Saîda. He was a strong anti-christian propagandist, and a main contributor to the tenseness of the relations between muslims and christians in the area. Christians are physically attacked by (Kurdish) muslims. Midyat (half-way between Cizre and Mardin) is an originally christian town, consisting of two separate agglomerations; there is a continuing influx of muslims from the countryside, and the christians have already been forced to evacuate one of the city halves. They warned me, not to go to Cizre, because christians, even European ones, are in danger of life there (a gross exaggeration, but illustrative of the fear under which the christians live here; they cannot count on protection by the government). By now, the vast majority of the christians that used to live here have left; not as a consequence of the brutal liquidation policy of the Young Turks (against which they managed to defend themselves), but of more subtle methods to make their lives unbearable. The town of Hazax (new name: Idil; between Midyat and Cizre) has a heroic fame: during the persecutions and massacres of christians, the jacobites of the area had entrenched themselves here and defended the town for years, until the end of the World War and the Turkish War of Independence. Now the town has been islamicized by a clever and peaceful policy of Şêx Saîda. He had a mosque built in this 100% christian town. The mosque attracted people from the villages around, who settled near it - the association of this mosque with the holy Şêx Saîda exercised a strong pull. Also members of nomadic tribes who settled chose this place. The government also played its role: the christians were not allowed to resist this muslim invasion, that would have been "undemocratic" and "discriminatory". There is a muslim

majority in this town now; many christians have left, some were converted to Islam. The believers all consider this an excellent example of jihad ("holy war", for the protection or propagation of Islam), and its success contributed to the shaikh's reputation. Beside being a hero of the faith the shaikh had other qualities which made him holy in the eyes of his followers: "He was not like other people of this world: in winter he would bathe outside, in a tub of ice-water, and in the oppressively hot summer he would sometimes light a stove in his room". "He was lost in contemplation for days on end, nothing could wake him up from it, only for the daily prayers would he interrupt this contemplation, to return to it immediately after." The miracles he performed are innumerable, they vary from the banal to the most fantastic. When one of his old murids was caught smuggling a small amount of tobacco across the border, the shaikh changed the tobacco miraculously into sawar (broken wheat), so that the murid went free.

Most miracles that are told about the shaikh involve clairvoyance.

One of his pupils told me the following story:

When I was in military service, and had still another year to serve, I came to Cizre on a week's leave. Before going back, I paid a visit to the shaikh. He said "you have another six months to go, haven't you?" At that time I paid no attention to the old man's "mistake". The shaikh urgently requested me to make a phone-call from the first place where my bus would stop the next day; he did not say why. I did not understand this demand, but promised him. But in the first two places where I had to change buses I did not have time to call the shaikh. My third bus got into an accident. If I had made the phone call to the shaikh I would not have been in this bus. I was brought to a hospital, from where I had someone call the shaikh. The shaikh himself was not at home, but had instructed a son to ask if I were unharmed! A doctor in the hospital who treated me asked if I were perhaps a shaikh, for in a dream he had seen a person dressed in white who had told him to go to the hospital and help me. I stayed in the hospital for some months, had a re-examination by a military doctor, and after some delays I could leave military service, exactly six months after the accident!"

I heard more stories of this kind, most of which obviously were embellished but must have some basis of truth. The shaikh was probably

a real clairvoyant, but pious imagination has exaggerated his powers out of all proportion.

IV. o Messianism

Long before people rise in revolt against a state of affairs that they experience as oppressive or exploitative, protest against it is expressed symbolically, e.g. in myths, folk-tales, jokes, and the like. Wertheim (1971) called such cultural elements "counterpoints"; they form an undercurrent that runs counter to the dominant system of values. Some of these counterpoints have a greater potential than others of leading ultimately to collective action by the exploited segments of society. Especially potent are the (religious) expectations of a millennium, an utopian state, to be brought about by the collective action of believers, usually led by a messiah-like figure. In many cases, messianistic movements can be interpreted as proto-revolutionary⁸³.

As protest movements were one of the focal points of my interest, I searched for messianistic/millennarian ideas and for the occurrence of past movements of a messianistic character. In an islamic context one would expect messianism to be associated with the concept of the Mahdi (see p.253), and I started therefore by questioning people on this and related concepts. To my surprise relatively few people knew at all what the Mahdi is, and even fewer had concrete ideas as to when the Mahdi would arrive and what the millennium would be like. Nevertheless, during the past century several mahdist revolts have occurred in Kurdistan - as I discovered later from the literature. The role of Mahdi was in all these cases played by shaikhs (see below). Only much later did I become aware that also a number of movements of which the leader was never called Mahdi had distinctly messianistic aspects. For instance, the weird behaviour of the Heqqe sect, with its reversal of norms and values, recalls some other messianistic movements. The new leader of this sect established an "utopian" community in his village, where everything is shared collectively, even women. My informants called the

village a "kolkhoz", and were fascinated by the free sexual relations said to exist there. (For more information on this sect, see the Appendix, notes to Table I, nr 4). Early nationalistic movements also had apparently messianistic/millenarian characteristics. Participants believed they could establish a new, better society simply by a massive rising, in obedience to the leader (a shaikh, again); it was expected to come about by a great onslaught, and the participants did therefore not (or little) engage in strategic considerations and long-term planning. The movements were usually clothed with religious phraseology. These movements all had in common that they were reactions against western penetration and the challenging of traditional values. Probably the most important 19th century (proto-)nationalist movement was led by Şêx Ubeydullah, of Nehrî's famous family of shaikhly seyyids (see Appendix, Table II).

In 1880, Şêx Ubeydullah led many tribes of central Kurdistan in a large revolt⁸⁴, directed at first against the Persian government and intending the establishment of an independent state. The outbreak of this revolt was stimulated by international developments that seemed to make a Kurdish state feasible. In the Turkish-Russian war of 1877-1878 the Ottoman empire had proved itself very weak. It was forced to accept a special defense treaty with Britain, which was to assist the Ottomans against further incursions by the Russians and also to protect the Sultan's christian subjects in the Asian provinces. Many of those christians lived in Kurdistan. In Hekarî Şêx Ubeydullah and the Mar Shimun (the religious and political leader of the Nestorians) exercised a sort of dual rule without much control by the Ottoman government. After the British-Ottoman defense treaty became known, the shaikh tried to enlist support from the British (through the Mar Shimun, Armenian clergymen and American missionaries at Urumiye) in order to achieve full independence for a Kurdish state under his leadership. He was pressed to do so by an acute awareness among the Kurds of neglect and national oppression in both the Ottoman and the Persian empires - to which the American missionaries of that time attest. On both sides of the Persian-Ottoman border the shaikh was the most respected (and obeyed) Kurdish leader, the natural embodiment of Kurdish nationalist aspirations. Tactical considerations made him decide to act against Persia first: it seemed weaker than the Ottoman empire, and the government of the latter seemed willing to support him in such a venture. The Ottomans did not want to alienate the shaikh, whose services they considered they might need against

Armenian separatist aspirations. The establishment of a semi-autonomous Kurdish state on formerly Persian territory, but under the suzerainty of the Sultan, was probably what Istanbul envisaged when it offered Ubeydullah help. visaged when it offered Ubeydullah help.

In October 1880 the shaikh sent his tribal troupes (among whom also the very bellicose Nestorians of Hekarî) across the Persian border. Tribes of Persian Kurdistan (Mameş, Mengûr, Zerza, Gewrik, Bane, Herkî/Begzade) immediately joined them. A 15,000 strong army under the shaikh's son Ebdulqadir took the town of Saûcbulaq (Mehabad). The shaikh himself with another 8,000 laid siege to Urumiye (Rezayeh). The (sunni) clergy of Mehabad had private interests to press, and issued a fetva to the effect that the revolt was a jihad ("holy war") against shiism. The neighbouring town of Mianduab (inhabited by shiite Azeri Turks) was attacked, and 3,000 inhabitants killed. The American missionary Cochran (at Urumiye) persuaded Ubeydullah to postpone the attack on Urumiye, which gave Persian troops the time to arrive from Tabriz and attack the Kurds unawares. The shaikh's men were dispersed over a wide area. A part of them were already on the march to Tabriz, which they intended to take, when they were faced with superior Persian military units (mainly Azeri Turks and Khamseh tribesmen of Fars). Soon (in November) the Kurdish troops were put to flight, and in December the shaikh was back in Turkey again. The Azeris took revenge on the local sunni Kurds then. Thousands of families escaped with the shaikh's retreating men into Turkey; many more were massacred and their villages burnt.

Through the intermediary of Russia and Great Britain, Persia put pressure on the Ottomans to punish the leaders of the rebellion. Using the time-honoured method of inciting tribal strife, sending other tribes against the shaikh, these could arrest Ubeydullah and his relatives. They were first brought to Istanbul, later sent into exile to Mekka, where the shaikh died in 1883.

An instance where messianistic ideas and nationalism are more obviously connected is the shaikhs of Barzan. Nearly all shaikhs of this family had a prophetic, messiah-like, even semi-divine reputation among their followers. Their village, Barzan, had always been a sort of utopian society. Refugees, whether christian or muslim, were always welcome there; this contributed to its becoming a centre of Kurdish nationalism. The land of the village used to be considered collective property. Two of the shaikhs were actually called Mahdi (Messiah) by their followers: Ebdusselam I and his son Mihemed (see Appendix, notes to Table II). The former, in a turbulent period of

tribal wars and armed conflict with Şêx Ubeydullah of Nehrî, was acclaimed Mahdî by his enthusiastic followers, who invited him to march with them to Istanbul and take the position of Caliph from the Ottoman sultan. When he refused, they beat him up severely, and according to some accounts even killed him by throwing him out of a window, with the argument that, if he were really the Mahdi he would be able to fly and thus save his skin.

His young son Mihemed, diplomatically, went to the powerful rival Şêx Ubeydullah of Nehrî and requested from him the ijaza to teach the tariqa. The friendly relations thus re-established between the two leading families of shaikhs in this area proved very profitable to Şêx Mihemed when Şêx Ubeydullah was captured and exiled after his great revolt of 1880: all tribes now looked on Mihemed as their sole religious authority. Again, enthusiastic followers acclaimed their shaikh the Mahdi. Precise information on the circumstances of this movement are lacking: there must be a close connection with Şêx Ubeydullah's revolt, in which many of Mihemed's present followers had participated. The best source is Nikitine (1925a), whose Kurdish teacher, a former secretary of Şêx Mihemed Sidîq of Nehrî, told him the history of the family of Barzan (a clearly biased report). I reproduce here sections from Nikitine's paraphrase of this account:

"...Then Şêx Mihemed's disciples started again calling him the Mahdi, under the pretext that, according to the hadith, the name of the Mahdi should also be Muhammad, and thus (so they said), "our shaikh is a true Mahdi". They started to buy arms. It is well known that, of all tribes of Kurdistan, the Zîbarî, Şîrvanî and Mîzûrî are the most savage. They provided Şêx Mihemed with devoted troops, numbering over 5,000 men. When they had all gathered, they declared that nobody would be able to resist them. "We shall go to Mosul and take that place; from there we shall march on Damascus and from Damascus we shall attack Istanbul; we shall catch that good-for-nothing Hamid (Sultan Abdulhamid) by his leg and throw him from the throne, and we shall put His Holiness the Mahdi in his place. He must take the place of the Prophet's representative."

When the "ulama" of all these tribes got the air of these plans, they said: "Stop it! This is impossible; the government will annihilate you." The murids replied that certainly

these mullas were "kafirs" (unbelievers), renegades..." Nikitine's informant continued with a description of the punishments they meted out to these mullas. After a few exemplary and cruel executions all the other mullas escaped to the nearest towns, where they went in hiding. "...The Mahdi's troops then split up in two columns, one took the road of Aqra, the other that of Riwandiz. Both marched on Mosul. They arrested the qaimmaqams (governors) of Aqra and Riwandiz, gave them a sound beating and destroyed their houses. Intelligence of these events reached Mosul, where Salih Zeki Pasha was then vali..." This vali, an intelligent man, decided to avoid armed clashes with the shaikh, and to subdue the movement by a ruse. When the shaikh's troops approached Mosul the vali rode out and told them that for some time he and his garrison had been awaiting the coming of the Mahdi. He declared his and their willingness to place themselves under the Mahdi's orders and march against Abdulhamid. He invited the shaikh to stay in his own house. The shaikh's troops, if divided into three groups, could be lodged in the barracks. The naive shaikh and his followers gladly accepted this respectful offer - with predictable results. The shaikh and his aides, who had been imprisoned in a high building on the Tigris, could escape by letting themselves down on their long cummerbands and swimming to freedom, for "the people of Barzan swim better than fish and do not fear water". The title of Mahdi, however, was discarded from now on. (Nikitine 1925a: 150/1).

Though we do not know with certainty, it seems that one of the main external causes for this movement was the defeat and capture of Şêx Ubeydullah at the hands of Persian and Turkish troops. The Ottoman administration was clearly perceived as the power of evil against which the Mahdi had to struggle. The fact that the Ottoman Sultans had in reality usurped the title of Caliph provided a nice extra argument. However, in order to acquire an insight in the genesis of such messianistic movements we need more information than is now available about local circumstances of the time, more precise data as to who these enthusiastic disciples of the shaikh were, etc.

Also the defeat of the Ottoman empire and the occupation of southern Kurdistan by the British seems to have triggered off what resembles a messianistic movement. The British political officer Edmonds noted it in passing:

"At this time (1920) an active missionary campaign was being

conducted by the Qadiri shaikhs in most parts of Sulamania liwa (province); it was quite common in any village after dark to hear the rapid padding of some convert racing about between the houses shouting the words of the zikr like one possessed, and several cases came to my notice of hardened scoundrels who suddenly made declarations of repentance and turned into model citizens". (Edmonds 1957: 237; underlining mine).

Similarly, the rapid socio-political changes in the young republic of Turkey created much uncertainty, especially among the religiously-minded, uneducated peasantry. Atatürk was called several times the Dajjal by shaikhs, because of his secularist reforms. The obvious implication was that the shaikh himself was the Mahdi - as some explicitly claimed. In some cases, this led to a popular movement with strongly messianistic traits. Again, the information is scanty. I translate an (unsympathetic) account of one such revolt in Turkish Kurdistan:

"In 1935 a certain Xalid from the village of Kayintar in the district Beşiri of Siirt province proclaimed himself a Naqshbandi shaikh (sic!). In december 1935 Şêx Xalid, who sent his murids to the district Eruh and its environs, wanted the people to accept him as the Mahdi. Şêx Xalid's men got involved in a popular rising, and started shedding blood. When Şêx Xalid and his men were dispersed and punished by the government his place was taken by his son Şêx Qudus. Şêx Qudus went into the mountains, and started propaganda for shaikhdom and the orders. As a result of heavy persecution by the government Şêx Qudus fled to Syria; here-with the incidents reached an end." (dr. Ç. Özek, Türkiye'de gerici akımlar ("Reactionary Currents in Turkey"), Istanbul, 1968: 160)

The only rising with messianistic elements about which I have been able to collect more detailed information is the nationalist revolt led by Şêx Seîd in Turkish Kurdistan in 1925. On the one hand, some elements in that movement remind of Şêx Xalid's: on the other hand, there were also elements in it that distinguish it from the latter and make it into a more purely political movement. Şêx Seîd's revolt is discussed in the next chapter.

IV. p Loss of influence of the shaikhs

The most important single action that damaged the shaikhs' power and influence was Atatürk's closure of the tekiyes in 1926 and his persecution of shaikhs - both direct reactions to Kurdish nationalist and reactionary movements as described above, which seriously threatened Atatürk's project of welding Turkey into a coherent and secular state. The measure was applied with Atatürk's customary drive. As early as March 1926 a British consul wrote: "Tekkiés and zaviés, being hotbeds of corruption, ignorance and superstition, are being demolished, shaikhs have been so exterminated that the very word is a term of reproach"⁸⁵. Quite a few shaikhs were executed (first of all Şêx Seîd and his collaborators; later also others who had no direct relations with the revolts), others were exiled, i.e. forced to live outside Kurdistan under permanent supervision. Many other shaikhs fled across the Syrian and Iraqi borders. To all appearances, the influence of the orders was soon reduced to virtually nothing. But covertly, their activity continued, as became apparent in the 1950's when the Democratic Party government allowed religious sentiment open expression again. Several shaikhs now again came to play a role in Turkey's politics under the banner of this party, which even allowed them to appeal (be it covertly, and very moderately) to Kurdish national sentiment⁸⁶. A military coup, led by kemalist officers, made an end to D.P. rule (May 27, 1960), and temporarily the shaikhs had to keep a low profile again. Gradually improving education and freer political discussion drew many young people definitively away from the shaikhs' orbits. But still, in 1965 and subsequent election years shaikhs and relatives of shaikhs managed to be elected into parliament, not because they represent certain political ideas, but simply because they are among the best known and most influential persons of their provinces. And although "modernization" and the crystallization of class contradictions make religion lose ever more influence among both the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, revivalist movements (see next section) are still gaining influence among other segments of the population, especially the small-town

petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry. Some shaikhs clearly profit from this latter development.

On the whole, though, shaikhs play a less prominent role in Turkish Kurdistan than half a century before. They are fewer, and have less direct influence. I met several persons whose father had been a practising shaikh, but who had not succeeded to his function (nor had anyone else). They still had a religious function, but a much less important one: that of village mulla - often with a salary paid by the state.

In Syria, shaikhs were never persecuted. Because they were not forced to go underground, it is easier to trace their loss of influence there. It appears that, until the 1950's their influence remained virtually unimpaired. According to some of my informants, as a result of the influx of many shaikhs from Turkey, the grip of religion on people even increased: the Kurds became more pious and bigoted than they had been before the 1920's. The economic and political developments of the late 1950's and the 1960's, however, brought rapid change. Roads were constructed, and many schools were built. Tractors changed the production relations in agriculture, while in the towns it became possible to find some (not much yet) work in the "modern" sector. Radios became available, and with them the voice of Nasser reached every village (Syria had joined the United Arab Republic in 1958). Nasser, who strongly stressed Arab nationalism instead of islamic solidarity, indirectly also strengthened Kurdish nationalist feeling. Due to the radio people were also rather well informed about the Kurdish war in Iraq that started in 1961. During the following years more and more people started stressing their Kurdish rather than their muslim or Syrian identity. Religion rapidly lost its grip on the young. Most shaikhs here had always opposed Kurdish nationalism. These now paid the price for this as well as for their allowing (or even stimulating) superstitions: they are being condemned as reactionary enemies to the scientific world-view and as traitors to the Kurdish case alike. Their consequent loss of following was dramatic.

In the 1930's the small town of Amûdê counted between 30 and 50 shaikhs, each with his own followers. On Fridays they used to walk in procession to the main mosque in town, their murids following the, beating drums. During prayer in the mosque the shaikhs took the first row. The murids all took place behind their own shaikhs, so that the importance of each shaikh could immediately be seen from the number and the quality (status) of his murids. 80 - 90% of the population were in that period murids of one shaikh or another.

It was in this same town that the most active members of the Kurdish National League Xoybûn (an organization of mainly intellectuals, founded in 1927) were forced to live by the French mandate authorities. The shaikhs made Xoybûn's activities in town well nigh impossible by long fulminations against these nationalist freethinkers ("ew kafir in, kûştina wan hilal e", "those are unbelievers, killing them is permissible", someone summarized the gist of these tirades). Especially the Qadiri shaikhs (who all were seyyids, and thus Arabs) stressed that Islam knows only two nations: that of the believers and that of the unbelievers. Kurdish nationalism was - they said - a devilish plan to divide the islamic nation.

Xoybûn never won the competition for popular loyalty. It was not through Xoybûn's efforts, but as a result of the economic and (external) political developments sketched above, that the shaikhs lost loyalty. There are only two practising shaikhs left in Amûdê, and their murids are not exactly the brightest of town.

Not all followers of a shaikh have the same loyalty towards him. Those who are exploited economically by him, such as the peasants on his land, are a category apart. When these lose their veneration for the shaikh and their belief in his divine mission, the exploitation is no longer perceived as justified, and they may even revolt. It seems that external stimuli are necessary to trigger a rising of the peasantry (as it is also external political developments that cause the shaikhs to lose their influence). The following case is an example of such a revolt⁸⁷.

In the late fifties the peasants of Bamernî, who had without questioning paid their contributions to Şêx Behadîn (who had died in the early 1950's), refused to let his son Mes'ûd, who was less respected, continue to exploit them. Şêx Behadîn had, until his death, wielded a great influence even beyond Kurdistan⁸⁸: the Iraqi monarch and the then

Prime Minister Nuri Said were among his disciples. The king had an airstrip made near the village in order to facilitate his visits to the shaikh. (The shaikh, incidentally, had an iron in more than one fire: when the monarchy was overthrown in 1958 by Qassem, one of the shaikh's relatives, Xalid Neqsbendî, was among the officers who had planned the coup and took control).

The shaikh and part of his large family (some 200 persons), together with a number of murids, lived permanently in the village. Beside gifts, the shaikh's income derived mainly from 3 villages (Serseng, Kediş and Bêbet) where he owned all land (which was sharecropped by the villagers). In Bamernî itself the shaikh owned about half the land; the rest was the property of independent small-holders. It was this latter category that were to revolt against the shaikh and refused to comply with the unreasonable economic claims he made. The share-croppers of Bamernî and the three other villages never participated.

After Behadîn's death and the succession by his son Mes'ûd protest rose on two issues:

1. The airstrip. Money for its construction had been paid to the shaikh, but most of it remained in the family, and the amount paid as wages to the actual workers (villagers of Bamernî) was ridiculously low. The villagers demanded back payments from Mes'ûd, and when he refused they went to court (in 1958, after the fall of the monarchy).

2. Irrigation. The water in Bamernî is not sufficient for all the village lands. The shaikh always took care that his land was watered first, so that it was always the independent small-holders who bore the entire burden of water-shortage. They became increasingly vocal in their protests. The events that now followed were closely connected with the development of Kurdish nationalism in northern Iraq. In March 1959 the (nasserist) military commander of Mosul, Abd al-Wahhab Shawwaf, revolted against president Qassem. Many pro-Qassem Kurds, among whom peasants from Bamernî, went to Mosul and assisted loyal troops in putting down the revolt (at that time Qassem still kept promising the Kurds recognition of their national rights).

Shortly after the return of the victors to Bamernî a group of young men, armed with sickles, axes, etc., attacked the shaikh's fortified quarters, loudly shouting abuses and insults. All of them belonged to the group of independent small-holders, some had been to Mosul. Elderly, pious peasants tried to stop them. A shot fell, and everybody returned to their houses. Some days later shots were fired at the shaikh, from a hill opposite the khanaqa.

There had been signs of discontent before, and once even a few peasants had fought with a number of murids (both parties armed with sticks), but this was a serious escalation. At an other occasion (also shortly after Shawwaf's

revolt), peasants showed their contempt of the shaikh by playing the zûrne and dancing in front of the shaikh's castle (until that time, the zûrne had been banned from Bamernî; the shaikh had condemned it as a devilish instrument). Clashes between peasants and the shaikh's men continued, and became more violent. By the end of 1959 (or early 1960) 2 peasants and 3 murids had been killed. The government sent a large gendarmerie unit to restore order. The shaikh did not feel safe, nevertheless, and took refuge in Mosul.

After the conflict between the nationalist Kurds (led by Barzanî and the Democratic Party of Kurdistan) and the Qassem government had come into the open, many villagers joined Barzanî's guerrillas, while Şêx Mes'ûd and his relatives sided with the government (the old conflict between the shaikhs of Barzan and Bamernî may have influenced this alignment). Peasants of Bamernî now also attacked the gendarmes stationed in their village. A number of peasants were arrested and sent to jail in Dehok, but the gendarme ultimately evacuated Bamernî. The shaikh, far away, had no means of exacting a share of the villages' crops. For the peasantry, the nationalist case thus coincided with their liberation from exploitation. Members of the shaikh's family, not unnaturally, actively joined pro-government troops, in the hope of re-gaining their lands.

As (nearly) always and everywhere, it was not the most exploited and destitute peasantry who revolted, but the middle peasantry, who had a certain degree of independence but also felt oppressed by the shaikh^{88a}. They did not protest when Şêx Behadîn still lived; he was respected, and apparently deemed to merit the privileges he claimed. When he was succeeded by a less meriting son it was easier to question the legitimacy of these claims. Protest grew into open revolt only after an external crisis in which the peasants proved that they could play a decisive role in politics, even at the state level.

One more thing should be noted on the shaikhs' loss of influence: it is especially noticeable in the more de-tribalized areas (where there are therefore fewer tribal conflicts) and in those places where the government (or the nationalist movement, as in Iraq) has sufficient authority to resolve conflicts. Where this is not the case (as in southeastern Turkey), shaikhs continue to exert power. This indicates how important the role of conflict-solver is for the shaikh's position.

IV. q Islamic revival: nurculuk

Of the islamic revival movements one originated in Kurdistan and has a connection with the Naqshbandi order. A short note on it therefore concludes this chapter. It is generally called by its Turkish name "nurculuk" ("nurcu", as its adherents are called, means "follower of the (divine) light"). This movement became important after the second world war; it is now the most powerful current of traditionalist Islam in Turkey. Its founder was a man who called himself Seîdî Kurdî ("Kurdish Seîd), an extraordinary person in many respects. I have heard fervent opponents of nurculuk talk admiringly of his courage, honesty and respectable character. For his followers he is a great saint, who could be at different places simultaneously, walk through closed doors etc., and who was the greatest living scholar and the most inspired interpreter of the Koran.

Seîd was born in 1873 in the village of Nûrs, in the province Bitlis (Turks therefore prefer to call him Sait Nursi), and received his early education in Xîzan, with Şêx Nûr Mihemed (see Table V of the Appendix). He became a mulla and was soon known all over Kurdistan as a very learned scholar. He was also a moderate Kurdish nationalist. In 1907 he went to Istanbul to plead with Sultan Abdulhamid for the establishment of a university of Eastern Turkey (he was to pursue this project all his life). This university was to be a pendant of the famous al-Azhar mosque and university, and was to be built in Kurdistan. He also wanted the Sultan to open schools where education was in Kurdish, because Turkish schools were useless for most Kurdish children, who knew not a single word of Turkish. In Istanbul he was in contact with the local Kurdish nationalists, and also played a leading role in an armed rising of reactionary religious elements against the Young Turks' rule⁸⁹. In the Balkan War of 1911 and in the First World War he commanded militia troops, and distinguished himself by his bravery and by (reputedly) saving the lives of 1500 Armenians whom he was ordered to kill but sent across the Russian front lines into safety. Later he was made a prisoner of war by the Russians, escaped from Russia to Germany in

1918 and returned to Istanbul that same year. In the War of Independence he took the side of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), not of the Sultan-Caliph, probably because the latter was seen as a tool in the hands of the European powers. But soon he discovered Kemal's plans for the complete secularization and westernization of Turkey, and from then on he was permanently in opposition. After Kemal's suppression of the Kurdish revolts, and elimination by decree of anything Kurdish, he continued to call himself Seîdî Kurdî, the only public person who dared to bear such a name. Like so many influential Kurds, he was exiled and several times imprisoned. In those years he wrote a huge series of pamphlets (some 135, it is said), which could be published after 1950 under the general name of Risale-i Nur ("Treatise on the (Divine) Light"; the name "nurcu" derives from this title). These pamphlets, written in an ugly, 19th-century Ottoman Turkish (which few people fully understand) pretend to give an interpretation of the Koran that is appropriate to the 20th century. In fact, they are extremely traditionalist and propose a return to the pure and undiluted Islam of the Prophet's time. Because this means, among other things, abolition of the Constitution and replacing of present civil law with the shariat, the basic ideas of nurculuk are inimical to the foundations of the Republic of Turkey, and the movement was therefore forced into illegality. Under Democratic Party rule (1950-1960) religious conservatives and reactionaries were allowed more freedom of expression, and the number of nurcus sharply increased. To this day however they remain semi-illegally organized, so that their numbers are difficult to estimate. Many medreses (traditional-type schools), especially in Kurdistan, are centres of nurcu propaganda. Several Naqshbandi shaikhs, too, easily fit into this network; since the closure of the tekiyes in Turkey the tendency away from mysticism proper to a more legalistic, orthodox conception of Islam that is noticeable with this order elsewhere as well⁹⁰, has become very apparent in Turkish Kurdistan. Because of Seîdî Kurdî's personality - a highly commendable one according to Kurdish norms: high principles, courage, and "Kurd-

ishness"- not only the bigoted, but many other traditionally-minded Kurds are attracted to nurculuk⁹¹. But claims that Turkey counts 4 million nurcus (on a total population of just over 40 million) are obviously exaggerations⁹².

Nurculuk has never put forward a concise and succinct statement of its aims and program. These are apparently thought to be expressed sufficiently clearly in the Risale-i Nur. It stands for an extremely strict observance of religious rules, but for much more about which its spokesmen express themselves only in the vaguest of terms, because many of its political aims are contrary to the Constitution of Turkey. The nurcus whom I met had only vague and general ideas on the aims of the movement. Strict obedience to religious prescriptions and recommendations (all of which are taken literally) is what they always mention themselves. Equally striking are the political consequences of that attitude: the movement resists all modernization and fights what it considers corruptions of Islam. It is extremely intolerant of less bigoted muslims and even preaches hatred of the heterodox alevi. It is virulently anti-communist and anti-socialist⁹³, and also (but less violently) opposes western influences. Shaikhs may have joined this movement because it is directed precisely against those factors that weaken loyalties to the shaikhs.

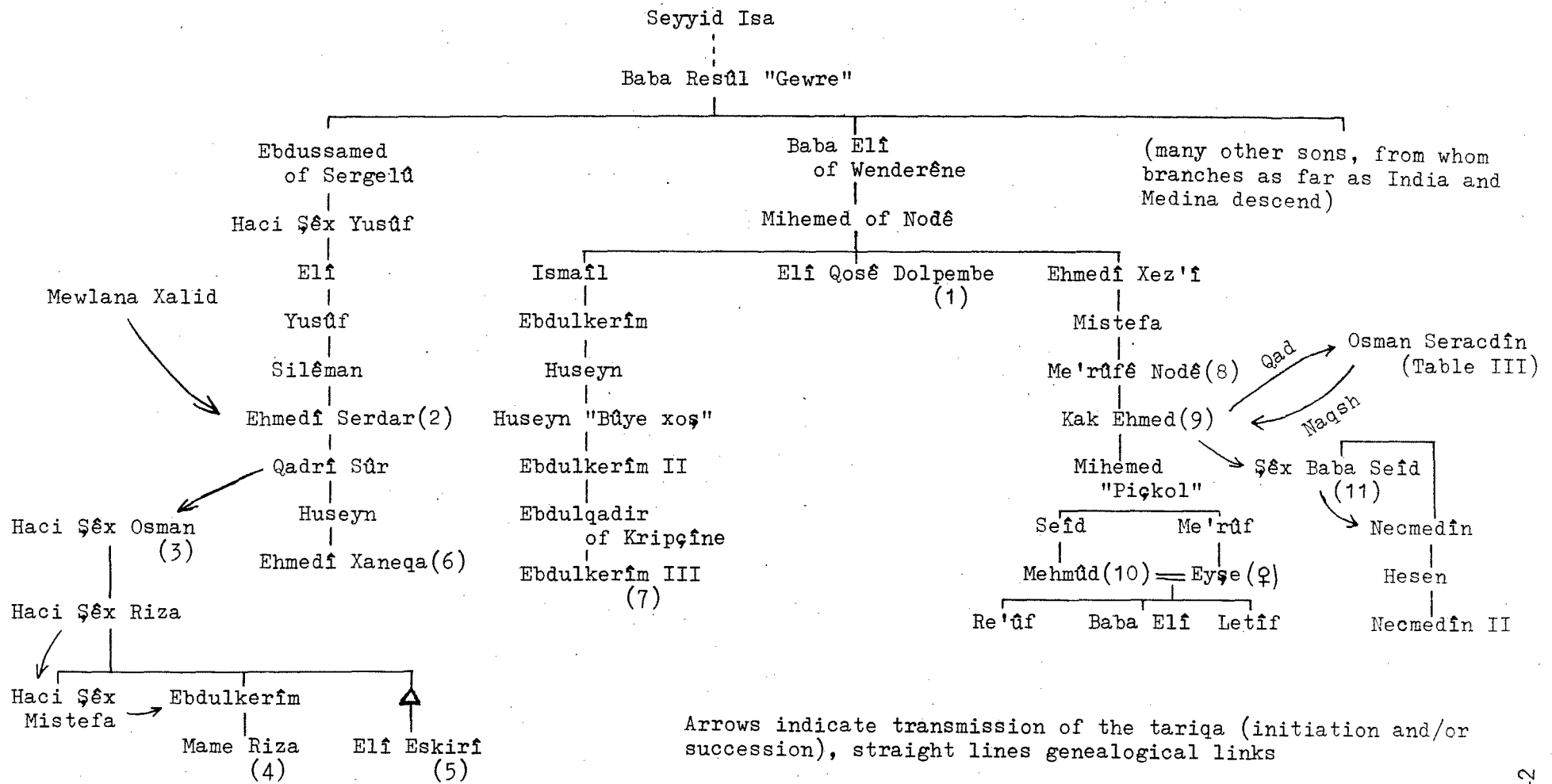
Appendix

To supplement this chapter, I give family trees of the most important shaikhly families of Kurdistan, showing also the important murshid-khalifa relations existing between some of them, and short biographical notices on some of the shaikhs.

Notes to Table I: Branches of the Berzencî-family.

- (1) This is the ancestor of the branch to which belongs Haj Seyyid Wafa Salami, whose silsila is given in the text.
- (2) Ehmedî Serdar received the Naqshbandi path from Mawlana Xalid and became himself a leading Naqshbandi shaikh.
- (3) Hacî Şêx Osman was a distant relative of Qadrî Sûr, from whom he received the Naqshbandi ijaza.
- (4) Şêx Ebdulkerîm (of Sergelû), though continuing to call himself a Naqshbandi, introduced practices so different from the ordinary ones, that one might speak of a new tariqa or a sect. His followers are called Heqqe. Several of their practices were equally repulsive to the surrounding orthodox muslims and to the British administration: men and women were seen bathing together in the water tank of the village mosque, taking even dogs with them into the water (the absolute peak of impurity!), and similar things (see Edmonds 1957: 204-206 for a description). In 1944 his successor Mame Riza was arrested and put in an internment camp in southern Iraq. Hundreds (according to Edmonds) or thousands (12,000, according to Mamê Riza's cousin Elî Eskirî!) of peasant followers left their villages and started off to join their leader in his exile. This forced the authorities to bring the shaikh back to Kurdistan where they gave him house-arrest at Silêmanî, so that his followers could easily come and visit him.
Edmonds attributed Mamê Riza's arrest to a simple administrative blunder, but Elî Eskirî was anxious to point out that the reason was his cousin's aid to Mela Mistefa Barzanî, who had just escaped from house arrest in Silêmanî and made his way back to Barzan, where he led a fresh rebellion against the government. Mame Riza had sent 50 men to Barzan to assist Mela Mistefa.
The Heqqe sect still exists; a khalifa of Mamê Riza, Hamê Sûr, has usurped its leadership. His village is organized, my informants say, as a "kolkhoz". The land is worked collectively; everything, women included, is collective property. Hamê Sûr himself is apparently the only one who is more equal than the others in this "egalitarian" society: he disposes of much money, and in spite of his 70 years still arrogates the ius primae noctis of all the village girls, as people say.
- (5) Elî Eskirî and his father are not shaikhs. Elî is a prominent nationalist politician and guerrilla leader. He is at present (1977) the most important leader of the guerrilla war that is being waged against the Iraqi government.
- (6) Ehmedî Xaneqa was in the 1920's the leading Kurdish personality of the town of Kirkûk, and (together with the Talebanîs) his relative Şêx Mehmûd's main rival for power in southern Kurdistan. In 1923 he was heavily involved in pro-Turkish propaganda among the Kurds, probably because the British had brought back his rival Şêx Mehmûd as their asset against Turkey. His arrest (by Edmonds himself) effectively checked Turkish influence in

Table I Branches of the Berzencî family mentioned in the text



the province of Kirkûk (see Edmonds 1957, *passim*).

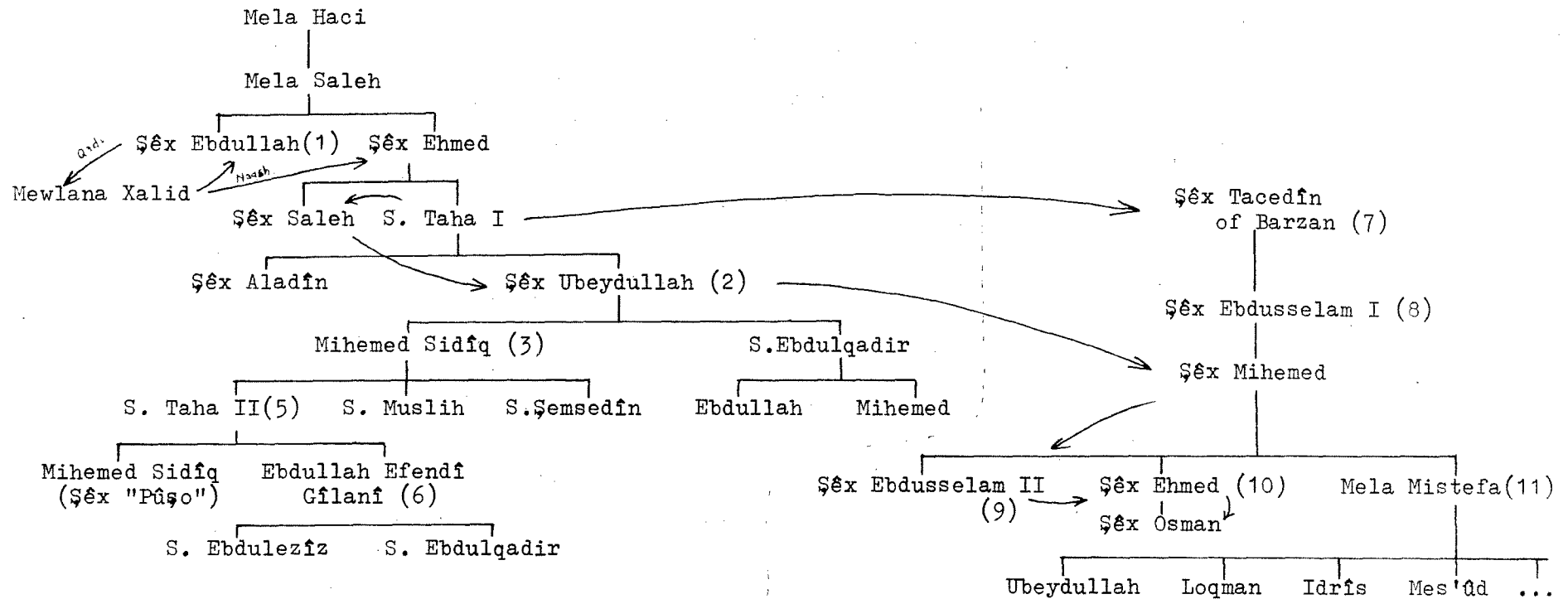
- (7) Şêx Ebdulkerîm of Krippîne (Iraq) is at present maybe the most influential Qadiri shaikh in Kurdistan: he has many khalifas in Iraq and Iran - I visited them at Mehabad, Bane and Sine. During the last period of the Kurdish war in Iraq (since 1966, if I am well informed) he sided with the government against Barzanî.
- (8) Ma'rûf of Nodê was the leading Berzencî shaikh at Silêmanî when Rich visited that town (1820). He conspired with the ulama against Mawlana Xalid. Since the latter's departure from Silêmanî (note 44) his descendants remained undisputed as the major religious and (after the fall of the Baban emirate) political leaders of the town and its surroundings.
- (9) Kak Ehmed acquired great fame as a miracle-worker. In spite of his antagonistic relations with Mawlana Xalid (according to some Naqshbandis he even attempted to assassinate this saint at the instigation of his father), he later established cordial relations with Xalid's main successor, Şêx Osman of Biyare. These two shaikhs initiated each other in their respective paths (Edmonds 1957: 74-78).
- (10) On Şêx Mehmûd, who proclaimed himself King of Kurdistan, see p. 278/9 and the literature mentioned in note 35.
- (11) Şêx Baba Seîd was either a descendant of Kak Ehmed or a more distant relative who had a spiritual link with him. He came from Iraq and established himself in the village Xewsabad near Mehabad (Persian Kurdistan). The name of the village suggests that he too had the reputation of being the ghawth. Lehmann-Haupt met him in Mehabad in 1898, and wrote that he had some 8,000 followers. From christian missionaries in Urmiya (Rezaye) Lehmann-Haupt heard that the shaikh and his immediate relatives had accepted Christianity and had been baptized secretly - although outwardly they remained muslims and continued to practice the Qadiri tariqa (Lehmann-Haupt vol I: 232, 272). But the villages over which the shaikh had control were freely accessible for the missionaries, and later - after being much pressed by the missionaries - the shaikh made his conversion public. During the First World War Mehabad was invaded by Turkish troops. When these heard of the shaikh's conversion they demanded that he revoke it, and when he refused, hanged him. His brother Necmeddîn succeeded him. (After Rev. F.G. Coan, Yesterday in Persia and Kurdistan. The passage on Şêx Baba is quoted in the Bulletin mensuel du centre d'études Kurdes (Paris), 1950 nr. 10: p 6-7).

The latter's son Hesên recently died and was succeeded by a son, Necmeddîn II, who still resides at Xewsabad. The followers of the family are mainly from the Mameş tribe; most members of this tribe pay regular visits to Xewsabad. I met a brother of the present shaikh at Mehabad where there is a khanaqa of followers of Xewsabad which I visited several times. The meetings of dervishes at this khanaqa are not significantly different from those elsewhere. No one at this khanaqa, nor anyone at the

Table II

The Sadatê Nehrî and the shaikhs of Barzan.

(only those branches that are mentioned in the text)



(S. = Seyyid)

other Qadiri khanaqa in town ever mentioned Şêx Baba's conversion to me. The shaikh has apparently been canonized again and his peculiarities been smoother over. There is even a street (or rather, an alley) that is named after him.

Notes to Table II: The Sadatê Nehrî and the Barzanî family

- (1) Şêx Seyyid Ebdullah was Mawlana Xalid's instructor in the Qadiri tariqa; later he and his brothers received the Nawshbandi initiation from his former murid. From that time on he and his successors were to practice the Naqshbandi tariqa only. Around that same time the family moved to Nehrî, chief village of the Şemdînan district, after which the family came to be called. The family had been residing in central Kurdistan for several centuries: legend has it that they descend from a son of Abd al-Qadir Gilani, Abd al-Aziz, who had come from Baghdad to Aqra, and whose son Abu Bakr established himself at Hekarî (Nikitine 1956: 212).
- (2) Ubeydullah is the shaikh who led the large nationalist revolt described in the text (p. 328).
- (3) It is not clear whether Mihemed Sidîq, Ubeydullah's successor, was also sent into exile after the revolt, and if so, when he returned. At any rate, at the beginning of the 20th century he was living at Nehrî, and was considered the most influential shaikh of central Kurdistan (Dickson 1910: 370; Nikitine and Soane, passim). His power rivalry with the shaikh of Barzan, Ebdusselam II, caused a lot of unrest in the Oramar district (lying in between the two shaikhs' territories). He ruled directly over the sedentary Herkî, the Girdî, the Zerza and the Xûmarû tribes, together some 13,000 persons, and had influence in a much wider territory (Nikitine & Soane 1923: 77n). Şêx Mihemed Sidîq was the shrewd protagonist of the tale of Tato and Suto (Nikitine & Soane 1923) who expertly exploited a rivalry between aghas and acquired power and possessions at their expense.
After his death (in 1911) a short but intense struggle for succession ensued between his son Seyyid Taha and his brother Ebdulqadir, in which the former won the upper hand.
- (4) Seyyid Ebdulqadir was exiled to Mekka with his father, and could not return to Istanbul until after the Young Turk revolution of 1908. That same year he was one of the founders of the first Kurdish political club, the Kürdistan Taali ve Terakki Cemiyeti (see Ch. V, section d). He played a role in nearly all Kurdish nationalist activities in Istanbul, became also a member of the (Ottoman) Senate and of the High Council.
In 1925, after the great revolt of Şêx Seîd, - with which he probably had nothing to do - he and his son Ebdullah were executed.
- (5) Seyyid Taha II, who had succeeded his father, was more a tribal leader and even a modern politician than a religious leader. After the outbreak of the First World War he went to Russia and tried to enlist support for the cause of an independent

Kurdistan - under his own leadership, of course. After the October revolution he returned to Turkey, but he had to keep moving because of Turkish assassination designs. In 1919 he contacted the British occupation authorities of Iraq at Baghdad, and pressed for a united Kurdistan under British protection. When the British remained non-committal, he went to Iran, where he joined Ismaîl Axa "Simko", chief of the Şikak tribe, who was in armed revolt against the Persian government. In October 1922 he returned to Iraq and offered the British his services against the Turks (who were at that time making active propaganda in Iraqi Kurdistan and even had a military unit at Riwandiz, which the British had been forced to evacuate). The British realized this time that they needed the seyyid, who was a man of great influence in the district of Riwandiz, and owned land there. They appointed him as qaimmaqam (governor) of the province. Due to Seyyid Taha's influence over the tribes the Turks could now be expelled, and British rule restored. Several years later (in 1932) Seyyid Taha accepted an invitation by Shah Reza of Iran to come to Tehran; he was poisoned there.

- (6) Şêx Ebdullah Efendî established himself (in 1941) in the village of Dize, in Mergiwer (Persian Kurdistan, territory of a settled section of the Herkî tribe). Known as a wise and pious man, and a staunch nationalist, he enjoyed great prestige. Even today people speak of him as "the best-loved man of Kurdistan". He and his brother Mihemed Sidîq "controlled an immediate following corresponding to that of a medium-sized tribe (about 8,000), but their influence reached farther afield" (Eagleton 1963: 20). When (in 1945-46) preparations were made for the autonomous Kurdish republic of Mehabad (supported, even stimulated by the Soviet Union), a large number of tribal leaders chose him as the favourite person to become the leader of (northern) Persian Kurdistan. The Soviets however considered him a British agent and tried (successfully) to prevent his election as the President of the short-lived republic.

Neither of this sons continues to hold the shaikhly mantle. Ebdulezîz attended military academy at Baghdad and became a high officer in the Iraqi army (a marshall, according to some of my informants). Later he moved to Rezaye, where he quietly lives in town. Ebdulqadir lives in Dize, and is a common landlord. The village, once buzzing with life and commercial activity (due to the great numbers of pilgrims-visitors) is now in a state of sorry decay.

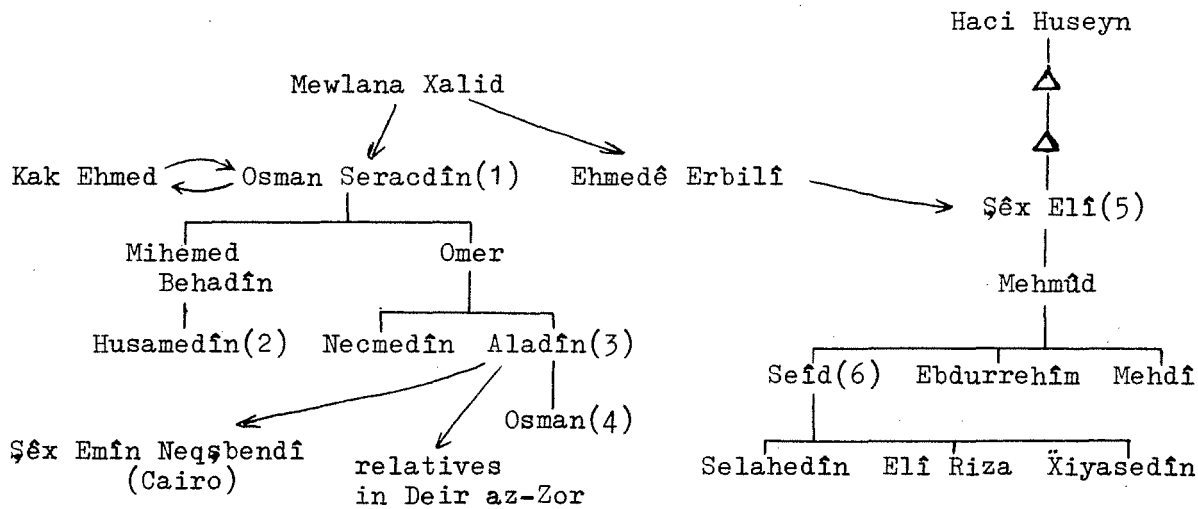
- (7) About the earliest shaikhs of Barzan the information is rather partisan and contradictory, According to some sources (e.g. Damaluji, quoted by Jawideh 1969: 145) Tacdîn was a khalifa of Mewlana Xalid himself, according to others of Şêx Seyyid Taha of Nehrî. The most complete source I found does not call the first Barzanî shaikh Tacdîn, but Ebdurrehman (Nikitine 1925a). Probably the two can be identified: the name Tacdîn (Ar. Taj ad-Din, "Crown of Religion") is an honorific. According to the same source, Ebdusselam I is Ebdurrehman's younger brother,

not his son.

However that may be, Tacdîn, after a period of religious education and spiritual instruction at Nehrî, returned to his native village of Barzan, where he soon became a rallying point of the poor peasantry who were exploited by the Zîbarî aghas (see also p.292/3). These peasant followers of the shaikh, together with the many refugees from all over Kurdistan, who were always welcome at Barzan, ultimately formed a kind of tribe, with a very strong personal loyalty to the shaikh.

- (8) Ebdusselam I, brother or son of Tacdîn, had been appointed khalifa by S. Taha's brother Şêx Saleh (who had succeeded him), against the will of Tacdîn. After the latter's death he acclaimed himself a shaikh, which caused him the enmity of Şêx Ubeydullah (who had meanwhile succeeded Saleh at Nehrî). Ubeydullah said that Ebdusselam and his disciples had become mad and victims of the Satan; early this century the Barzanîs were still commonly called "the madmen" (dîwane). But Ubeydullah also sent tribal troops against Ebdusselam, because the latter's influence continued to increase. In spite of military defeats Ebdusselam's disciples even acclaimed their shaikh the Mahdi, and the poor man, probably afraid of new reprisals by Ubeydullah if this went on, went into hiding. His son Mihemed, who succeeded him, re-established cordial relations with Nehrî by meekly going to Ubeydullah and ask him for his instruction in the tariqa. Ubeydullah made him his khalifa. The alternation of harmonious and inimical relations between the two shaikhly houses was to continue, however. After Ubeydullah's capture and exile from Kurdistan, Mihemed too was acclaimed the Mahdi by his followers; the Mahdist revolt was summarily described in the text.
- (9) Ebdusselam II is the shaikh who was involved in a perpetual power conflict with Mihemed Sidîq of Nehrî (3) and Behadîn of Bamernî. His relations with Seyyid Taha II (4) were quite cordial again, the latter even once took refuge in Barzan from persecution by the Ottomans. Several times Ebdusselam raised the banner of revolt against the (Ottoman) governor of Mosul province. In 1916 he was captured and hanged in Mosul.
- (10) Ehmed Barzanî, who succeeded his brother as the religious leader of the Barzan community, was well nigh permanently in revolt against British rule and the Iraqi monarchy that replaced it. Besides, he was in perpetual conflict with his neighbours the Zîbarî aghas and with Şêx Reşîd Lolan who had much influence over the Bradost tribe. These rivals accused him of horrible heterodoxies, such as allowing or even prescribing the drinking of wine and the eating of pig-meat.
- (11) His younger brother Mela Mistefa early distinguished himself as a leader of campaigns against the family's traditional local enemies and against government troops. In 1944 he led his own first major revolt (in Barzan, after escape from Silêmanî where he had been sent in exile, together with Şêx Ehmed). In order not to have to fight too many enemies at once he made peace

Table III The shaikhs of Biyare/Tawêla and of Palû



with the Zîbarîs, and married a daughter of the Zîbarî chieftain (this woman was later to have a great personal influence in the Kurdish nationalist movement). For nearly two years he fought a guerrilla war, always on the move, and avoiding major battles with the Iraqi army. In 1946 he went to Iran and became a general of the short-lived Kurdish republic of Mehabad; after the defeat of the republic he made a long Odyssey through Iraq, Turkey and Iran into the Soviet Union, where he remained in exile for 11 years, until the coup by Qassem in 1958, when he was invited back to Iraq. From 1961 to 1975, with but short interruptions he led the war of the Kurds against successive Iraqi governments. More than anything else, it is Barzanî, with his tremendous charisma, his legendary life history and military successes against superior armies, who has contributed to the now very general national consciousness and pride of the Kurds.

Notes to Table III: The Shaikhs of Biyare / Tawêla and of Palû

- (1) Şêx Osman Seracdin (Saraj ad-Din) was Mawlana Khalid's major successor in the Silêmanî region. He belonged to the family of aghas of the twin villages of Biyare and Tawêla in Hewraman, east of Silêmanî, just on the Iraqi side of the border. He established cordial relations with Kak Ehmed: the shaikhs initiated each other in their respective turuq. Since that time the shaikhs of this family instruct both the Naqshbandi and (a somewhat "civilized" version of) the Qadiri paths. The Berzencîs who descend from Kak Ehmed do not, however, instruct the Naqshbandi path.
- (2,3) In Edmonds' time the cousins Husamedin (at Tawêla) and Aladin (at Biyare) were among the politically most influential leaders of the area: "For the former I conceived great respect, for

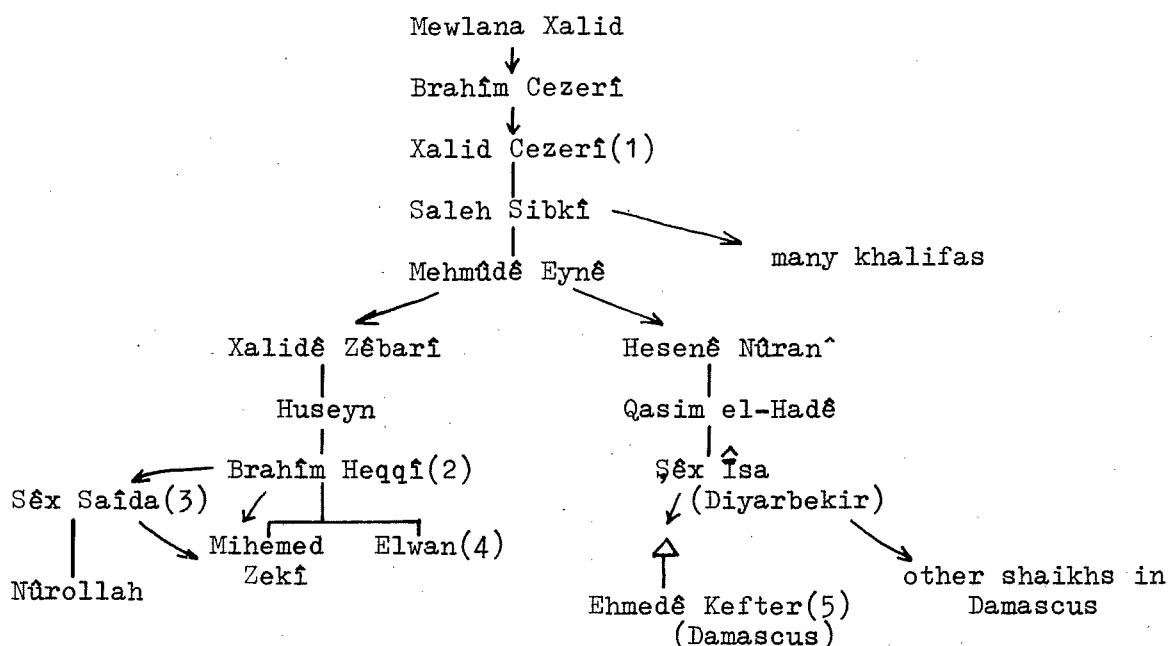
his moral authority was invariably exercised actively in the interests of law and order,....His cousin, in contrast, was a restless and grasping old man who, while careful to maintain an appearance of co-operation, lost no opportunity of using his pull with the administration in attempts to establish formal title to lands which had been in the possession of unsophisticated villagers for generations; he received a small salary and was quite shameless in his persistent demands to get a rise." (Edmonds 1957: 156).

- (4) Şêx Osman moved from Biyare in Iraq to Durû on the Persian side of the border after Qassem's coup, when many landowners in Iraqi Kurdistan were threatened by muqawama ash-sha'biyya ("Popular resistance forces"). It was at this village of Durû that I visited Şêx Osman two times (see p. 305, 319).
- (5) Şêx Elî was the great-grandson of a certain (Qadiri) shaikh, Hac Huseyn (who possibly belonged to the Berzencî family), who had left his native town of Silêmanî for Damascus and later the Diyarbekir region, where he opened a tekiye (khanaqa). Elî studied in his youth at Diyarbekir and Cezîre. At the latter town he met the Naqshbandi shaikh Ehmed of Erbîl, a khalifa of Mewlana Xalid. In due time Elî was initiated in the Naqshbandi tariqa, and went to Damascus, where he spent five years at the feet of Mewlana Xalid (according to another informant, himself a shaikh, Şêx Elî was not initiated in the Naqshbandi tariqa by Şêx Ehmed, but by Şêx Mehmûd Sahib, a half-brother of Mewlana Xalid). Then his master sent him to Palû, northeast of Diyarbekir, to open a branch of the order there. Problems with government officials made Elî move east to the Mûş and Bitlîs regions, where he made many disciples. He won several Qadiri shaikhs (khalifas of his ancestors?) over to the Naqshbandi tariqa. Towards the end of his life he returned to Palû. (see Rondot 1937: 46).
- (6) His grandson Şêx Seîd had great influence among the Zaza-speaking tribes NE of Diyarbekir (Palû, Lîce, Hanî,...). In 1925 he led the first massive nationalist revolt in Turkish Kurdistan. He was assisted by relatives who were also shaikhs. Also his brothers and sons played leading roles in the revolt and subsequent developments, all of which will be treated in chapter V.

Notes to Table IV: Other important Naqshbandi families

- (1) Xalid Cezerî was a khalifa of Mewlana Xalid. He established himself at the village of Besret, NW of Cezîre (Cizre) in present Turkey. I am not sure whether the links down to Brahîm Heqqî are all genealogical. The surname of the second Xalid suggests that he belonged to the Zîbarî tribe, and may therefore be a khalifa rather than a descendent of the preceding shaikhs.
- (2) Brahîm Heqqî left Besret for northeastern Syria after Atatürk started persecuting the shaikhs in Turkey. He had a reputation

Table IV

Other important Naqshbandi families

of great holiness: he is the ghawth (mentioned in note 5) whose clothes never got wet when it rained.

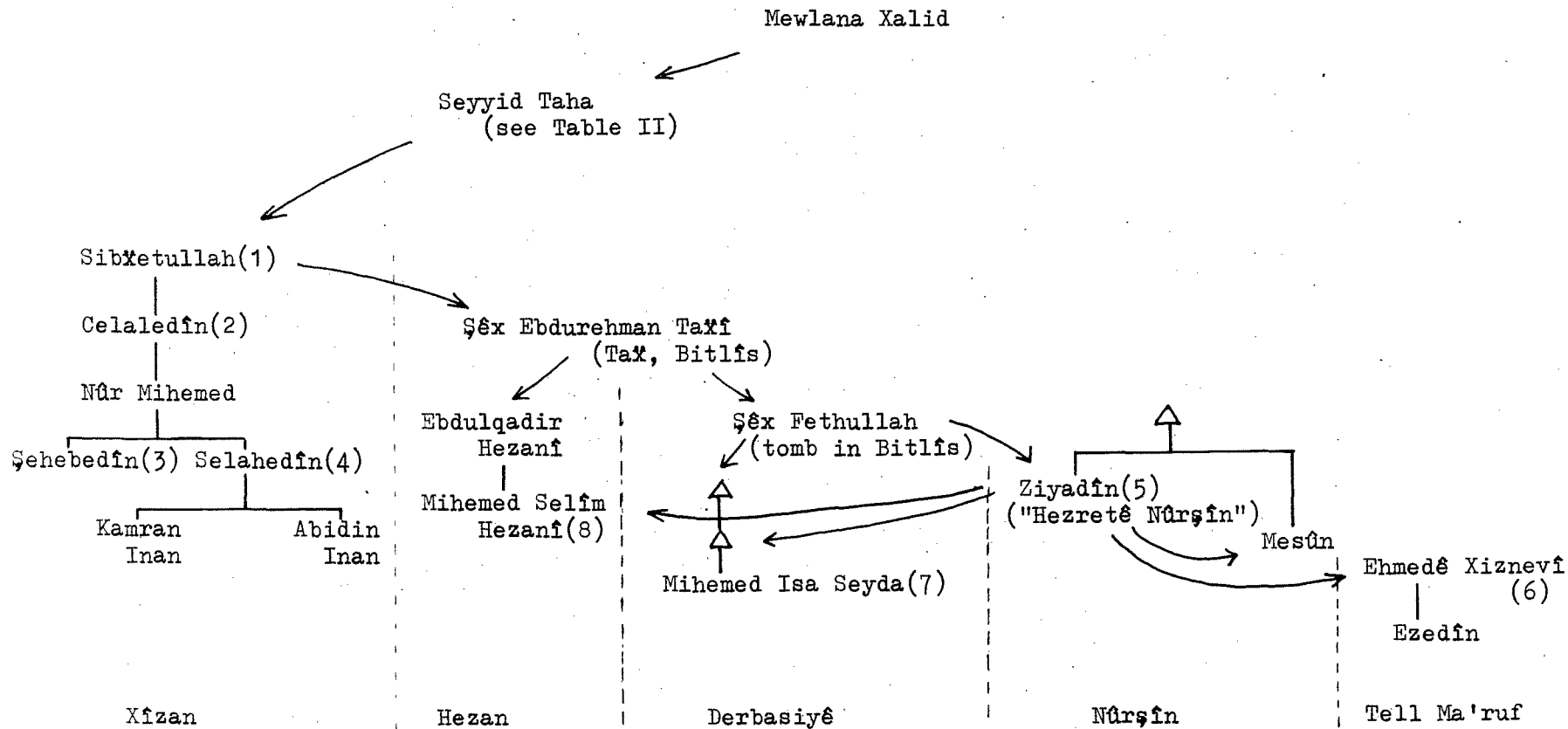
- (3) Şêx Saîda, a khalifa of Brahîm Heqqî, remained in Cizre (see p. 325). He had great influence among the tribes of south-eastern Turkey, and a great reputation as a miracle-worker and a clairvoyant. The sons of his own preceptor studied under him.
- (4) Şêx Elwan has a khanaqa in the village of Helwa, near Dugir (in the Syrian Cezîre). I attended a khatma there, and was not much impressed by the shaikh.
- (5) Şêx Ehmedê Keftêr was mentioned by some Naqshbandi murids in western Kurdistan when I asked them whether the order had a supreme head. Others contested this.

Notes to Table V: More influential Naqshbandi families

- (1) Şêx Sibxetullah, residing at Xîzan, east of Bitlîs, was known in a wide area as "the ghawth" (see note 5). My information on his family is very incomplete, and sometimes contradictory; I am not sure the family tree as I give it is 100% correct, nor are the dates given unambiguous.
- (2) Celaledîn is said to have led, during the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78, a party of 30,000 Kurds on a plundering foray as far as Bayezid (Dickson, 1910: 370).
- (3) Şêx Şehbedîn led a pan-islamist revolt (with Kurdish nationalist overtones) against the Young Turks in 1912 or 1913. Other leaders were a Şêx (or Mela) Selîm and a Şêx Elî, also from Xîzan. Many chieftains had previously promised support, but failed to give it when necessary. The revolt was suppressed,

Table V

More influential Naqshbandi families



and the leaders took refuge in the Russian consulate at Bitlîs. At the outbreak of World War I, the Turks took the consulate; the rebels were hanged. (reports on this revolt are all contradictory; see Nikitine (1956): 195; Chirguh: 19; Safrastian: 74; Jwaideh: 328/9; Turkish newspaper DÜnya, June 4, 1977).

- (4) During the time of the great revolts (1925-1930) Selahedîn collaborated with the kemalists, who gave him temporary authority over the district. After 1950 he was active in the Democratic Party (of Turkey) where he was one of a group with moderate Kurdish nationalist ideas. His sons did not succeed to shaihood, but chose political careers. Kamran became a senator, and even a vice-secretary-general of NATO (he is considered one of the staunchest pro-Americans of the entire country). He was a cabinet minister in the right-wing National Front government that governed Turkey from August through December, 1977. Abidîn is a member of Parliament for the province of Bitlîs. The family has large land-holdings in several parts of northern Kurdistan.
- (5) Şêx Ziyadîn is usually called "the Hezret (an honorific title, "His Holiness") of Nûrşîn" (a village between Mûş and Bitlîs). The Hezret was a man of exemplary holiness, with no interest in (nationalist) politics; his nephew and successor, Mes'ûn, though sympathizing with the nationalist cause, always managed to stay aloof when anything serious was going on (such as Şêx Seîd's revolt of 1925).
- (6) Şêx Ehmed of the village Xizne (in Turkey) moved to Syria during Atatürk's persecutions of the shaihs, but his influence in Turkey remains to this day. His coming to Syria had effects there not unlike those following Mewlana Xalid's return from India to Silêmanî. Masses of Qadiri murids suddenly flocked to his side, which provoked hatred and jealous counter-propaganda from the side of the Qadiri shaihs who had since long been established here and now suddenly saw their following (and incomes!) dwindle. They called him a kafir, but without much effect. For several decades Şêx Ehmed exercised virtually unrivalled influence in NW Syria, from his village Tell Ma'ruf (which some of his less religious opponents mockingly call "the Vatican").
- (7) Şêx Mihemed Îsa is the son of another khalifa of the Hezret, who had his followers mainly among the Cibran tribe. The Cibran participated in Şêx Seîd's revolt, and this shaikh, too, fled to Syria. His son, Şêx Mihemed Îsa became prominent in nationalist circles, and was among the four founders of the Kurdish democratic Party of Syria (1956).
- (8) Another khalifa of the Hezret, Mihemed Selîm of Hezan, was to turn against Şêx Seîd, the only shaikh in the region who did so.

CHAPTER V

Şêx Seîd's revolt

V. a Introduction

In February 1925 a large area of Turkish Kurdistan rose in revolt. Towns, seats of Republican Turkish administration, were taken, Turkish officials expelled or taken prisoners. Charismatic leader of this revolt was a Naqshbandi shaikh with great local influence, Şêx Seîd; the explicit aim of the rebellion was the establishment of an independent Kurdish state, where the islamic principles, violated in modern Turkey, were to be respected.

At first sight, this nationalist revolt does not seem much different from the preceding ones, such as that led by Şêx Ubeydullah of Nehrî in 1880 (see p. 328). On closer inspection, however, it appears that some elements were present that distinguish this movement from earlier ones. The revolt had been prepared by a political organization, that exploited the shaikh's charisma in order to mobilize a mass following that it did not have itself. The shaikh, however, was much more than a mere figure-head; he assumed supreme leadership of the military operations.

There is a parallel here with the Kurdish war in Iraq (1961-1975), where Barzanî (not a shaikh himself, but of a shaikhly family) had a similar ambivalent relationship with the Democratic Party of Kurdistan. It was largely due to the existence of a party and the dissemination of political propaganda that these movements, unlike Ubeydullah's, did not die with the removal of their leader.

Şêx Seîd was captured two months after his revolt broke out, and hanged some months later. Guerrilla activity by his followers was however to continue for a few years. A later revolt (the so-called Ararat revolt, culminating in 1929-1930) is, in fact, the continuation of Şêx Seîd's revolt.

In my opinion Şêx Seîd's revolt opened a new stage in the history of Kurdish nationalism, a stage that is not yet past. Because the revolt also exemplifies the roles of shaikhs and aghas in interaction with the state, I have chosen it as the subject matter for this concluding chapter. At first a few remarks have to be made on the context of the revolt.

A note on the sources for this chapter

The sources used for the first section, dealing with the earlier phases of Kurdish "nationalism", have been discussed in previous chapters, and do not need mentioning again. The second section is largely based on standard works on Turkish history: Lewis (1961), Shaw & Shaw (1977), Avcioglu's *Millî Kurtuluş Tarihi* and the works of Aydemir; where other sources were used they are referred to in the footnotes. The rest of the chapter is based on a number of interviews and a study of most of the available written sources. I have not stayed in the central areas where the revolt took place, but did interview elderly men in other areas (south of the affected districts) as well as a number of people who had escaped to Syria after the revolt. Most accounts were of limited value. The revolt is considered one of the great episodes of Kurdish history, and most informants had told their story so often, polishing and embellishing it each time, that it was very difficult to discover the factual basis. I received essential information from the following informants, (all living in Syria), who were all in a position to get a more or less correct insight (and who are considered authorities by the Kurds):

Mela Hesen Hisyar. He was 20 years old when the revolt broke out, and a subaltern officer in the Turkish army, stationed at Silvan (Meyafarqîn). A distant relative of Şêx Seîd, he remained close to the shaikh during the revolt. After the shaikh's capture he was one of those who continued guerrilla warfare, until he too was wounded and taken prisoner (1927). After the amnesty of 1928 he was released. When, that very year, he heard that the Ararat district was in revolt, he went there and fought until that revolt, too, was quelled. Then he lived in hiding in Turkey for some time and ultimately found refuge in Syria. In his account he gives Şêx Seîd an even more central role than the other sources do, and - though he does not deny the shaikh's sincere piety - he claims that the shaikh was primarily motivated by nationalism, and used religious phraseology instrumentally, in the service of this nationalism.

Memdûh Selîm. Originally from Van, he was one of the founders of the Kurdish students' union Hêvî, in 1912. During the World War he was an officer at Erzerum; after the armistice he re-appeared in Istanbul in nationalist circles, as a prominent journalist. He seems not to have been directly involved in Şêx Seîd's revolt, though he had contacts with Azadî. In 1927 he was one of the founders of the Kurdish League Xoybûn (headquarters in Syria) and one of the planners of the Ararat revolt. He was extremely reluctant to talk about his own role, but gave useful information about less personal matters. He appeared very well-informed.

Şêx Mihemed Îso Seyda. Still a child during the revolt. His father was a shaikh belonging to the Cibran tribe, and participated actively in the revolt. The young child and his mother were imprisoned for some time, while the father was at large; they were released because the mother was Circassian, not Kurdish. In 1929 they escaped to Syria. The shaikh is frequently visited by tribesmen from Turkey, and it is from them that he has his knowledge of the occurrences during the revolt.

Arif Beg. A Zaza Kurd from Maden, who was an agricultural engineer in government service at Diyarbekir in 1925, and had some knowledge of the state of affairs in the villages of the plains around that time.

Then, of the written sources, the following proved to be of interest:

Zinnar Silopi, Doza Kürdûstan. Silopi is the pseudonym of Qadrî Beg Cemîl Paşa, leading member of the Kûrt Taalî Cemiyeti of Diyarbekir.

M. Şerif Fîrat, Doğu illeri ve Varto tarihi. Fîrat belonged to the leading family of the Xormek tribe, that actively opposed the revolt. In this curious book the author tries to prove that all Kurds are really Turks and to show that the alevi tribes, especially his own tribe (the Xormek are alevi Kurds), have always been faithful defenders of the Republic of Turkey; all Kurdish nationalists are called traitors. Nevertheless, the book is an important source for the events in the north-eastern sector of the rebellious area. The author, who was a schoolteacher, gives what seems an accurate account. (The book has an interesting history. After it appeared for the first time, in 1945, the author was murdered for it. After the military coup of 1960 president-prime minister Gürsel, who started an offensive against Kurdish nationalism, had it reprinted by the Ministry of Education, and wrote himself a recommending foreword, praising the author as a great idealist. A third impression appeared in Ankara, 1970).

M. Nuri Dersîmi, Kürdistan tarihinde Dersîm. Dersîmi was a young veterinarian, a member of Kürdistan Taalî Cemiyeti, who played an active role in the Koçgîrî revolt (1920/1) and followed subsequent events from nearby. His account of Şêx Seîd's revolt, however, seems to lean heavily on Fîrat.

Of other near-contemporary Kurdish sources the following merit mentioning, in spite of their propagandistic nature:

S. Bedr Khan, The case of Kurdistan against Turkey. Philadelphia, 1928. (anon.) Les massacres Kurdes en Turquie. Publication de la ligue nationale kurde Hoyboun. Cairo 1928.

dr. Bletch Chirguh, La question kurde, ses origines et ses causes. Cairo 1930.

The three brochures mentioned above were all published under the auspices of Xoybûn, and reflect the opinions of this exile organization. The authors were active in Istanbul in 1918-1921, however; on this period their information is first-hand. For Şêx Seîd's revolt, again, the stream of refugees to Syria gave them excellent information, too. Additional useful information I found in the Foreign Office files in London (Public Records Office).

Of the Turkish sources, newspapers are interesting; they reflected the official view, which was rarely reflected elsewhere. I consulted the newspaper Cumhuriyet for the year 1925. Aydemir's and Avcioglu's works give some information not easily found elsewhere. I have not been able to find an important book that may be relevant, this is: Behçet Cemal, Şeyh Said isyani (Istanbul 1955).

Secondary sources I used many; when quoted, they are referred to in the notes.

V. b History of Kurdish national consciousness

Kurdish nationalism as a socially significant force is a rather recent phenomenon. That is not to say that in the past no Kurdish "national" awareness existed. The linguistic difference with others was obvious, and there are quite early indications that also otherwise Kurds saw themselves as different from Turks, Arabs and Persians (not to mention their non-muslim neighbours). Thus e.g., the 17th-century Kurdish poet Ehmedê Xanî prefaced to his epic poem Mem û Zîn a section entitled "Derdê me" ("our ills"), in which he lamented the Kurds' division, which caused them to be subjected by the Ottomans and Safavids, or previous empires. His hopes were for a king to arise from amidst the Kurds:

"If only there were harmony among us,
if we were to obey a single one of us,
he would reduce to vassalage ,
Turks, Arabs and Persians, all of them.
We would perfect our religion, our state,
and would educate ourselves in learning and wisdom..."¹

Xanî was, and is, widely read in Kurdistan. Manuscripts were copied and kept by melas ("village priests"); students would learn fragments of Xanî by heart along with koranic suras, Hafez, Sa'di and others. Mem û Zîn is universally considered the national epic of the Kurds. It is likely therefore that Xanî's lament adequately reflects the national feelings of educated Kurds in the past few centuries.

Although Xanî's longing for Kurdish grandeur may have been shared by many, one would be wrong in assuming that it ever led to a strong solidarity among Kurds vis-à-vis others. It never made contending chieftains refrain from allying themselves with non-Kurdish outsiders against their fellow Kurds, it never made them unite against a foreign enemy. And this is, in fact, the essence of Xanî's complaint. Only a strong king would be able to make the Kurds stop fighting each other, liberate them from foreign domination, and bring them progress and prosperity. With Xanî we do not yet find an idea capable of inspiring a popular movement. He did not preach abstract

ideals like love for or loyalty to the nation. The strong and wise leader is of overriding importance. And, indeed, until the 1920's popular support for movements of a (more or less) nationalist character was motivated by loyalty towards their leaders rather than by nationalist sentiment. Since then, nationalism has become a very significant motivating force, but nevertheless loyalty to one of the (nationalist or other) leaders often overrides the ulterior interests of the nation.

Periods in nationalism.

A periodization of Kurdish (proto-) nationalist movements readily suggests itself. The earliest phase was characterized by local rulers' attempts to make themselves independent of the central state apparatus, to restore a "golden age" thought to have existed in the past, or to thwart attempts by the central government to impose closer central control. It is doubtful whether the label "nationalist" may be applied here; such movements are part and parcel of politics in the periphery of empires. Some of these local rulers, however, clearly saw themselves as the kind of Kurdish king that Ehmedê Xanî had called for. The best known instance of these movements is Bedir Xan Beg's assertion of nearly independent rule over a much enlarged territory, as a reaction to European penetration of Kurdistan and Ottoman attempts to curtail his powers (see p. 222 ff).

With the abolishment of the emirates this phase came to a close - although most later movements retained the same element of reaction against the imposition of ever more effective central control. In the preceding chapters the specific conditions and social changes of the following period have been discussed, and it was shown (section IV. h) how shaikhs came to the fore as the most prominent political leaders. The conditions of this period also constituted a fertile soil for the growth of millenarian expectations; shaikhs were the natural candidates for messianistic roles. Thus, the shaikhs of Barzan and Ubeydullah of Nehrî had a large following among the poor peasantry, who expected them to bring about a new and better

world. Maybe Şêx Ubeydullah's revolt (see p. 328) is the "purest" instance of this phase of development of Kurdish nationalism. The shaikh himself had nationalistic intentions, as is clear from his correspondence with American missionaries. He wanted to establish an autonomous Kurdistan (eventually to become fully independent), to which end he tried to enlist foreign support, and planned a step-by-step strategy. The shaikh's nationalistic motivation and rational planning (which may have been shared by the tribal chieftains supporting him) contrasts with the irrational zeal of the mass of his followers. The latter were motivated not so much by nationalism as by loyalty to the shaikh personally and by the belief that under his leadership a single campaign would destroy oppression and poverty and a new world would come about. If "magical and "rational" attitudes may be seen as opposite ways of reaching desired ends, the participants' attitude may be called "magical". Not all participants had the same motivation; many (tribesmen, especially) simply joined the revolt because their chieftains did.

Thus, this second phase of nationalism was characterized by (quasi-) millenarian expectations, and the leading role of shaikhs. There was also, among the participants, a definite feeling of being exploited and oppressed,^{1a} although there was as yet little awareness of how this happened. These characteristics were not to disappear with the advent of a later stage of nationalism, but rather underwent gradual changes. Experience showed that the millennium did not arrive with a single stroke, that the mere following of a holy leader did not suffice. Also, the Kurdishness of the millennium received ever more stress. The idea that all Kurds form a single nation that belongs together and deserves an independent political existence gradually gained field.

Kurds: a nation?

Previously, "Kurdishness" was a rather floating concept. It referred to different groups, depending on the context and the speaker. The term "Kurmanç" (Kurd) could refer to Kurdish tribesmen as opposed

to, for instance, Turkish tribesmen, Ottoman townspeople or christian subject peasantry; it could refer to speakers of the Kurmancî dialect as opposed to speakers of Zaza or the southern dialects; or it could refer to the (Kurdish) peasantry as opposed to their own aghas or the Ottoman administration. The yezidis, speakers of the same dialect, but despised as "devil-worshippers", were often considered not to be Kurds by the muslim Kurds. On the other hand, many tribal chiefs, and sometimes entire tribes, prided themselves on (real or fictitious) Arabic descent. Kurds who entered the civil service and other town-dwellers often preferred to call themselves Osmanli (Ottoman); to them the very name of Kurd (as that of Turk!) implied backwardness and boorishness.

The concept of the nation as we know it² was foreign to the Middle East. The only solidarity group wider than the family or tribe that is recognized in islamic doctrine is the umma, the community of muslims. In the Ottoman Empire one's juridical position depended on the religious community to which one belonged: muslim, Greek (orthodox), Armenian (gregorian) or Jew. The latter three communities had a certain autonomy in juridical and administrative matters. Within the muslim community there was a strict division between the sunni majority and the alevi (shiites), who were considered heretics. The Ottoman sultans, from the mid-16th century down, boasted the title of Caliph, leader of all true believers³. As such they commanded the religiously sanctioned loyalty of all (sunni) muslims, no matter which language they spoke. Both clergy and Ottoman officials stressed the unity of sunni Kurds with sunni Turks, sunni Arabs and the other sunni ethnic groups. Differences between sunni and alevi muslims (c.q. between sunni Kurds and alevi Kurds) were fanned into enmity by the same authorities, because of Ottoman-Safavid rivalries. Especially Sultan Abdulhamid II (who ruled from 1876 to 1909 and who stimulated pan-islamic propaganda at home and abroad) succeeded in consolidating the strong loyalties of all his sunni subjects. The Hamidiye militias were another successful means of binding (sunni) Kurds to the sultan. Kurdish tribesmen's loyalties to the Sultan-Caliph (though

not to the empire) overrode their national loyalties, even when (around the turn of the century) nationalism in the modern sense had started to move people.

This is illustrated by a passage from the memoirs of the Kurdish nationalist Qadrî Beg. His nationalism had been awakened or strengthened during his study in Istanbul, where the first nationalist organizations flourished. In 1914 he was drafted into the army and assigned to a brigade that, to his great pleasure, consisted almost entirely of Kurdish tribesmen (Hesenan and Cibran tribes). He expected to be able to discuss Kurdish "national ideals" with the Kurdish officers, but was disappointed: "Alas! These tribal officers, because they had strong ties of loyalty to the Caliph of Islam, did not want to hear anything about the national problems of the Kurds."⁴

Not all tribal chieftains were devoid of nationalism in this period, but it was not until the Caliphate was abolished by Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) in 1924 that a wave of more or less nationalist-inspired revolts erupted in Kurdistan.

More foreign even than the concept of the nation was that of the nation-state. All Middle Eastern states were multi-national, while several peoples, such as the Kurds and the Armenians (and the Jews, if these may properly be called a nation) were represented in more than one state. Another characteristic of the Middle East was that often more than one ethnic group inhabited a same territory. Ethnic groups all had their own occupational specializations, and depended on each other to a certain extent. Thus, the areas of settlement of Kurds and Armenians largely coincided. Cynical as this may sound, it was the Armenian massacres that made a Kurdish state feasible.

Nationalist currents in the Ottoman Empire

It was from Europe that these concepts hailed; it was Europe, too, that fanned the nationalisms. This is not the place to write the history of nationalism among the Empire's nations⁵; I shall sketch the basic outlines only.

Greek and Slavic nationalism were quite actively stimulated by Europeans. Russia also took a keen interest in the Armenians, its obvious (potential) allies in its confrontation with the Ottoman Empire. As a reaction to these threats, a number of new, and partly conflicting

ideologies took root in leading intellectual circles of the Empire (last decades of the 19th century). Ottomanism was a kind of patriotism based on citizenship in the Ottoman state. It stressed the common interests of all Ottoman citizens, independent of language or religion. Pan-Islamism found its strongest champion in Sultan Abdulhamid (1876-1909) himself. It had a definite anti-colonialist tinge. Pan-Turkism, the romantic idea of uniting all Turkic peoples in a single political unit, may originally have been a reaction to, and imitation of the Czar's Pan-Slavism. These ideologies came to fruition within the same social stratum: the military and civil officials and urban-based landlords. The Young Turk movement originated among the most enlightened and best educated of this stratum, in the 1880's. It was a political movement, strongly influenced by French liberalism and positivist philosophy. The Young Turks embraced a program of constitutionalism (as against the Sultan's absolutism), Ottomanism, and political freedom (initially, the movement called itself "new Ottomans"; the name of "Young Turks" was a label foreigners attached to it and that became generally accepted). Significantly, many of its first protagonists were non-Turkish muslims. Two Kurdish intellectuals, Ebdullah Cewdet and Ishaq Sukûtî, played important parts⁶. The sultan's loyal subjects embraced Pan-Islamism, which was rejected by the Young Turks: it denied the equality of all Ottoman citizens and provided a justification of the sultan's absolutism. Gradually, however, the Young Turk movement came under the charm of (Pan-) Turkist ideas. European turcophiles as Léon Cahun made an important contribution to the acceptance of these ideas, through their contacts with leading Turkish intellectuals. As the christian nationalities seemed to reject Ottomanism, their and the Turkish nationalism mutually reinforced each other's development. After the Young Turk revolution (1908) the Committee of Unity and Progress, which remained in the background but possessed the real power, did little to hide its increasingly chauvinistic Turkish nationalism. It seems that the nationalism of the other muslim nationalities arose largely as a response and reaction to the increasing prominence of Turkish nationalism

and Pan-Turkist aspirations.

In order to place the Kurdish nationalist movement of those days in its proper historical context, a few words have to be said about the upheavals of the (First) World War and the Turkish War of Independence.

V. c End of the Ottoman Empire and birth of the Republic of Turkey

In 1908 Young Turk officers of the Committee of Union and Progress forced Sultan Abdulhamid to restore the Constitution and accept elections for parliament⁷. The (slightly revised) Constitution promised legal equality for all citizens (independent of religion or language) and considerable civil liberties. For a short time, optimism and Ottoman patriotism prevailed. Soon however, it became only too clear that the Empire's ills were not to be healed by the very existence of a Constitution. Within half a year, it lost more territory than in the preceding 30 years together. These external problems, and an abortive counter-revolution in the spring of 1909, gave the Committee of Union and Progress the excuse for an increasingly authoritarian rule: three members (Enver, Talaat and Mehmed Cavid, as ministers of War, the Interior and Finance, respectively) assumed ever more dictatorial powers. In 1914 this triumvirate sent Turkey into the First World War as an ally of Germany and Austria, hoping to reconquer lost territories and to "liberate" Turkic peoples under Russian rule (in the Caucasus and central Asia).

Armenian massacres and Russian invasion

In May 1915, orders were issued that all Armenians were to be evacuated from Eastern Anatolia, as it was feared that they would take the side of the Russians and attack the Turkish armies in the back. Some Armenians reached the camps in northern Iraq and central Syria where they were to be concentrated; many perished on the way, or were killed outright by Turkish gendarmes or jealous Kurdish neighbours⁸. Many more were killed when a short-lived Armenian state,

established at Van under Russian protection, was destroyed by Ottoman reinforcements (July 1915).

Early in 1916 Russian armies invaded Eastern Anatolia, forcing many muslims to flee south and westward. During that year the Russians advanced beyond Erzincan. From the south British troops from India advanced into Mesopotamia. Ottoman defense was more effective there, and at first the British were repelled. In February 1917 they recaptured Kut al-Amara (400 km south of Baghdad) which had been taken and evacuated in their first campaign. Then they advanced further north, in order to capture the oil wells of Kerkûk and Mosul and to join forces with the Russians in the north. The Bolshevik revolution, however, temporarily reversed the situation. Russian troops were withdrawn from the occupied territories. They left most of their arms in the hands of the Anatolian Armenians that remained. In the southern Caucasus, Georgians, Armenians and Azerbaijanis established an independent Transcaucasian Republic (Dec. 1917), which was recognized by the Ottomans. Armenian para-military units, either penetrating from this republic, or formed among the Anatolian Armenians, now took revenge on the muslims living among them and massacred many. Early in 1918 Ottoman armies pushed eastward from Diyarbekir and Erzincan, forcing many Armenians as refugees into the southern Caucasus. Kurdish militias played their part in these operations.

Armistice and partition of the Empire

These advances on the eastern front (even oil-rich Baku, on the Caspian Sea, was temporarily taken) could not compensate for losses in the south and west. On October 31, 1918 the Ottoman government saw itself forced to accept an armistice and tolerate occupation by allied troops. Partitioning of the Empire, as previously agreed upon by the British and French representatives Sykes and Picot, went into force. France took Syria (including the Lebanon) and Cilicia, Britain Palestine, Jordan and Iraq. Istanbul and the straits had formerly been claimed by the Russians (for whom they were of vital importance). As the new Soviet regime, however, had renounced all imperialist claims,

imposed central control on all guerrilla bands and prepared for war. The first successes were won on the eastern front. In 1919 an Armenian Republic had been constituted in the southern Caucasus (as a successor to the Transcaucasian Republic). In the spring of 1920 armed Armenian bands started to raid eastern Anatolia from this base, in an attempt to take by force the provinces promised at Sèvres, now that it became clear that the Turks would never cede them voluntarily. Due to the upheavals of the preceding years the Armenians had become a rather small minority in the eastern provinces¹¹, and it seems that all military activity originated from across the border¹². In Oct. 1920 Kazim Karabekir, commander of the eastern front, advanced against the Armenians, pushed them back behind their frontiers and forced the Republic's government to accept a peace treaty in which it renounced all claims to Anatolian territory and accepted a borderline that still stands (apart from a few minor revisions). On the western front victory was not so easily won. The Greeks continued their offensives and advanced further into Anatolia. Not until Sept. 1921 was the Greek offensive broken and were the Greek troops put to flight. In the summer of 1922 the Turks completely destroyed the Greek armies in Anatolia. The Allies had to accept the new Turkey as a fact. The Treaty of Sèvres was meaningless now. In November 1922 a new peace conference started at Lausanne. In the resulting treaty (signed July 24, 1923) the territorial integrity of Turkey, as defined in the National Pact, was recognized, with the sole exception of Mosul province. This province, roughly comprising southern Kurdistan, contained the important oil deposits of Mosul and Kerkuk. The British, whose northward advance had been largely motivated by the presence of these deposits, were unwilling to abandon their control of them. The future of the province was to be decided in bilateral talks between Turkey and Britain¹³. Armenians and Kurds were not mentioned in the treaty; Turkish sovereignty of the eastern provinces was implicitly acknowledged.

The Republic of Turkey

Turkey's independence was won. No efforts were spared to weld it rapidly into a viable modern state. On Oct. 29, 1923 the Grand National Assembly accepted a new constitution which declared Turkey a republic. Mustafa Kemal was elected its president. The ex-sultan Abdülmecid, who had been put on the throne less than a year previously, retained the office of Caliph, but Mustafa Kemal made him understand that this was not to have any political content. The following March the caliphate was entirely abolished. Many more measures followed that reduced the role of Islam in public life: clerics were pensioned off, the traditional religious schools (medreses) replaced by a modern secular education system and, the shariat courts abolished (1924). As a reaction there were a number of minor revolts by muslim conservatives. Fanatical leaders at several places convinced simple peasants that Mustafa Kemal was the Dajjal ("Anti-Christ": see p. 253, 332). The resulting messianistic revolts did not, in general, present any real threat to the new regime.

Next to nationalism and secularism, populism (halkçılık) was another cornerstone of the new regime. The basic idea was that all citizens of the republic were equal regardless of class, rank, religion or occupation. Religious discrimination was abolished and conflicting class interests denied, with the ultimate consequence that socialist parties and trade unions were banned. Populism became the ideological justification for a policy of nation-building that denied the existence of a separate Kurdish (or Laz, Circassian, etc.) culture, and made the Kurds into Turks by decree. Historians were ordered to produce "scientific proof" of the identity of the two nations. Under the guise of struggle against "feudalism" a law was passed that gave the government authority to expropriate large landholdings in the eastern provinces - a weapon against aghas and shaikhs. The expropriated lands were to be given not to the local landless Kurds, but to Turkish or turkicized settlers from elsewhere (mainly muhacirs, muslims from the Balkan who came to Turkey after 1923). In fact, as early as 1923/24 several influential shaikhs and aghas were

removed from the area¹⁴. Until 1925 this policy, which later was to develop into its logical consequence of forced assimilation, was visible in its outlines only. The Turkish government did not want to alienate the Kurds, because of the Mosul question.

The Mosul question

Britain and Turkey did not reach an agreement on the status of this oil-rich province and the delineating of the Turkish-Iraqi border within the stipulated time (see note 13). The matter was therefore referred to the League of Nations, which appointed a three-man commission of investigation. Turkey proposed a referendum among the population of the province. Agents were active all over southern Kurdistan, making anti-British, pro-Turkish propaganda. The British refused the referendum; they considered the question one of border delimitation only. They tried, meanwhile, to buy Kurdish good-will with vague promises of autonomy or independence. The investigating commission visited the disputed province in Feb. 1925, to probe the local situation and the population's wishes. At the moment they were investigating in Mosul, Şêx Seîd's revolt broke out in Turkey, and was soon followed by severe repressive measures. Understandably, there were Turkish suspicions that this revolt was a British machination, intended to prejudice the commission's findings.

The commission, incidentally, concluded that the Kurds constituted a majority of Mosul's population, and that there were strong arguments for the creation of an independent Kurdish state¹⁵. Oil, however, carries more weight than most arguments. Britain did not intend to part with it. In June 1926 Turkey and Great Britain signed a treaty in which Turkey surrendered all rights to Mosul, in exchange for 10% of the oil produced in the area, and the British promise to refrain from agitation on behalf of the Kurds and Armenians in the future¹⁶.

The British occupation of Iraq had given rise to significant social and political developments in southern Kurdistan. Kurdish national consciousness was more developed here than in the north. The present

chapter, however, is confined to the developments in northern Kurdistan. Events in Iraqi and Persian Kurdistan are left out of consideration, except insofar as they had direct relevance for the situation in northern Kurdistan.

V. d The first Kurdish political organizations

Not unnaturally, the first Kurdish nationalist organizations were formed in Istanbul, by Kurds of prominent families who occupied official positions in the Empire and were influenced by the nationalist ideologies originating from Europe. The first¹⁷ organization, the name of which is variously given as Kürt Terakki ve Teavun Cemiyeti (Kurdish society for progress and mutual aid) or Kurdistan Taali ve Terakki Cemiyeti (Society for the elevation and progress of Kurdistan), appeared on the scene in 1908 in the liberal atmosphere following the Young Turk revolution. As founding members we encounter representatives of the foremost Kurdish families:

Mihemed Şerîf Paşa. Of the Baban family. In the 1890's he had been the Ottoman minister at Stockholm. He was a staunch supporter of Sultan Abdulhamid, and opposed to the Young Turks.

Emîn Elî Bedirxan. Leader of the Bedirxan-clan (the descendants of Bedr Xan Beg) in Istanbul.

Şêx Seyyid Ebdulqadir. Son of Şêx Ubeydullah of Nehrî. He became president of the Ottoman senate.

These aristocrats shared the "Ottomanist" ideals of the Young Turk movement but not its liberal ideas. Their attitude towards the "common" Kurdish people was extremely paternalistic. They had no serious contacts with Kurdistan. For all three was true what Major Noel, in 1919, reported for the Bedirxan family: they were "only a name in (western) Kurdistan, but a name that commands respect; (...) the family can still command fidelity and services in Bohtan (the region of their origins)"¹⁸.

Three less well-known co-founders of the organization¹⁹ established a Kurdish school and publishing-house that published a magazine ("Kurdistan"). Another great name associated with the school is that of Seîdî Kurdî, who already enjoyed fame as a religious scholar, and was later to become an influential islamic revivalist (see p. 338).

The Kurdish population of Istanbul consisted not only of such notables and students: there was a large number of Kurdish migrants in menial jobs, especially that of porter (hamal)²⁰. Most of them lived in the same quarter (Gedikpaşa mahallesi), where many tribes had their own hans (caravanserai-like structures, offering primitive lodgings). Apparently, these migrant labourers never participated in the Society, which remained an exclusively upper-class concern.

Soon the Young Turks closed down the Society, either for the anti-Union and Progress attitudes of its leading members, or because it was a Kurdish (rather than Turkish or Ottoman) society, or for both reasons. Rivalries between the Bedirxans and Seyyid Ebdulqadir made suppression of the society very easy. As an organization it was succeeded by the Kurdish students' union Hêvî ("Hope", founded in 1912), which was a slightly less aristocratic club. A leading role in it was played by members of the family of Cemîl Paşa - a family of Diyarbekir that owed its greatness to high Ottoman offices rather than to a more "traditional" leading role in Kurdish society. Most other members were also sons of urban, ottomanized notables. They belonged to the same social stratum as most Young Turks; their romantic nationalism paralleled that of the Turkish nationalists of their time. Their contacts with "common" Kurds, again, were quite superficial. In 1914, with the outbreak of the war, Hêvî fell apart because its members were drafted into the army and were sent to far apart places. Qadrî Beg's disappointment at his discovery that Kurdish tribesmen did not at all share his nationalist ideals (see the quotation on p. 360) is illustrative for the isolation of the nationalist intellectuals before the war.

Organizations as the Kûrdistan Taali ve Terakki Cemiyeti (and to a lesser extent, Hêvî) could not, and would not lead a mass movement. Politics, to them, was a gentlemen's game. People associated with the former organization tried to attain independence for Kurdistan (under their rulership, of course) by intriguing with the Allies: Mihemed Şerîf Paşa offered in Dec. 1914 his services to the British Expeditionary forces in Mesopotamia; the offer was declined²¹.

Members of the Bedirxan family contacted the Russians. Two of them, Kamil and Ebdurrezzaq, seem to have been appointed governors of Erzerum and Bitlîs respectively during the Russian occupation²².

As is usual for such families, they did not put all their eggs into one basket: in 1919 we find another member, Xelîl, as the (Ottoman) governor of Malatya²³.

The war brought not only young urban Kurdish nationalists into contact with Kurdistan, it also brought great changes in Kurdistan itself. The old Hamidiye was - under another name: militia - mobilized again. Many more tribes were enlisted now than in the past. As a consequence of the Russian invasion many Kurds (hundreds of thousands) fled to the west. When, after the October revolution, Russian soldiers were withdrawn and left the remaining Armenians to defend themselves, the Kurdish tribal units drove nearly all of these towards the Caucasus²⁴. With the disappearance of the Armenians, most of eastern Anatolia became almost exclusively Kurdish territory²⁵. A Kurdish nation state was feasible now. Kurds of Iraq and those in exile, later also those at Istanbul discussed Kurdish territorial claims with the Allies, who took these seriously. News of this came back to Kurdistan, and stimulated Kurdish nationalism there. Also, many Kurds who at the beginning of the war were still completely under the influence of pan-islamic propaganda started to suspect Young-Turkish intentions with respect to the Kurds. There were rumours that the Kurdish refugees in the west were intentionally dispersed, so that they would nowhere constitute more than 5 percent of the total population²⁶.

A story that, even if it is not factually correct, has symbolic value, is the following. Xalid Beg, a chieftain of the Cibran tribe and colonel in the army (not the militia), was one of the Kurds who distinguished themselves in the re-conquest of eastern Anatolia. Şêx Seîd's brother Mehdî, a relative of Xalid, noticed that on the day of the final victory over the Armenians, when every one else was merry-making, Xalid Beg looked very sad and sat brooding silently in his tent. Mehdî sat down with him and inquired what the reason of Xalid's black mood was. After some insisting the colonel told Mehdî the thought that had entered his mind and did not leave him at rest: "Today we have whetted the sword that will one day cut our own throats!"²⁷ Xalid Beg

later became one of the planners of Şêx Seîd's revolt.

After the war was over the caliphate lost much of its claims to the Kurds' loyalty since the Caliph became but an instrument in the hands of the Allies (especially the British). In fact, kemalist propaganda claimed that he was a prisoner and that he therefore could not say anything authoritative. Rumours that an Armenian state was going to be established in eastern Anatolia agitated the Kurds and no doubt contributed to the vehemence with which they helped the Turks expell Armenian militants. According to British sources (which may be biased or give a wrong interpretation), immediately after the Armistice Turks close to the Committee of Union and Progress stimulated Kurdish nationalism as a weapon against the British, and promised a form of autonomy within a Turkish-Kurdish state²⁸. The idea of Kurdish independence suddenly appeared widespread (although few of the contemporary witnesses are reliable: all had their own reasons to present the Kurds as less or as more nationalistic than they really were). What Kurdish independence (or autonomy) was to mean, however, was a point on which opinions diverged. Not only the old aristocrats with high official careers and the urban "middle class" wished independence, also many tribal chieftains and shaikhs clamoured for it. All wanted to play leading roles in the independent Kurdistan, none wanted to be subordinated to any of the others. To improve their chances, many established contacts with one or more of the relevant external powers: the government of Istanbul, the Allies (c.q. the British), and the kemalists (the Russians could, after the revolution, no longer be counted upon to create and protect a Kurdish vassal state).

The old aristocrats did this in grand style. thus, Sureyya Bedirxan (Emîn Elî's eldest son) sent the British government a letter in florid style in which he demanded that the territories that had once been ruled by his ancestor BedrXan Beg be given back to him - rather as a fully owned private property than as an independent state under his rule²⁹.

Mihemed Şerif Paşa (who attended the Peace Conference as the Kurdish representative) explained in one of his letters to the same government that most Kurdish chieftains were

still too primitive for a western-style democracy. Elections would only lead to an intensification of inter-tribal conflicts. What was needed was an educated Kurd acquainted with administrative and military matters, assisted by British advisers and Kurdish ministers. Prestige of the ancient great Kurdish families was to be preserved by uniting these in a Federative Council, to be presided by the mîr that H. M. Government was to appoint... Modestly he added that he was ready to assume this hard and responsible duty³⁰.

Seyyid Ebdulqadir, on the other hand, remained a supporter of the caliphate and did not expect or demand anything from the British. He remained close to the Istanbul government, and stated that he wanted only Kurdish autonomy within the Ottoman state, under the caliph's suzerainty. The modesty of his demands was, undoubtedly, not unconnected with his position as president of the Ottoman senate³¹.

These urbane, aristocratic nationalists continued to negotiate about the future of Kurdistan without any form of consultation of its population. On the other hand, many "traditional" leaders continued to play the "traditional" power game in the changed environment. Their "nationalism" meant little more than the desire to enlarge their own economic and political powers. The idea of a united Kurdistan did not have any meaning or appeal to them. Traditional enmities and rivalries determined the chieftains' actions as much as before. Chieftains who all called themselves Kurdish nationalists were to take opposing sides in several of the Kurdish nationalist revolts that followed.

Beside these old authorities, however, there was a new generation of dedicated urban nationalists that was going to play an important role in the following years.

Nationalist organizations after the war and the kemalists

On the whole, it can be said that after the war the urban nationalists had a better contact with the Kurdish village population than a decade previously (although the contacts were with chieftains rather than commoners). The Kürdistan Taali Cemiyeti (Society for the Elevation of Kurdistan), founded in Istanbul in 1918, with parallel organizations in Diyarbekir and a number of other towns in Kurdistan, counted among its members not only representatives of the older generation of nationalists (the former Kürt Terakki ve Teavun Cemiyeti) and of the urban middle class, but also representatives of the tribal milieu³². Moreover, the Society claimed to represent 10,000, later

even 15,000 of Istanbul's Kurdish population (which is about 50% of the total). British observers in Istanbul took this claim seriously, especially after the Kurdish guilds of that town had declared their allegiance to Seyyid Ebdulqadir³³. The Kurdish students' union Hêvî was also revived; its members included many young intellectuals as well as several prominent tribesmen. After a split in the K.T.C., the Hêvî group merged with the younger and more radical elements of the former organization in the Teskilat-i İctima'iyye ("Social Organization")³⁴.

A salient point is that, although most leading members of these organizations were Kurmançî-speaking sunnis, they also attracted alevi and Zaza-speaking Kurds. In 1920 young members of the Kürdistan Taali Cemiyeti fomented a rising in western Dersim and Sivas, among the alevi Kurds. A large number of tribal chieftains united behind the demand of autonomy for Kurdistan. They sent ultimative telegrams to the Grand National Assembly demanding release of Kurdish prisoners, withdrawal of non-Kurdish officials from Kurdistan, recognition of autonomy, and later even complete independence³⁵. The demands of these chieftains (no doubt inspired if not dictated by the members of K.T.C. in their midst) went beyond narrow provincial or sectarian interests. Their Kurdistan included sunnis and alevi, Kurmançî- and Zaza-speakers³⁶. Support from other parts of Kurdistan was, however, not forthcoming, and kemalist troops could suppress the rising without great trouble. One of the reasons for the failure was the lack of inter-regional coordination, due to bad communications and poor organization. The rising had not been planned centrally and there had not been previous contacts with influential persons in other parts of Kurdistan. Also, most sunni Kurds saw at the time only an alevi rising in it; they saw no reason to spontaneously support it.

In this respect, not much has changed yet. Kurdish alevi in general think of themselves primarily as Kurds, and consider the religious difference as secondary. There are even Turkish-speaking alevi who identify themselves with the Kurds rather than with the Turks - at least verbally -

because both Kurd and alevi are discriminated against in Turkey. Sunni Kurds, however, share the sunni majority's prejudices against the alevi. In areas where sunni and alevi Kurds live together (such as Malatya, Elazig, Erzincan) islamic fanaticism and fascist propoganda found a willing ear among the sunni Kurds, to the extent that now (1978) a virtual civil war between alevi (both Turks and Kurds; politically leftist) and sunnis (both Turks and Kurds: politically of the extreme right) has been touched off.

A third important reason why the rising failed is that many other chieftains of Dersim, as well as of other parts of Kurdistan, had confidence in Mustafa Kemal and supported him. They perceived that they needed him to consolidate or increase their power. Many aghas knew Mustafa Kemal personally, for he had been appointed commander of the 16th army corps at Diyarbekir in 1916. He had stopped Russian advances and many, not unnaturally, considered him their protector. He had made friends with many chieftains, and assured them of his love for the Kurds. To the Erzerum and Sivas congresses he had invited prominent Kurds - even Kurdish nationalists - and he promised that Kurds and Turks were to have fully equal rights in the independent Turkey. In the first Representative Committee (see p.365) a few Kurds were appointed, and in the Grand National Assembly the Kurds were proportionally represented³⁷. At the beginning of the first unrest in Dersim he invited the instigators for talks. The only one who went, Elişan (chieftain of the Koçgîrî tribe), was made a candidate for the Assembly³⁸.

In the years 1919/21 Mustafa Kemal's contacts with Kurdish chieftains appear better than those of the Kurdish nationalist organizations. As the Kûrt Taali Cemiyeti of Diyarbekir told Major Noel, in spite of a quite general nationalist feeling (?) they had been deterred from proclaiming an independent Kurdistan, "owing to the Turks having won over two of the principal local notables who are influential among surrounding tribes..."³⁹

Incidentally, the members of this society were not the unselfish, idealistic nationalists as which they liked to present themselves (as opposed to corrupt and treacherous chieftains who supported the Turks). Up to the spring of 1919 they had been zealous for a form of Turco-Kurdish nationalism, and

had cooperated with Young Turk elements, as that seemed most rewarding. Later that year they turned against the Turks and propagated the idea of a fully independent Kurdistan. A sarcastic British observer explained this change as an effect of cupidity awakened by U.S. president Wilson's "fourteen points", which allowed for the self-determination of nations:

"Since then, however, the tantalising version of President Wilson's doctrine that everybody should do as he liked, slowly dawned on their horizon with all its alluring possibilities, and erstwhile Turco-Kurds are now convinced that if they shout loud enough, President Wilson will hear them and allow them to mismanage Diyarbekir by themselves, and to continue to fatten on the Christian property that they stole during the massacres, without even having to share the spoil with the Turks."⁴⁰

Even apart from the confidence which Mustafa Kemal inspired, it is not surprising that many Kurdish chieftains turned to him: he had power that he might delegate to them, whereas the nationalist organizations did not have that themselves. They might count on the Allies' good-will and the provisions of Sèvres, but most chieftains correctly perceived that the Allies were in the first place the Armenians' friends, not the Kurds'. Mustafa Kemal was the most likely person to protect "Kurdish" lands from Armenian claims. Thus it could happen that in November 1919 the Kurdish delegation at the Peace Conference saw its efforts to convey the demands for Kurdish independence crossed by a series of telegrams from Kurdish chieftains to the Peace Conference, protesting that they did not want separation from the Turks⁴¹.

Azadî

After the definitive victory of Mustafa Kemal's nationalists, the Kurdish nationalist organizations at Istanbul ceased their activities. In fact, they had already well nigh dissipated before that date. Prominent members who had been compromised by too close contacts with the Allies fled. A number of them were to establish in Syria, in 1927, a new nationalist organization, Xoybûn, which, due to its close cooperation with the Armenian Dashnak, enjoyed British and French good-will. In Xoybûn the old aristocratic and paternalistic

atmosphere prevailed. It was later to play some part in the Ararat revolt (which, according to some members, it had organized), for which French and British good-will proved useful.

In Turkey itself, however, a new, clandestine, Kurdish organization was founded in 1923. It was called Azadî ("Freedom")⁴² and had a different composition than the preceding organizations. Not urban notables (except a few with much personal influence), but mainly experienced military men formed the nucleus of this organization. Significantly, its central branch was not at Istanbul or Ankara, but in Erzerum, seat of the 8th army corps. Central persons of Azadî were Xalid Beg (one of the aghas of the Cibran Tribe) and Yusuf Ziya Beg (a descendant of the mîrs of Bitlîs). The former was one of the few chieftains' sons who had attended the tribal military school founded by Sultan Abdulhamid II for his Hamidiye cadres; he enjoyed the respect of most tribal militia commanders. He was a colonel in the regular army. It was probably due to his urban education that he was much more of a nationalist than the other tribal officers. Yusuf Ziya Beg was a person of great influence in Bitlîs; he had been elected its deputy to the Grand National Assembly, which gave him the possibility of travelling and contacting many people without arousing suspicion.

The first preparations for the organization had been made by a number of officers; then they approached influential persons all over Kurdistan (as there were new elections for the Assembly in 1923, Yusuf Ziya could do that easily under the guise of a campaign for re-election). In 1924 Azadî convened its first congress. Of those attending it, one of the most fervent nationalists was Şêx Seîd, a Naqshbandi shaikh who was related by marriage to Xalid Beg, and who had been invited because he had great influence among the Zaza-speaking tribes of the districts northeast of Diyarbekir. The militia (Hamidiye) commanders who were present were more reserved, but the shaikh convinced them of the need to fight for Kurdish independence, as the Ankara government's policies became increasingly threatening

to the Kurds⁴³. The congress took two important decisions:

1. a general rising of Kurdistan was to take place, followed by a declaration of independence. The rising had to be planned in detail, and every participant was to have full instructions on the actions expected from him. As this was to take much time, May 1925 was set as the tentative date of the rising.
2. It was generally felt that foreign assistance was necessary. There were three possibilities: the French (in Syria), the British (in Iraq), and the Russians. Many of the militia commanders, who had always seen Russia as their chief enemy, and felt, for religious reasons, much closer to the Turks than to the anti-religious Bolsheviks, refused even to consider the last possibility. As it is said, it was again Şêx Seîd who turned the tide and convinced the others that it was better to receive aid from the unbelievers than to suffer the same fate as the Armenians⁴⁴. A courier was sent to Georgia. The Soviets answered that they appreciated the oppression of the Kurds, but were not in a position to help them. They promised however, not to assist the Turks in suppressing any Kurdish rising. The British, too, were contacted, but remained non-committal, as usual⁴⁵.

V. e Şêx Seîd's revolt

The religious factor

Throughout 1924 preparations for the rising continued. The circumstances were favourable for nationalist propaganda: with the abolition of the Caliphate (March 1924) the most important symbol of Turkish-Kurdish brotherhood disappeared. It became possible to condemn the Ankara government as irreligious, an accusation that seemed to be confirmed by other measures it took. This argument carried more weight with many of the - very emotionally religious - Kurds than any other. There were other grievances as well. If Kurdish accusations are correct, the fear of Kurdish nationalism led the

Ankara government to take measures that could only make Kurdish nationalist sentiments more general. In the name of populism, the Kurdish language was forbidden in public places (1924); in the name of the abolition of feudalism Kurdish aghas, but also intellectuals, were sent in exile to western Turkey. A new law (nr. 1505) stipulated that land of Kurdish large landlords could be expropriated and given to Turkish speakers who were to be settled in Kurdistan⁴⁶. Azadî's propagandists took up the grievances resulting from this, and found many willing ears.

It does not seem, however, that any concrete strategic plans were laid down. Most efforts were directed at assuring the support of influential persons in all parts of Kurdistan. A general rising in all of Kurdistan and the proclamation of a Kurdish government were apparently deemed sufficient for the establishment of an independent Kurdistan. It was known that the Turkish camp was divided internally, and that there was a strong current of conservative, in part religiously inspired, opposition to Mustafa Kemal. It would therefore be doubly advantageous to give the coming revolt also a religious appearance. In the first place many Kurds would join who would not do so otherwise, while the government and the Grand National Assembly would not be a single monolithic bloc in opposition to the rising. Therefore, it was attempted to establish contact with the exiled ex-sultan Vahideddin⁴⁷. If this sultan-caliph were to give public support to the rising, the chances of its success would be better. For the same reason, Şêx Seîd and the other co-operating shaikhs had important parts to play. Azadî expressly had chosen shaikhs as the overt leaders for the revolt. In at least three, not unrelated ways, they were to be of vital importance:

- They had a large personal following, and possessed important financial means (Turkish sources often stress the latter aspect: Şêx Seîd is often called "an owner of large flocks". According to Mela Hesên, the shaikh was so rich because his sons were big animal dealers: he never took money from his murids).

- It was the shaikhs who could give the rising a religious appearance, and thereby attract many more people outside the circle of their personal following.
- In their traditional role of mediators and conflict solvers, they were quite indispensable.

As an example of how the need for a shaikh may be felt I give the following: it took place during World War I, and involved the same Şêx Seîd. Ebdurrehman Bedirxan,⁴⁸ who resided in Tiflis then, approached the shaikh with Russian promises that if the Kurdish militias would turn against the Turks, the Russians would help them to establish an independent Kurdistan. The shaikh first discussed this proposal with Kor Huseyin Paşa, chieftain and militia commander of the Heyderan tribe. Kor Huseyin was afraid that his perennial rival, Xalid Beg of the (equally powerful) Hesenan tribe, would use this as a pretext to attack him, and made his co-operation conditional on a promise on Xalid Beg's part to participate. Xalid, on the other hand, was afraid that Kor Huseyin might attack him in the back, and demanded a similar guarantee of his participation. Both needed the shaikh, as a go-between, a notary, and a guarantor of each other's promises.

(The plot, however, was betrayed; the shaikh was sent away, to his ancestral village in Palû; Kor Huseyin and his tribe were sent far from the dangerous front. Both later reacted positively to Azadî's proposals, but only Xalid actually participated in Şêx Seîd's revolt).

It is probably due to this role of mediators and the respect that transcends tribal boundaries, that during the revolt four of the five fronts of the rebels were commanded by shaikhs, while Şêx Seîd himself had the supreme command of all operations.

A contemporary view of the state of affairs in 1924

Most sources on the events of this period are rather biased. They are partisan and, in the case of written memoirs and oral informants, coloured by hindsight, later interpretations and wishful thinking. It is interesting, therefore, to find an account of the situation as it was given by a number of Azadî members to British intelligence interrogators in September 1924⁴⁹. They were officers in the Turkish army; the story of their desertion from it follows below. Their account largely corresponds with my reconstruction from other sources. According to them, many of the Kurdish army officers had nationalist

sympathies. No less than 50% of the officers and the rank and file of the 7th army corps (stationed at Diyarbekir) were Kurds, while even many Turkish officers sympathized with the Kurds⁵⁰. Relations with the Turkish anti-kemalist opposition were claimed, but these claims were so vague that they were not believed. As objectives of the Kurdish national movement they stated the following:

- Organize a series of immediate, simultaneous rebellions throughout Turkish Kurdistan:
- Establish a national government (after some pressing for the name of a likely leader, the Bedirxan family was mentioned⁵¹);
- Develop education, agriculture and mineral resources as an independent state.

According to these informants, Azadî had no fewer than 18 local branches, most of which had army or militia officers as leading members. Apart from this party organization, they gave a list of influential aghas in the southeastern provinces who would support a nationalist movement. Their interrogators commented that they gathered little impression, however, of real organization, or definite plans of action.

Among the best-known and most influential of Azadî's leaders, they mentioned:

Xalid Beg Cibran (head of central branch, Erzerum);

Kor Huseyin Paşa, militia commander of the Heyderan
(head of the Menazgird branch);

Xalid Beg of the Hesenan, militia commander
(head of the Varto Branch);

Yusuf Ziya Beg, ex-deputy (head of the Bitlis branch);

Ekrem Beg of the Cemil Paşa family (head of the Diyarbekir
branch);

Seyyid Ebdulqadir Efendî (head of the Istanbul branch!)⁵²

The list of tribal chieftains who would certainly join a rising once it started included Hacı Mûsa Beg (chief of the Xwîfî tribe and once member of the Representative Committee, see p.365), Şêx Selahedîn of Xerzan and Cemîlê Çeto of the Pençinaran (from the western, mountainous part of Bitlis), who all had been in "passive rebellion" since August 1924, backed by Azadî. Other influential chieftains mentioned were Mehmûd Beg, the son of İbrahim Paşa of the Milan (Mehmûd was once, in 1919, considered a suitable candidate for kingship in a small Kurdish state under British Protection), and the sons of Ebdurrehman and Silêman Aşas of Şirnex.

It is noteworthy that Şêx Seîd was not mentioned, neither among the members of Azadî, nor among the chieftains who were expected to join.

Ehsan Nûrî's mutiny and desertion

The names of the deserters who gave the British all this information are not mentioned in the documents, but there cannot be any doubt that they were Ehsan Nûrî and his comrades, whose escape to Iraq is connected with the first in a series of mistakes and setbacks that ended in the failure of the revolt⁵³. A regiment of the 7th army, in which a number of prominent Azadî members were officers (Ehsan Nûrî, Riza - a brother of Yusuf Ziya Beg -, Rasim Xûrşîd and Tewfîq Cemîl) was, in August 1924, sent on a punitive expedition against the Nestorian Assyrians of Hekarî, who had shown themselves disobedient to the government. While they were at Beytüşşebab they received a cipher telegram from Yusuf Ziya (who, through Azadî contacts, could use the military telegraph). This personage had been in Istanbul to sound out Turkish opposition circles. The telegram contained a report of his findings. His brother Riza and the other Kurdish officers, however, misunderstood it for a sign that the general rising had started. They mutinied and, taking many arms, went into the mountains, followed by four companies that consisted almost entirely of Kurds. They tried - in vain - to persuade local Kurdish tribes to join in the revolt. When they realised that there was no general rising, and that their position was very precarious, they destroyed the heavy arms, and fled to Iraq. Here they were hospitably entertained. In 1929-1930 Ehsan Nûrî (then with the title of Paşa) was to reappear as the great military leader of the Ararat revolt, the tactical genius of Kurdish resistance.

This mutiny led to reprisals. The Turkish government realised the seriousness of the Kurdish nationalist threat. Searching for the deserters' allies, it rolled up part of Azadî. Yusuf Ziya Beg, Xalid Beg (Cibran) and a number of associates were arrested. The rebellious Hacı Mûsa Beg was also caught and sent to jail. Yusuf Ziya and Xalid were later killed in prison; Hacı Mûsa Beg was released⁵⁴.

Lists of names had been found; nevertheless only a few more arrests took place. Şêx Seîd, as several other leading people, was called a witness in Xalid Beg's trial. As he feared to be arrested too, he refused to come to court, and instead left the Xinis district (where he ordinarily resided) for Çebeqçûr, where the government had as yet little power⁵⁵.

New plans for the revolt

With the arrest of Azadî's leading minds, plans had to be modified. The impression one gets of the months following the arrests is one of great confusion. Many contradictory plans were put forward, hardly any accepted for execution. Several plans were made for the liberation of Xalid Beg and Yusuf Ziya Beg from their Bitlis cells, none materialized. Many of the chieftains who had at first promised their participation were frightened, and avoided contact with the others. Even those who wanted to continue were uncertain and did not agree on what should be done. In this situation Şêx Seîd, whose influence had been substantial until then, emerged as the paramount leader. He knew what he wished, had the capacity to convince others, and a great reputation for piety, which was useful when his other arguments were insufficient. He had left Xinis for the Çebeqçûr - Palû - Lîce - Hanî area, both in order to avoid arrest and to coordinate preparations for the rising that he wanted to take place as planned before. It was among the small, poor, Zaza-speaking tribes of this area that his family had for generations had many faithful followers (murids). Here he could feel safe to meet whoever he wished. The townlets had only relatively small gendarmerie contingents, and outside them government had as yet little power. Nor would it arouse much suspicion if the shaikh travelled through this area, as this is the annual habit of many shaikhs. In making such a tour they give their murids an easy opportunity to see them, to do tobê and to give financial contributions; they resolve conflicts and counsel people (see p. 317). Resolving conflicts was an especially important task this time: if the revolt was to succeed,

inter-tribal conflicts should be resolved first; otherwise, some tribes could be expected to turn against the revolt for the mere reason that their enemies participated.

The first important conflict brought to the shaikh's attention is a case in point. Before reaching the Zaza-speaking area he conferred with leaders of the (Kurmançî-speaking) Cibran tribe, relatives of Xalid Beg. This formerly nomadic tribe shares its habitat (Karlioiva, Varto, Bulanîk) with a number of (Kurdish) alevi tribes, of which Xormek and Lolan are the most important. Formerly these sedentary tribes had been subject to the Cibran, and only in the past decades had they gradually emancipated (see p. 139-140). After they had become militias in the World War, they resolutely resisted attempts by the Cibran to reimpose their dominance. This led to armed clashes, and a permanent feud. This feud could substantially impede the Cibran's actions if it were to persist during the revolt. Şêx Seîd wrote a letter to the Xormek chieftains, inviting them in the name of religion to join the other Kurdish tribes in a jihad ("holy war") against the Ankara government. As the Xormek are alevi, however, the shaikh's word did not carry any special weight with them, and he did not succeed in making them join the revolt or even only ending the feud between Xormek and Cibran. Indeed, immediately after the revolt broke out, the two tribes attacked each other. The Xormek and Lolan fought the rebellion much more effectively than the gendarmerie and army⁵⁶. This negative example is atypical, however. According to my informants, the shaikh resolved many petty conflicts on this tour.

The tour also gave ample opportunity to give instructions on the approaching revolt to trusted men. Other leaders also came to see the shaikh and discussed strategic problems with him. My informant Mela Hesen even claims that there was an Azadî congress during, or immediately preceding the shaikh's tour, followed by a council of war, where strategic plans were worked out⁵⁷. At the congress only chieftains of the districts astride the Murad river (the eastern branch of the upper Euphrates) were present, mainly representatives of the Zaza-speaking tribes⁵⁸. Many were quite hesitant, but it was decided to go on with the revolt in March⁵⁹.

The plans worked out in the following meeting were extremely simple. All tribes were to participate under the leadership of their own chieftains. They were to take full control of their area of residence and chase away Turkish officials and gendarmes or make them prisoner.

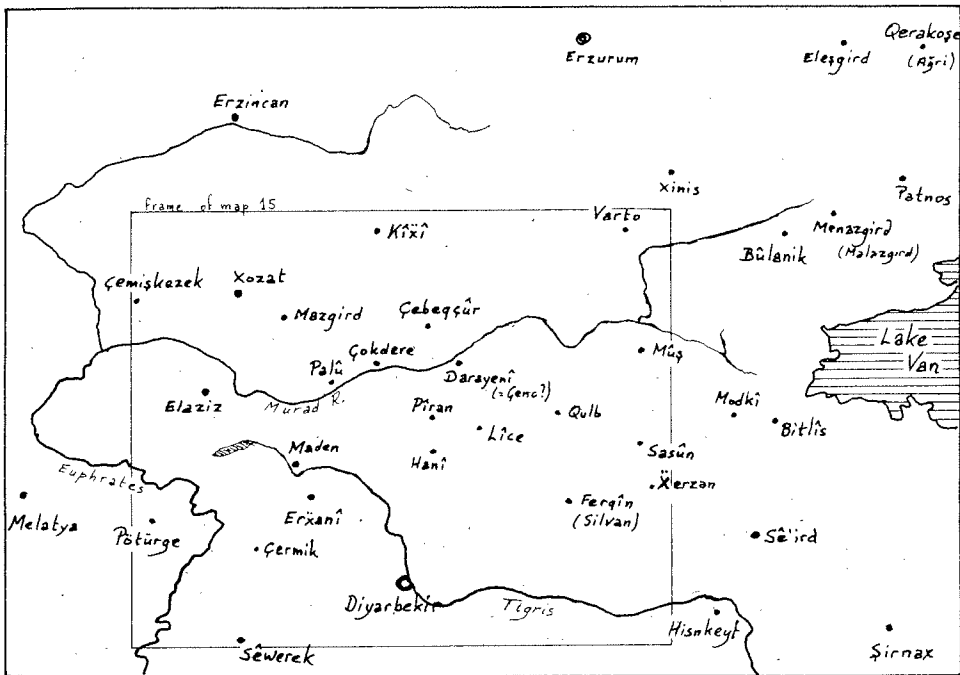
Then they were to join one of the "fronts" that were to be formed. On these fronts, the rebels were to take the towns, and persuade local tribes to join their rebellion; the government's counter-attacks were also to be warded off at these fronts. The fronts - where the real military operations were to take place - were to be commanded by shaikhs who had influence locally, and knew the local conditions:

1. The northern/northeastern front was to be under the supreme command of Şêx Ebdullah of Melekan. Sections of the front were to be led by the shaikhs of Çan (Kîxî - Çebeqçûr), Xalid Beg of the Hesenan (Mûş, Varto), Şêx Seîd's son Elî Riza and Mehmed AXa Xelîlê Xeto.
2. The Xerput-Elaziz front was to be commanded by Şêx Şerîf of Gokdere.
3. The Erxanî front by Şêx Seîd's brother Ebdurrehîm.
4. At the Diyarbakir front Heqqî Beg was to be in command on the eastern bank, Emerî Farûq on the western (both were Zaza - chieftains).
5. The Silvan (Ferqîn) front was to be under Şêx Şemsedîn's command. Şêx Seîd, assisted by a small war council, was to have the supreme command of all operations⁶⁰.

When, not much later, the revolt broke out prematurely, these plans were largely followed.

Outbreak of the revolt

The shaikh continued his tour to Lîce, Hanî, and Pîran. Everywhere he gave instructions to those who came to meet him, and discussed strategic questions with those who had specific leading tasks. In the village of Pîran, on February 8, a minor incident prematurely precipitated the revolt. A few outlaws, persecuted by the gendarmerie, put themselves under the shaikh's protection. The gendarme unit that was after them demanded their extradition, which, due to the tense atmosphere, led to an exchange of fire between the shaikh's men (the shaikh was accompanied by a large armed body) and the gendarmes, of whom at least one was killed⁶¹. The shaikh, realising that his preparations for the rising were not completed yet, wanted to hush up



Map 14 The area affected by Şêx Seîd's revolt.

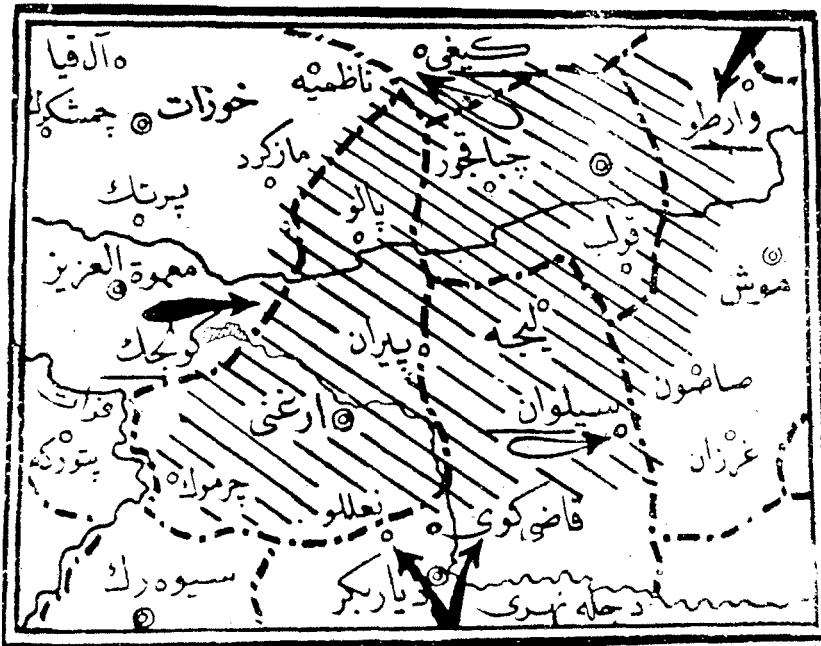
the situation, but it got rapidly out of hand. The people of Hanî, hearing of the incident, chased away the governor and all Turkish officials from their town. Near Lîce, a mail-van was held up (February 10). It was no longer possible to stop the rising; the leaders had to make the best of it. On February 14, Darayenî (Darahini) was taken; it was made a temporary capital and seat of government. The shaikh appointed Feqî Hesen of the Modan tribe as the governor. He then returned south, collecting more tribal troops around him as he went. Lîce and Hanî were taken; from there the rebels marched on in the direction of Diyarbekir. They were several thousand then⁶², and easily routed an infantry battallion sent from that town. The town itself was not yet attacked: it was nearly impregnable without heavy arms. Şêx Seîd made his headquarters at Tala, north of Diyarbekir. From there he remained in contact, through couriers (telegraph lines had been cut), with the other fronts. He asked for reinforcements on the Diyarbekir front, and sent envoys to Mehmûd Beg (son of Ibrahîm

Paşa) of the Milan, urging him to lay siege to Diyarbekir from the south; there was no answer. Reinforcements did arrive from the Silvan area. The "war committee" that was to coordinate operations had assembled by now. It consisted, beside Şêx Seîd himself, of: Fehmî Bîlal Efendî, Sedîq Beg (of Medrag), Şêx Ismaîl, Reşîd Axa (of Têrkan), Saleh Beg (of Hanî), Sedîq (of Pîran) and Mela Mistefa (of Lîce): all were Zaza-speakers of the central area of the revolt.

The offensive towards Diyarbekir began on February 29: the town was surrounded by a large number of Kurds (10,000 according to one of the besieged, see note 62), and the military commanders of the garrison were invited to surrender. On March 2 the attack started, but due to the thick walls and the strong garrison it could not be taken by force. Contact had been established with Kurdish inhabitants of the city, and in the night of March 7/8 a small band of besiegers managed to enter the town with help from within. In a bloody fight, however, most of them were killed, and the others expelled again.

Meanwhile, at the other fronts, more progress had been made, and a number of successes were obtained:

1. The shaikhs of Çan (Ibrahîm, Mistefa and Hesên) took Çebeqçûr (February 17); they also advanced on Kîxî, but were repelled by the local Turkish garrison, assisted by warriors of the Xormek and Lolan tribes⁶³.
2. Şêx Seîd's brother Ebdurrehîm took Maden (February 29) and Çermik. At the latter town his troops were reinforced by Şêx Eyub with 500 men from the district of Sêwerek who had first occupied the central town of their district. Together they advanced on the important town of Erxanî and took it. Then they went south to reinforce the siege of Diyarbekir, the most important target⁶⁴.
3. On the northeastern front, several operations took place simultaneously. The Hesenan took Menazgird, the Cibran Bulanîk; Şêx Elî Riza took care of coordination. The latter tribe clashed with the Xormek and Lolan many times, at several places. It was these tribes, too, that hampered the occupation of the town of Varto at first. On March 11 at last that town was taken (by



Map 15. The districts in revolt by the end of March
(after the daily Cumhuriyet, March 27, 1925. Black and white arrows indicate movements of government and rebel troops, respectively)

Cibran troops) in an attack coordinated by Şêx Ebdullah. Many of the 120 gendarmes stationed at Varto were Kurds and Naqshbandi murids; they assisted the rebels at the critical moment. Part of the Kurdish troops were now sent to Xinis (which was raided by Hesenan and Cibran under Şêx Elî Riza and their own chieftains); another group was sent south to reinforce the rebels in the plain of Mûş. These were to take Mûş and Bitlis, and to liberate the Azadî leaders imprisoned in the latter town. The local tribes, however, did not join the revolt. News came that Xalid Beg (Cibran) and Yusuf Ziya Beg had been executed in their prison cells. The efforts were then concentrated in the northeastern direction⁶⁵.

4. Spontaneous outbursts in sympathy with the rebels occurred at several places, even as far west as Çemişkezek and Pötürge (in Malatya)⁶⁶.

In general, the minor towns in the rebel area and at the fronts could

be taken without serious resistance. Turkish gendarmes and officials fled or surrendered; Kurds simply took their places. About the capture of one major town, Elaziz, information from Turkish and Kurdish sources (none of which is first-hand) is usefully complemented by the observations of a European resident of that city⁶⁷:

Rebels under the command of Şêx Şerîf and Yado AXa (a Zaza chieftain, called a robber-bandit by Firat) had first taken Palû, and advanced on Xerpût and Elaziz. The (mainly Turkish) population of Elaziz heard the first rumours that the rebels were approaching on March 23. On March 24, there was the sound of shooting. The vali (provincial governor) fled, as did some other officials. That same day some 300 Kurds entered the town^{67a}, sacked the government house and the Department of Justice, and opened the prison. The released prisoners showed the Kurds the houses of the officers and the rich, "so that the first could be made prisoner and the second looted". Porters and woodcutters of town (mainly Kurds) happily joined in the latter activity. Later Şêx Şerîf entered the town and promised the inhabitants to maintain order (in which he was not to succeed). On March 25 the looting continued; the military depot and the tobacco monopoly were plundered. Military and gendarmerie did not offer any resistance to the Kurds; they had either fled or gone in hiding (the ex-vali of Elaziz later claimed⁶⁸ that his gendarmes did not dare shoot at the Kurds since the latter had tied korans to their bajonets - a trick only a few years younger than the koran itself). Resistance was organized by the civilians of the town, after the main body of insurgents had left in the direction of Malatya. The Kurds had not left anyone in command at Elaziz; what remained was an unorganized band without discipline, that seemed mainly interested in looting. Leading citizens organized resistance groups that expelled them.

By the end of March, the main thrust of the Kurdish attack was over, and the Turks had brought sufficient forces into the area to start a massive counter-offensive and quell the rebellion.

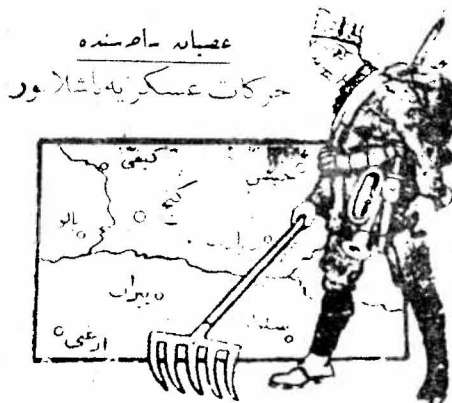
Suppression of the revolt

The Turkish military forces in the East (7th army corps at Diyarbekir and 8th corps at Erzerum, under the command of Mürsel and Kazim Karabekir Paşa, respectively) were inadequate for dealing with the revolt. The 7th army corps had many Kurds in its ranks. Although there is no evidence of actual desertion, this may have contributed to the

The revolt in Turkish newspaper cartoons (Cumhuriyet)



Feb. 26, 1925 : "According to competent person this will be the rebels' situation in two weeks' time".



March 7 : Military operations in the rebel area begin.

ineffectiveness of the army's counterattacks. Units sent against the rebels were simply wiped out, and the survivors were taken prisoner by the Kurds. The 8th army corps was very late in turning against the rebels. My informants attribute this to Kazim Karabekir's general opposition to Mustafa Kemal (he was the president of the conservative opposition party Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Firkasi). The main resistance against the revolt came at first from the Xormek and Lolan tribes of the Kixi-Varto area, who came to the support of the small garrisons of these towns and also attacked the rebels elsewhere (especially the Cibran).

The Ankara government proclaimed martial law in the eastern provinces (February 23). The situation became so serious that Mustafa Kemal decided to take closer control of the affairs of state. The prime minister Fethi (Okyar), who was too hesitant, and not unfriendly to the opposition, was forced to resign, and Mustafa Kemal's trusted second man Ismet Paşa (Inönü) appointed in his stead (March 2). Two days later a law on the reinforcement of order (Takrir-i Sükun) that gave the government extraordinary powers was passed through parliament. On a large scale troops were sent to the eastern pro-



March 28 : "Our forces have surrounded the rebels from three sides. They will be contained within an iron ring formed by the bajonets of the Turkish army".

vinces; this became possible because the French gave permission to use the Baghdad railway (that passed through Syria) for troop transports. Altogether at least 35,000 well-armed Turkish troops were deployed against the rebels; some foreign diplomats gave even higher estimates⁶⁹. The Turkish air force bombed the rebels continuously. Mustafa Kemal also ordered other Kurdish chieftains to join the Turkish forces and help them to quell the revolt. In fact, several tribes went to the Diyarbakir front - refusing to do so would be tantamount to rebellion - but managed to avoid real confrontation with the rebels. Others did attack, but only after it had become clear that the rebels were going to lose.

When the huge armies approached Diyarbakir, the rebels lifted the siege, and retreated from the plains into the mountains to the north-east (March 27). The Turkish troops laid an enormous ring around the rebellious area, thus preventing the rebels from escaping to other parts of Kurdistan. Gradually they contracted the ring, thus pushing all rebels together in the Çebeqûr-Genc-Lice area. A few violent open battles (April 3-8) had disastrous results for the Kurds: many were killed, wounded or taken prisoner. It was only then that the Kurds reorganized themselves into small guerrilla bands instead of large tribal armies. Such bands could escape from the iron ring

routed. Success attracted more nationalists, and in 1930 the "Ararat revolt" presented an even more formidable threat to the Turkish government than Şêx Seîd's rebellion had ever done. This revolt was also quelled, ultimately. But not until 1938 (after a third great revolt, in Dersim, and many lesser ones) was Turkish Kurdistan pacified - at enormous human costs.

V. f External and internal support for the revolt

British aid?

There was one party that could but be extremely pleased with the revolt: the British, who in Iraq were up against strong pro-Turkish, anti-British propaganda among the Kurds. There was some malicious pleasure in London: "Revolt provides a useful comment on the Turkish claim, which plays a large part in their Mosul case, that the Turks and Kurds are indissolubly united by racial and political affinity"⁷². It is not surprising, therefore, that the Turks suspected, and publicly accused, the British of instigating this revolt. The Third International also took it for granted that British Imperialism was behind this revolt⁷³. Both the British and the Kurds have always denied it. Representatives of Azadî did approach the British for

عصيانه او بونی فصل باشوردی ، فصل بئردی ؟



Cumhuriyet, April 10 :
How the revolt began
and how it ended. The
puppet of Britain
killed by Turkish
soldiery.

برورد بئردی
(آک ۱۶) دینکردان

برورد باشوردی ...

material and political support, several times even. The British also knew, through the deserting Kurdish officers (Ehsan Nûrî and others, see p.382) that a revolt was at hand. It seems unlikely, however, that they ever gave any form of assistance. The Turks never produced any serious evidence to substantiate their allegations, except one "British agent" called Tampling or Templey, a person who had previously been in the Allied police and was now a private detective at Istanbul. He had entered a "highly compromising" correspondence with Seyyid Ebdulqadir. The British disclaimed him and called him a "Turkish agent provocateur"⁷⁴.

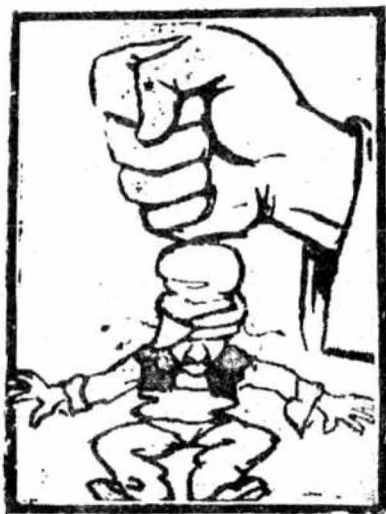
Arms

Though the Kurds would have gladly accepted any arms offered from outside, it does not seem that they received any. The fire-arms that they used dated from the First World War or even before. The militias had all had their own arms. Russian soldiers who retreated in 1917 frequently sold their rifles for some bread. Many more arms were taken from the Armenians. Yaqûb Şewkî, a Kurdish general in the Ottoman army (at the Caucasus front) told his men after the armistice not to deliver their arms to the British (as official instructions were) but to distribute them among the local (i.e. Kurdish) population. Due to all these sources there were enormous amounts of arms in circulation in Kurdistan. After 1923 the republican government had started collecting these - a process not completed in 1925, since most Kurds were quite reluctant to give up their arms⁷⁵. Nonetheless, most of the Kurds fought with very primitive arms. According to an eye-witness at Diyarbekir, they fought with piques and sabres, but fanatically, and made many of the better armed Turkish soldiers prisoners⁷⁶.

Turkish opposition

Through Yusuf Ziya Beg, Seyyid Ebdulqadir and others, Azadî had attempted to establish contact with the Turkish anti-kemalist opposition - without tangible results. At no stage was there any co-

operation between these two oppositional movements. Some Kurds had sympathy for Kazim Karabekir's Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Firkasi, but there is no evidence that the latter party ever showed interest in the Kurdish revolt, Mustafa Kemal's accusations notwithstanding⁷⁷. The 8th army corps, which stood under Kazim Karabekir's command, dealt more leniently with the rebels than other armies, but that is still a far cry from even passive support. There was little opposition to the severe reprisals taken upon the Kurds. Similarly, there is not a trace of evidence that ex-Sultan Vahideddin's agitation lay at the root of the revolt, as is claimed in other Turkish sources. There was certainly no co-ordination of the Kurdish planners with religious reaction in other parts of Turkey. As Toynbee noted: "...it is noteworthy that the revolt did not spread among the Turkish population of Erzerum, Trebizond, and Samsun, who were almost as backward and reactionary as their Kurdish neighbours, and who not long afterwards...rose on their own account...against the Ankara government's westernizing reforms."⁷⁸



ایک نومردی

(Cumhuriyet, March 2, 1925)

V. g

Participation among the Kurds

A striking fact is that the majority of the Kurds who participated, the nucleus that rose in revolt immediately after the incident at Pîran, were Zaza-speaking Kurds of the small tribes in the mountainous Lîce-Hanî-Çebeqçûr districts. These were the tribes where Şêx Seîd (and the other participating shaikhs) had his greatest personal influence. Of the other tribes, apparently only the Cibran and the Hesenan played important parts. These have their habitat in Karliova - Varto - Bulanîk and in Menazgird and surroundings, respectively, contiguous to the Zaza-speaking territory. Outside this central area of the revolt, spontaneous outburst were recorded in Sêwerek, Pötürge (east of Malatya) and near Çemişkezek. After March 20 there was again an increase in activity: a number of tribes (no details known) rebelled in accordance with the original strategic plans, thus expanding the area in revolt⁷⁹.

In the case of the Zaza tribes, participation was well nigh complete. According to Mela Hesên (who belongs to one of these tribes, the Zirkan), "it was not as in the time of the militias, when only a certain number of men from each tribe would participate in a campaign; this time every man came out to fight."

It should be noted that in these tribes, nearly every man had his own piece of land and a few animals. I.e., they belonged to the stratum that is most easily mobilizable in rural revolts⁸⁰. Secondly, the chieftains did not have economic power over the commoners, nor were they much richer. There were thus no conflicts of interest to make commoners refrain from participation at the demand of the aghas. Thirdly, these tribesmen were (and still are) known as extremely pious, even bigoted. The influence of shaikhs was even greater here than elsewhere.

It is not known whether the (Kurmancî-speaking) Cibran and Hesenan participated entirely too. Both tribes are rather large, and did not have paramount chieftains, but a number of aghas each. One of the Cibran aghas, Qasim Beg, reputedly betrayed Şêx Seîd when the latter tried to escape to Iran, but there are no indications that any section of the tribe ever turned entirely against the rebellion.

It is not without interest that the operations by these tribes were coordinated by Şêx Ebdullah and Şêx Elî Riza, in consultation with the chieftains of the tribes.

Of the other tribes that had reacted positively when first approached by Azadî, many kept aloof. Several even turned against the rebellion.

Thus, for instance, informants from the Xerzan district told me the following chieftains there had "signed" to join the revolt:

Cemilê Çeto of the Pençinaran,
Emîn Perîxan of the Reman,
Ehmedê Eshed of the Reşkotan,
Mehmed Elî of the Reşkotan.

When the revolt broke out, only the Reşkotan chieftains rose in (passive) rebellion. They did not send contingents to join Sêx Seîd, but did nothing to affirm their loyalty to the Ankara Government either. Turkish officials were afraid and fled from the district. A Turkish regiment was sent from Diyarbekir to pacify the Reşkotan district; it was completely routed. The other tribes still kept aloof (or, maybe there was some fighting between Reman and Reşkotan already going on; my informants could not remember when that started, nor whether there was an old feud between the two tribes). When Turkish reinforcements arrived, Emîn Perîxan joined these in a combined attack on the Reşkotan chieftains. Cemilê Çeto also responded to the Turkish call to attack the rebels; he is said to have joined the Turkish troops at the Diyarbekir front. He was one of the chieftains who had become friends with Mustafa Kemal at Diyarbekir in 1916. Nevertheless, after the suppression of the revolt he was brought to court with the leading rebels, and was also hanged⁸¹.

Outside the central area where the revolt had a mass character, participation and non-participation or even opposition of tribes to the revolt was apparently determined to a large extent by the same kind of considerations that had for centuries determined tribal politics and policies vis-à-vis the state. Motivation of the commoners - be it religious or nationalist - played no part worth mentioning yet. Chieftains joined or opposed according to what seemed the advantageous thing to do and to what their rivals did; the commoners simply followed the chieftains. When chance turned against the rebels, and they were on the losing hand, several tribes that had remained neutral

until then suddenly began to oppose them.

According to Firat, (a section of) the nomadic Berîtan had first joined Şêx Şerîf's forces on their way to Elaziz, but later, when these had to retreat east for the approaching Turkish troops, these Berîtan (or another section of the same tribe) attacked them⁸².

The case of the alevi tribes Xormek and Lolan was different again. It is true that they had a feud with the Cibran, but that was not their only reason for opposing the revolt. It was the orthodox sunni, anti-shi'i ideology that had always been the justification of their discrimination and oppression by the Cibran. Mustafa Kemal's Turkey was a secular republic; for the first time alevi had officially equal rights, and law protected them. An independent Kurdistan, under authority of sunni shaikhs, could only be to their disadvantage.

Non-tribal Kurds

The plain of Diyarbekir was (and is) inhabited by non-tribal Kurds (with a small minority of christians and jews). They were tenants, share-croppers or labourers. The land on which they worked was owned by mainly town-dwelling (Diyarbekir) landlords. These appallingly poor peasants did not participate in the revolt. Apparently, they were not even invited to do so; with the characteristic contempt of the tribesman for the "reyet" they were deemed unfit to fight. Arif Beg, who knew the plain well, thought that these peasants would, to a man, have rebelled if only their lords had told them to do so; I doubt this, however. Contemporary reports from other, similar parts of Kurdistan (plains of Mosul, east-central Kurdistan) suggest that the subject peasantry, even if they had vague nationalist feelings, were more strongly motivated by resentment of their lords⁸³. Indeed, in the later Kurdish risings in Iraq, which were more widespread than Şêx Seîd's revolt, the non-tribal peasantry did not participate on any significant scale, but did rise against the landlords several times.

The peasantry of the Diyarbekir plain thus had neither the economic

independence which makes rebellion a feasible thing, nor (probably) the motivation to rise: the revolt was not directed against their exploiters, but against a government that promised to curtail the power of these exploiters.

Urban notables

Nationalism had its first defenders and propagandists among the urban notables: absentee landlords, high officials, people of the professions. Also the kemalists, however, largely depended on this stratum. A high proportion of the town population in eastern Anatolia, especially of the notables, was Turkish, or turkicized; Kurdish nationalists, therefore, were often a minority. Diyarbekir was in this respect an exception. Of the two chief notable families there, the Piringçizade sided with the kemalists (and received high offices in reward), while the Cemilpaşazades (descendants of Cemil Paşa) had the reputation of being nationalists. There was a large Kurdish Club in town (Kürt Taali Cemiyeti), which boasted a thousand members. It does not seem, however, that these played roles of importance in the revolt. They certainly did not try to organize a rising in town in support of the revolt (but that may be due to the early arrest of some leaders). According to an outsider present in town during the siege, the Cemilpaşazades had prior knowledge of the revolt, but were very afraid to compromise themselves, and never really became involved. In fear, the eldest member of the family, Qasim, left Diyarbekir for Istanbul in February. Another member, Mehmed, is even said to have collected some warriors from his villages and have fought on the Turkish side⁸⁴. Active members of the Kurdish Club were imprisoned before they had the opportunity to lead the Kurdish population of town against the garrison. In the trials after the suppression of the revolt several of them were found guilty of conspiring for the establishment of an independent Kurdistan⁸⁵.

In the other towns of the area there was no organization comparable to Diyarbekir's Kurdish Club. Notables of Elaziz may have

spontaneously welcomed the first rebels as defenders of the faith and the caliphate, but when undisciplined bands continued looting their town, these same notables expelled them and later helped Turkish troops to pursue the rebels.

Urban lower class

Whereas the middle classes of most towns in the east were (and are) largely Turkish, most menial jobs were done by Kurdish immigrants from the surrounding countryside. These were unorganized - as is to be expected from a lumpenproletariat - but showed sympathy with the rebels. In Diyarbekir many of these lower class Kurds were Zaza-speakers, belonging to the tribes that were in rebellion. It was they who one night let rebels enter the town. They did not, however, rise in general rebellion (without organization and without arms, that would have been very difficult, too).

Similarly, in Elaziz the lower class Kurdish population joined the rebels only in looting their town. It does not appear that they also joined them as warriors.

V. h The Naqshbandi order and the revolt

At several points in this chapter it was stressed that (Naqshbandi) shaikhs played a crucial part in the revolt. A comparison with the role of the Sanusi order in the resistance of Cyrenaica's Beduin to the Italians may therefore be illuminating⁸⁶. The Sanusi order was responsible for coordinating the Beduin tribes' actions. It was a centralized, hierarchical order. Each tribe or sub-tribe had a zawiya, a lodge, where a khalifa of the Sanusi resided. The khalifa's authority was recognized because of his holiness and the charisma he derived from the Sanusi, and because he was an outsider, not a member of any particular tribe, and therefore not party to any conflicts. In fact, many tribes and sub-tribes asked the Sanusi to send a khalifa to them; it became a matter of prestige for a tribe to have its own khalifa. The superimposition of this centralized structure on the segmentary tribal Beduin society made concerted

action possible, and welded the Beduin into a strong and coherent nation. Without the Sanusi order, there would probably not be an independent Libya.

The Naqshbandi order in Kurdistan was in a somewhat different position. It is an order that extends geographically from Egypt to Central Asia and India (also in the perception of its murids), and has therefore less of a "national" character than the Sanusi order (which was restricted to Cyrenaica). Secondly, it is not centralized: neither the entire order, nor the Kurdish section has a generally acknowledged head (see Fig 8c, p. 296). This is not to say that hierarchical relations do not exist. Some shaikhs enjoy more general respect than others, and may demand obedience from certain other shaikhs, who are their khalifas, or sons of their fathers' khalifas (or khalifas of their fathers' khalifas, etc.). The network, however, is only partially ordered in such hierarchial relations. And as there is no generally recognized head, there are many conflicts among Naqshbandi shaikhs, especially among those who live close to each other and compete for the same murids.

The families of Naqshbandi shaikhs with the most wide-spread influence in northern Kurdistan were those of NŪrşîn (between MŪş and Bitlis; the Hezretê NŪrşîn (Şêx Ziyadîn) enjoyed wide fame around 1925), and of Xîzan (descendants of the "ghawth"; see the Appendix of Ch IV, Table V). The Hezret had always stayed out of politics; he was one of the few shaikhs entirely devoted to the spiritual life. Late in 1924, after the arrest of the Azadî leaders, the governor of Bitlis negotiated with the Hezret's brother's son and successor Mesûn and with Şêx Selahedîn of Xîzan, and secured their promises to refrain from activities against the government⁸⁷. These shaikhs and the tribes where they had direct influence stood, indeed, aside from the revolt. Their khalifas, however, did not feel bound by these promises one way or the other. One of the Hezret's khalifas (Şêx Mihemed Îsa's father, of the Cibran tribe) was to participate

in the revolt; another (Şêx Mehmed Selîm of Hezan, in Erzerum) was to fight it actively.

It was only the shaikhs who had influence among the Zaza-speaking tribes of the Çebeqçûr-Palû-Lîce area who, in mutual agreement, led the revolt and furnished the integrating network. Şêx Seîd and Şêx Ebdullah, who had both been invited by Azadî because they were the most widely respected of all Zaza-shaikhs (together with Şêx Şerîf who had military experience), coordinated the western and eastern sectors, respectively. Before the outbreak of the revolt they had conferred extensively about the course of action to be taken. Once the revolt broke out they had to act rather independently of each other, since the distances were large and communication difficult.

Both shaikhs had also murids among the Kurmancî-speakers. Şêx Ebdullah came from Melekan in the Solhan district, which is close to the Kurmancî-speaking area. Şêx Seîd seems to have made deliberate attempts to win influence among the Kurmancî-speakers. Originally from Palû, with family holdings in other parts of the Zaza-territory, he had built a second tekiye in the Xinis district, and had married a woman from the Cibran's leading family. The shaikh's family relations certainly contributed to his emergence as the central leader. His sons travelled widely as animal dealers, which made it possible for them to perform courier duties as well. Elî Riza for instance had, prior to the rising, sold an enormous flock of sheep in Aleppo; he may have met Kurdish nationalists in exile there; it is certain that he then went to Istanbul and visited Seyyid Ebdulqadir and tried to establish contact with the Turkish opposition⁸⁸. The money from the sale of the animals was to serve the financing of the rebellion. Elî Riza later became second in command in the northeast, which may have been a means of controlling Şêx Ebdullah. Şêx Seîd's brother Ebdurrehîm led the Erxanî operations. Another brother, Tahir, played a minor role early in the revolt: it was he who robbed the mail-van of Lîce.

A third shaikh of influence was Şêx Şerîf of Gokdere. In the First World War he had been a militia colonel, commanding Zaza-tribesmen of Çebeqçûr and Palû. His military experience proved very useful. The other shaikhs had more strictly local influence, and were active only locally, following previously made plans and instructions from Şêx Seîd and the war committee⁸⁹.

Unfortunately, I have not been able to reconstruct the murshid-khalifa relations connecting these shaikhs with each other. It seems, however, that it was not the formal network of the order, but informal links between shaikhs who shared common political ideals that constituted the integrating factor.

In Cyrenaica too, it was ultimately the general loyalty of the Beduin to the Sanusi (the head of the order), and the general anti-Italian agitation by his khalifas, rather than the order's potential for military organization that proved decisive. Both in the wars of the Sanusi order against the Italians and in Şêx Seîd's revolt the fighting units were tribes or sub-tribes, generally led by their own chieftains. In the latter, the coordinating role of shaikhs was very conspicuous, and the shaikhs took active part in combat. The family of the Sanusi stood aside from the actual fighting, but his khalifas and close murids untiringly urged the Beduin to continue their resistance against the Italians and, in fact, played leading military roles⁹⁰. On the whole, one gets the impression that Şêx Seîd's revolt was better coordinated than that of the Sanusi's Beduins, the Kurdish shaikhs played their coordinating parts better than their Beduin counterparts. That is undoubtedly related to the fact that the Sanusi dispatched his khalifas to a tribe or sub-tribe each, whereas in Kurdistan the shaikhs had followers among more than one tribe.

V. i Religious vs nationalist character of the revolt

The revolt was neither a purely religious nor a purely nationalist one. The nationalist motivation of those who planned it is beyond doubt, but even among them many were also emotionally affected by

the abolition of the caliphate. Şêx Seîd certainly was a very pious person, and honestly indignant at the secularizing reforms taking place in Turkey, but - as my informants insist - he was at least as sincere a nationalist. One of his closest collaborators in the revolt was Fehmî Bîlal Efendî, a blasphemer who mocked religion in public. The shaikh kept him as his right-hand man because Fehmî was a capable person and a convinced nationalist. The primary aim of both Şêx Seîd and the Azadî leaders was the establishment of an independent Kurdistan. The motivation of the rank-and-file was equally mixed, but for them the religious factor may have predominated. The planners and leaders of the revolt, at any rate, thought that religious agitation would be more effective in gaining mass support than nationalist propaganda alone. Partly for this reason, shaikhs were chosen as figure-heads for the revolt. The movement was called a jihâd ("holy war"); Şêx Seîd assumed the title of amir al-mujahidin ("commander of the warriors of the faith")⁹¹. This by itself, however, does not mean that religion provided the impetus behind the revolt. The report that Kurds tied Korans to their bajonets (see p. 389), as well as some of the declarations of participants at the trials, strongly condemning the sinful anti-religious reforms in Turkey, may give the impression that the revolt had the character of a messianistic movement in the name of old-time religion. Tying Korans to one's weapons, though, is only an effective method if one expects the enemy to respect the Koran. The way the revolt broke out and immediately spread suggests that a strong anti-Turkish or anti-government feeling motivated the masses, at least in the central area of the rebellion. The participants' zeal received additional fuel from the religious justification given to their action.

After Şêx Seîd and other leading shaikhs had either been killed or captured, or had escaped, nothing of the messianistic appearance of the movement remained. Neither the guerrilla bands that continued war against the government and its troops, nor the leaders of the Ararat revolt that followed, used religious phraseology. Nationalism

seemed undiluted, then. To a certain extent, this nationalism was based on quite "traditional" motivations, and took the form of "traditional" rebellion against state authority. The Ararat Revolt started with the Celalî tribe's refusal to accept external authority (any external authority). The guerrilla bands followed the tradition of social banditry - a phenomenon endemic in Kurdistan (as everywhere where the norms of society conflict with the laws of the state). These "traditional" motivations have certainly also played their part in the nationalism of the participants in Şêx Seîd's revolt.

Already Şêx Seîd's departure from Xinis to the for him safer Zaza area had much of the social bandit's taking to the mountains to escape persecution by the state. Similarly, one of the participating Zaza chieftains, Kerem AXa of the Zirkan, had been "on the run" for over a half year when the revolt broke out: he had killed a Turkish captain and six regulars, and had lived as an outlaw since (Firat: 196/7). The outbreak of the revolt was precipitated, again, by the attempt of gendarmes to arrest outlaws under the protection of the shaikh.

Yado, who together with Şêx Şerîf led operations at the Xerpût-Elaziz front, had some renown as a social bandit before that time. After the shaikhs' apprehension he resumed his old existence in the mountains around Çebeqçur until 1927 when he escaped to Syria (Silopi: 105).

The borderline between social banditry and politically motivated guerrilla warfare is difficult to draw. The same may be said for the boundary between "traditional" resentment of government encroachments and "proper" nationalism. Kurdish nationalism in this century has always remained in the indefinable in-between, and still largely finds itself near that vague borderline.

The relationship of nationalism and religion is different again. For the mass of participants in Şêx Seîd's revolt, religious and nationalistic loyalties cannot be separated: they coincided and were virtually identical. Nationalist sentiment arose out of, or was at least stimulated by, religious feeling and primordial loyalties to the shaikhs. Nationalist loyalties began, however, to lead a life of their own. and have no longer such strong associations⁹².

Concluding remarks

I want to return here to two questions that were among those with which I set out originally and that, although they were too abstract to attempt answering them directly, repeatedly came back to my mind:

1. How did/do the primordial loyalties arise, why are they as they are, and what makes them so strong?
2. Under which circumstances do the primordial loyalties break down and/or give way to other ones (especially those of nation or class)?

Each of these questions can be asked on different levels of abstraction. I do not think that the question "Why do tribes exist?" is a very meaningful one, and I certainly do not feel capable of answering it. "How do tribes arise?", on the other hand, refers to empirical reality, and indeed in the course of this book a number of processes by which tribes come into existence were mentioned. Similarly, the question "Why are tribesmen loyal to tribal chieftains?" is too abstract, but one might attempt to answer the question "How do chieftains achieve and maintain their position of leadership?" It is on this level that some answers have been suggested in the preceding chapters. I shall not summarize all of them, but I want

to stress here a few points that I consider important.

In the tribe, kinship is a basic organizing principle. In small tribes especially, people are loyal to their fellow-tribesmen because they are kinsmen. One might try to explain kin loyalty from the economic and/or psychological security experienced within the (extended) family or lineage, but that is a circular reasoning, for the security is a consequence of the same kin loyalty that it should explain. I shall not attempt further to explain this kin loyalty but accept it as given for the present purpose. In some cases, tribesmen have common economic interests, e.g. communally held (pasture) land, which is a solid base for group solidarity. Similarly, common locality (often implying common economic interests) is a clear reason for group solidarity. As said, villages correspond often to a segment of a tribe, and consist in other cases of a number of (not closely related) shallow lineages.

The same kin loyalty plays a role in "segmentary opposition": in cases of a conflict between two persons, relatives of each rally to their support. If the people in conflict are related, their kinsmen support the party with whom they have closest blood ties (those with equal distance to both remain neutral). Conflicts, especially the violent ones, are between (kin) groups, not individuals. Nearly all conflicts therefore acquire a feud-like character (see Chapter II, section c). Conflicts between two groups can in general only be resolved through the mediation of someone whose authority is recognized by both groups. Ipso facto, this mediator should not belong to any of the conflicting groups. This point can hardly be stressed enough, since it has important consequences for the nature of leadership in Kurdish society. As units increase in size, the probability of conflict increases more than proportionally¹. In small tribes, a respected kinsman may act as the chieftain; he rules by consent, and only rarely do conflicts occur in which his authority may be called into question. Larger tribes, however, will ultimately be broken up into a number of smaller ones as a result

of a feud or other conflict, unless there is a mediator whose authority is recognized by all, This explains why the chieftains of large tribes and emirates nearly all claim(ed) foreign descent. It is not so important whether these claims are true: the essential factors are 1) sufficient distance from each of the sections constituting the tribe, and 2) charisma. A prestigious foreign descent lends the chieftain both.

Chieftains may be expected to spread the legend that their ancestors were invited by the tribes to come and lead them. Şeref Xan's story of how his ancestors became the rulers of Bitlîs (p. 198) is a good example. Such may have been true in some cases (as it was true for some of the European royal houses); in many others it probably was not. The rise of Haco (or rather, of his family, the mala Osman) to power over the Hevêrkan confederation (p. 110-116) seems a good example of how such a chiefly lineage, separate from and above the confederation's tribes and sections, may arise from within, instead of being invited from elsewhere.

As it is conflicts (both internal and external) that make a paramount chieftain necessary to the tribe, chieftains who wish to increase or maintain their powers find an excellent way of doing so through the manipulation of conflicts. A chieftain should of course resolve conflicts to a degree sufficient to give his tribesmen a feeling of peace and security, but he should not completely eliminate them, for in so doing he would make himself dispensable. We saw that in the emirates of Bitlîs, Hekarî and Botan conflict had been, as it were, institutionalized in the juxtaposition of two confederations of tribes.

In yet another way chieftains made (and make) themselves almost indispensable to their tribesmen: as intermediaries in all contacts with the state. In Chapter III we saw how important this factor is. As the grid of the administrative network of the Ottoman state and its successors became finer, the significant political roles were played by chieftains of ever lower levels: after the mîrs, chieftains

of large tribes, then chieftains of smaller tribes (and/or sections of tribes), then village aghas. In the course of this process, the role of shaikhs became more important, Their political significance also derived from their role as mediators: in most cases they are outside the tribal organization, and have at least a derivative charisma. When the mîrs were deposed, a part of their functions fell into the hands of shaikhs: they resolved conflicts between tribes, and on the occasions where collective action involving more than one or two tribes occurred, this was coordinated or led by shaikhs. The above may explain part of the political processes in Kurdish society, but as an explanation of Kurds' loyalty to an agha or a shaikh it is not satisfactory. Aghas and shaikhs gather followers around them, and succeed in this not only because they are so adept in the game of "divide and rule". Even where they owe their position to the perpetual mediating in conflicts and the balancing of groups against each other, they are accepted as mediators because of some other quality that they have, a certain charisma. in some cases this charisma finds its origin in the leader's own personality, in many other cases it exists only by his association with a great hero or saint. Certain leading families command great respect because of their (reputed) descent from great ancestors: early heroes of Islam, or more recent powerful chieftains who became famous by success in war. Occasionally still chieftains emerge who have charismatic qualities themselves. Although such "great chieftains" may behave in a way that can hardly inspire great love in their subjects (see again the description of Haco's career, p. 112 f), by their very success they attract many loyal followers, and a texture of mystifying ideology is soon woven around their real behaviour. Circulating oral epics have the same ideological function as history text-books in European primary schools: chieftains' actions are embellished and idealized, the political status quo is justified, and admiration for and love of the rulers are propagated. Shaikhs have similar associations which lend them an even stronger charisma: their murshid's reputation reflects on them, they have a silsila full of great names, and

all sorts of miracles are associated with their tariqa. The fact that in popular conception they are intermediaries between God and man lends them even more prestige. Moreover, some shaikhs seem to possess "paranormal" gifts, and in the majlis the murids may have strange experiences which are easily attributed to the shaikhs' miraculous powers (see Chapter IV, sections i and j).

We may attempt to understand the nature of this charisma better by studying situations where it is lost or breaks down. First of all it should be noted that not all followers or subjects of a leader are equally loyal. Non-tribal subjects often resent their subjugation and exploitation. In the past this resentment may have been tempered by the relative security resulting from protection by their overlords. However, as the state became more and more capable (and willing) of protecting them from physical attacks, they have repeatedly made clear that they wished to be liberated from their exploiters. In Iraq they resented their Kurdish aghas as much as they had resented Ottoman officials before². During the 1950's peasant anger erupted in a number of large-scale revolts; in the following decade only very few of the non-tribal Kurds participated in the nationalist war. Apparently, no ideology was strong enough here to veil from these non-tribal peasantry the naked exploitation to which they were subjected; they perceived themselves clearly as a class. As Barth noted (see p. 261), the miskên living under the Hemewend were said to even attempt to transform the Qadiri order - a focus of primordial loyalties - into an instrument of class struggle.

However, even where the non-tribal groups have liberated themselves from their tribal overlords, new systems of primordial loyalties may arise within their stratum: patron-client relationships as found almost universally in peasant societies. Barth noticed that among the miskên there were a few persons who owned a dîwanxane. This usually indicates that these persons act in several ways as patrons for those who visit the dîwanxane regularly.

The closest and most loyal followers of a tribal chieftain are his retainers (if he has a retinue) and his close relatives. Even when the latter are in conflict with him, they may (but need not) immediately

close their ranks against outsiders. After these follow his other fellow-tribesmen, and finally the members of client tribes. The last may be resentful of domination, especially where this is combined with economic exploitation (in the form of high dues exacted), but they are more susceptible to arguments of tribal ideology than the non-tribal peasants. After all, they are tribesmen, and therefore more "noble" than those who are not. For them as well as for the other followers, association with a powerful chieftain may be psychologically rewarding. As soon as the chieftain's success is seen to end, however, the client tribes break away, and many individual members of the tribe may transfer their loyalties to some other chieftain. Similarly, shaikhs have several types of followers, with differing degrees of loyalty to them. The most loyal are probably those murids that live with their shaikh or visit him regularly. Then there is a wide category of persons, often living far away, who visit the shaikh only rarely, but who consider him so holy that they would immediately obey him if a situation occurred where he asked them to do something for him.

For instance, there are people all over Kurdistan who talk admiringly of Şêx Osman (of Durû, see p.319f), although many of them do not even know his name and simply call him "the shaikh of Tawêla" (his ancestral village). The holiness of his family is exemplary. Şêx Osman's potential influence is therefore even more considerable than his present actual influence.

Most shaikhs own at least some land; many own considerable tracts. The peasants on the shaikhs' land generally suffer severe economic exploitation, while they see the shaikh and his murids living leisurely off their labour. The exploitation may long be accepted because the shaikh is seen as holy, and it is meritorious to work for him. These exploited peasants however are the first followers to question the legitimacy of the shaikh's claim to their loyalty, and in times of crisis they may withdraw it.

Thus, Şêx Osman felt forced to flee from Tawêla in Iraq to Iran at the time of violent anti-landlord agitation under Qassem. I know no details, but apparently the shaikh could not trust his own peasants. In Durû too, I noticed that the

villagers - who had theoretically become the owners of their land under the land reform, but continued to be exploited economically - behaved less than friendly to several of the resident murids, and did not show the shaikh the same degree of respect that the outsiders showed.

The best instance of the withdrawal of loyalty from a shaikh that I recorded is the chasing away of Şêx Mes'ûd from Bamernî by the same villagers that had obediently and loyally allowed his father Behadîn to exploit them (p. 335/7).

This suggests at least two ways in which loyalties of tribesmen to the agha and of murids to the shaikh may weaken and ultimately break down:

1. As the relations become more openly exploitative, and the agha or shaikh compensates less for the exploitation in other ways, their followers may start questioning the usefulness of continuing the relation (in at least some cases it is not the peasants but an agha who is the first to break the "traditional" relationship with the many obligations it carried for him, and who changes it from a "multi-stranded" relation into a purely economic one, thus increasing exploitation, and making his continuing claims to loyalty less legitimate).
2. Since ideologies justifying these leaders' positions play such an important part, everything that weakens these ideologies will also weaken the primordial loyalties. Modern education and radio both spread values other than the tribal ones, and it may be expected that the young, educated in state schools, will call into question aghas' and shaikhs' authority. Especially in Turkey, school-teachers and textbooks condemn aghas and shaikhs as backward, reactionary and undemocratic elements, and this must have its effects.

It can hardly be denied that these two processes are occurring. However, the primordial loyalties and the ideologies on which they are based show a remarkable resistance to change. Both are weakening, but only very gradually. I shall illustrate this with an example.

In the village of Sorguldeşt (a pseudonym), in the plain southwest of Mardin (Turkish Kurdistan), the relations of

production have become more clearly capitalist than in most other parts of Kurdistan that I visited. One might therefore expect the primordial loyalties to have weakened more here than elsewhere. The villagers (96 households) belong to the tribe Derbas which is spread over 10 - 15 (?) villages. Each village has a village agha. The aghas of all Derbas villages are closely related. Two generations ago, all lands surrounding this village were registered in the name of the then village agha. The villagers worked as his share-croppers. Of this agha's two sons, one succeeded him as the village agha, the other was compensated by receiving a much larger share of the land, not an unusual arrangement. Their family now consists of two branches: the present agha with his two brothers (each owning some 60 hectares), and the landowning branch (the "owner of the car" and his brother, who each own some 400 hectares). As a result of a partial landreform in the 1950's, some 30 households own 10 - 15 hectares, another 10 households own 5 - 10 hectares, while the remainder are completely landless. Before the landreform, all villagers were share-croppers, who paid the owner of the land on which they worked 50% (formerly even more) of the produce. Most of the traditional share-cropping arrangements have now been ended, however. Only a number of relatives of the agha receive land in usufruct from him on this basis. The "owner of the car" (who also owns a harvester, a tractor and a lorry) cultivates all his and his brother's land mechanically; his former share-croppers can only work as day labourers, for a short period every year. (There is a two-crop rotation system in use: one year wheat or barley is grown, allowing mechanized cultivation, the next year lentils, which are still reaped with the scythe). The small landowners are also becoming dependent on the "owner of the car": about half of them let him cultivate their land mechanically, in exchange for 50% of the crop, a new type of share-cropping arrangement that is rapidly gaining field in the entire Middle East. In some cases they do so voluntarily; the "owner of the car" then pays all expenses (seed, fertilizer, labour, etc.) from his own pocket. In most cases, however, the small landowners are compelled to enter into this arrangement because they are indebted to him. Until their debts (and a high interest) have been paid back, they are obliged to let him cultivate their lands; moreover, in this case they also have to contribute half of the expenses.

A process of concentration of economic power into the hands of the "owner of the car" is thus taking place. This entrepreneur feels no primordial obligations to his fellow tribesmen, and easily dismissed the share-croppers from his land. His cousin the agha, who still takes the tithe for the upkeep of the dîwanxane, has not revoked all share-cropping

arrangements, but it is only close relatives who use his land. The incomes of most villagers have declined over the past decade. They are out of work most of the time. 80 or 90 percent of them work a few months each year in the Adana region (cotton and citrus plantations) as seasonal labourers. Many complain about exploitation, especially by the "owner of the car"; they accuse also, but more reluctantly, the agha. On some of the walls of the village houses the slogans of social justice broadcast by the (social-democrat) Republican People's Party are written. I heard, however, that in the last elections all villagers had unanimously voted for the reactionary religious Party of National Salvation, the party supported by the agha. Several of the villagers told me privately that they abhor this party, but nevertheless voted for it in order to preserve the peace in the village. "After all, we are all relatives, and it is better to maintain amiable relations"³. One of my acquaintances in the village, who had four or five years of secondary education, was a self-proclaimed leftist and Kurdish nationalist. He was probably the most politically conscious person in the village. When talking about aghas in general, he denounced them; later, however, he confided to me that he too would vote for his agha's party in the next elections. His emotional feelings of loyalty towards his agha, in spite of his rational arguments to the contrary, became even clearer in a heated discussion with another Kurdish friend, a teacher from elsewhere, who argued the necessity for Kurdish and Turkish progressives to cooperate. My acquaintance became more and more excited, until he burst out emotionally: "I shall never trust those Turks! The leftists are as much desirous of colonializing us as the others. If one day a confrontation comes, I shall stand side by side with my agha, against the Turks!" If such are the emotions of the villager most exposed to external influences, who moreover belongs to the poorest of the village (no land, no regular job), it is clear that primordial loyalties are still very strong indeed. An important factor is, of course, that it is not the agha, but his cousin who exploits the villagers. Relations with the agha have therefore not yet become too strained.

I have come across one case only where a clear break in primordial loyalties seems to have occurred. The community where it occurred is not a real tribe, however, although loyalties resembling the tribal ones used to exist.

The town of Şirnak and its surroundings (see p. 140 f, 224) are dominated politically by four families of aghas, the mala Agit (the most powerful one), the mala Ebdurehman AXa, the mala AXayê Sor and the mala Osman AXa. I shall refer to them, in this order, as A, B, C and D. There are other

"aghas", related to these families, but they have neither riches nor influence. The other Kurds of the town and the villages ("kurmanç") were, and in part still are, tied in exploitative patron-client relationships to these families of aghas. Many also were retainers of one of the families. The four families were in permanent rivalry with each other. Kurmanç told me how until 15 years ago ("we were still young, and politically unaware then") they went out at night to raid villages belonging to a rival agha, stole animals and even killed peasants. Their loyalty and obedience to the agha was unconditional and unquestioning. Elections (it is the elections of the mayor of Şirnak that are especially important) were until recently also an affair of the aghas only. In 1965 and 1969 A and C put up the leading candidates (of Republican People's Party and Justice Party respectively, "left" and "right" in Turkey's politics); they were in coalition with B and D respectively. The outcome was purely a matter of arithmetics: the kurmanç allied to A and B voted RPP, those allied to C and D voted JP. A's candidate therefore carried the victory both times. In 1969 some signs of change were already perceptible, the loyalty of the kurmanç seemed to have become less unquestioned. C's candidate presented himself as very progressive, and addressed all kurmanç, promising measures to decrease their subjugation to and dependence on the aghas. This had as yet little noticeable effect in the elections. In the following years, however, a number of influential kurmanç started preparations for a coup against the aghas and propagated the idea that in the elections of 1973 the kurmanç should have a candidate of their own. Putting up an independent candidate would be a costly affair, they needed a party that would accept their candidate. The Justice Party, aware that in the existing conditions it was never going to win with a member of C as its candidate, was ready to put the kurmanç candidate (a local official) on its list.

In election time of 1969 there had been some shooting between members of A and C; a smouldering blood feud was the result. In face of the danger of a kurmanç revolt, however, the families made peace. C declined to put up a candidate and supported that of A, so that the elections of 1973 were between the candidate of all aghas and the candidate of the rebellious kurmanç. The aghas apparently felt that their position was at stake, they attempted to terrorize the kurmanç into obedience. A relative of the aghas' candidate killed two kurmanç in the streets of Şirnak (among whom a cousin of the kurmanç's candidate); four more people got killed in the surrounding villages. Election day showed that these methods were no longer effective; out of 2400 votes cast in town, over 1600 went to the Justice Party, that is, to the kurmanç's candidate; in some villages this proportion was even higher. Incidentally, the man who had

killed the two kurmanç was, after much delay, arrested and condemned to a few years of imprisonment. He was set free again in the general amnesty of 1974, and lives in western Turkey since. When I asked whether ultimately blood revenge would be taken, my informants smiled excusingly: it is as yet unimaginable for a kurmanç to take revenge against an agha. Moreover, when the man came to see his relatives occasionally, he was extremely well protected (which suggests that the aghas do not find revenge so unimaginable anymore).

The aghas' absolute control over the kurmanç has apparently been broken, but not completely: nearly 30% of the kurmanç continued to vote for the aghas' candidate. That is not so surprising, as many kurmanç are economically dependent on one of the aghas' families. Moreover, there may have been conflicts among the kurmanç of which I am unaware, which made some kurmanç vote against their candidate. On the other hand, a number of the poorer aghas (of families other than the four powerful ones) supported the kurmanç's candidate⁴. It seems unlikely that the aghas will ever be able to command the loyalties of the kurmanç as they did before, even if they would succeed in (re-)imposing their dominance by economic means. However, the kurmanç's class-like behaviour is not a guarantee against new systems of patronage developing within the kurmanç stratum. It is, in fact, quite likely that these will emerge.

I visited Şirnex in 1976, two and a half years after the critical elections. The atmosphere was subdued, there was tension in the air, as there had been ever since the elections. People took safety precautions, and avoided leaving their houses at night. At wedding parties there was no outdoor music and dancing, the party remained inside. The people with whom I spoke talked much about the past confrontation of aghas and kurmanç. The details they gave were often contradictory; I have therefore given only the barest outline above. The obvious question to ask is why the, originally quite strong, loyalties of most kurmanç to their aghas have broken down, and why this happened in those years. I looked for indications of increasing exploitation or other changes in the (economic) relations between aghas and kurmanç, but did not find them. The degree of mechanization of agriculture is low (due to the unevenness of the terrain); nevertheless peasants of several villages where nothing else seems to have changed, have since a number of years refused to pay the aghas their tribute, in a few cases defending themselves with firearms. The only semblance of capitalist relations existing in the area concerns a lignite mine near the town that is owned by family A, operated by a private company from western Turkey, and where some 200 men from Şirnex work. These workers had no relation whatsoever with

the kurmanç's revolt, however; they are relatively privileged. It is mainly persons from the agha stratum, and loyal kurmanç, that find work there. When I asked my informants how they explained the general revolt against the aghas, they put forward two points that are highly relevant:

1. Whereas the aghas are in general "lazy" and do not study hard, many of the kurmanç send their children to secondary school and let them learn as much as possible. The prevailing leftist atmosphere in Turkey's schools in the late sixties and early seventies may have had its effects. Another consequence is that several kurmanç came to qualify as local government officials because of their education, and thus acquired - theoretically at least - a certain independence vis-à-vis the aghas. The kurmanç's candidate was such an official.
2. Several of the kurmanç spent short periods in Iraqi Kurdistan (where many of them have relatives), and participated in the nationalist war there (in the late sixties). As they say themselves, this experience made them more aware of oppression at home. Moreover, they accuse the aghas, especially family A, of always having collaborated with the Turkish secret police in the pacification of this part of Kurdistan. Nationalist and "class" sentiments thus coincide (or are made to coincide).

I think that the explanation has to be sought in a combination of factors. The above two are important, and they explain why the turning point lies around 1970. It should also be noted, however, that the kurmanç were never a monolithic group. Those living in town, near the aghas, and maybe also a part of the villagers, had quasi-tribal loyalties to their aghas. They sometimes acted as their retainers. Many of them still talk and behave as tribesmen, quite unlike non-tribal people. The majority of the villagers, however, always were in the same position as the non-tribal peasantry elsewhere. They were exploited economically, and the only protection that they enjoyed was that the agha would take revenge if one of them was killed (even that protection is no longer given: a month before my stay in Şirnax, passing nomads had killed a peasant; one of the aghas was ready to organize a revenge raid, but the other aghas refused to cooperate, and the murder remained unrevenged). Loyalty of these peasants towards the aghas probably never existed. When the town kurmanç also started opposing the aghas, the village and urban kurmanç reinforced each other's resistance.

These two examples make clear that it is not possible to give simple predictions as to under which conditions, and how, primordial loyalties will be replaced by other ones. The variety of primordial loyalties, even within a relatively small community, is too wide; moreover,

primordial loyalties do not remain themselves until they break down, but their nature changes. The element of patronage, always present to some extent in tribal and religious loyalties, becomes more prominent. Similarly, national and class loyalties are not all of one kind. Three types that are easily distinguished might be labelled as, successively "reactive" (i.e. originating in a reaction against an out-group perceived as national or class oppressors), "solidaristic" (i.e. originating in positive identification with the own nation or class, that is perceived as such) and "paternalistic", or rather "filialistic" (i.e. a loyalty not primarily to the nation or class, but to a great and charismatic nationalist or social revolutionary leader). These are ideal types; maybe one should call them aspects of these loyalties. The same person may be influenced by all three types of loyalty, in different situations, or even simultaneously. The last type of loyalty might as well be classified with the primordial ones; it is not very different from the loyalty to a tribal chieftain or a religious leader. The difference between primordial loyalties and those of nation or class may thus be thought to be a matter of definition only, or alternatively one might say that very few people are "truly" nationalist or class conscious. Typically, primordial loyalties involve relatively small groups, with face-to-face relations between the members, and they are strongly oriented towards the person of the leader, a paternal figure. The latter aspect especially is easily, and frequently, transferred onto the wider loyalties. In the view of the nationalist or socialist theoretician the prevailing worship of national or revolutionary leaders may represent a corruption of the "real" national or class awareness. From the viewpoint of a nationalist or class movement this is probably true; for many individuals however, the "filialistic" loyalty may be a transitory stage from the primordial loyalties to "solidaristic"/"reactive" loyalties.

In the past 15 years Kurdish national awareness in all parts of Kurdistan has increased tremendously. That is noticeable especially in Turkey. Many Kurds who were gradually being assimilated (i.e.

turkicized) began to re-assert their Kurdish identity. This is not primarily a consequence of the nationalist propaganda spread by intellectuals; the latter's efforts had but little effect. The main contributing factor was the military successes of Barzanî in his war against the Iraqi governments, which gave the Kurds something to be proud of. Barzanî's feats were told and retold, acquiring mythical proportions; he became a super-hero. He had the style of a great chieftain of the old days; moreover, he was the son of a shaikh. All this made him a unique focus of emotional loyalties. Ultimately, this admiration for and loyalty to Barzanî was also transferred to the Kurdish people and the Kurdish identity. Strong national awareness, and a stressing of the Kurds' separateness developed, and these became to a certain degree independent of the attitude towards Barzanî. A similar development had earlier taken place around Şêx Seîd and the other leaders of his revolt. The rank and file of the participants in the revolt followed its leaders out of tribal and/or religious loyalties, but in the course of the revolt "reactive" and "solidaristic" nationalist loyalties were strengthened. After the shaikh's execution, Kurdish national awareness remained; it was probably stronger and more wide-spread than before the revolt. Energetic attempts by the Turkish authorities to create loyalties to the political entity of Turkey (and to its leader Atatürk) were only partially successful. Thus, loyalty to a nationalist leader in these cases also stimulated national loyalty. It is more difficult to imagine a similar development of class loyalties, although theoretically it is possible. The reverse, however, may also happen; and there are more instances of this process. Once nationalist sentiment had become a factor to be reckoned with, local politicians used it for their own purposes. It occurred several times that followers of rival leaders fought each other in what was objectively a common power rivalry, but with nationalist motivations on both sides. Less extreme, it has become a common practice for chieftains and shaikhs (more usually, the hard core of followers around the shaikh), to accuse their rivals of not being sufficiently

nationalist, of being traitors, collaborators with a government that oppresses the Kurds nationally. Within the nationalist movement in Iraq, elaborate systems of patronage have developed, while many of the existing primordial loyalties (ties with chieftains, especially) were reinforced.

There is clearly no irreversible trend for primordial loyalties to give way to wider ones. The term "primordial" is a well-chosen one indeed, for even in a context determined by "modern" loyalties the primordial loyalties retain a great vitality and continually re-assert themselves, modifying national or class loyalties. It appears much easier to entertain such narrow loyalties than wider ones. Maybe nation and class are too wide and too abstract concepts for being capable of continually satisfying individuals' need to belong to an identifiable group.

Both nationalists and social revolutionaries should be aware that it is not sufficient for primordial loyalties only to be broken once and for national and class loyalties to be asserted at only one occasion; a "permanent revolution" appears to be necessary. Economic factors alone cannot predict which loyalties will be asserted in which situation; these only determine necessary conditions, but are not sufficient in themselves as explanations. In the two clearest cases of revolt with a class character, that of Bamernî's peasants against Şêx Mes'ûd and that of Şirnax's kurmanç against the aghas, external political factors provided the decisive impulse.

SOME ORIENTAL TERMS FREQUENTLY USED IN THIS BOOK

The words are given in the form in which they occur in the text, which is the Arabic for terms used throughout the Middle East, the Turkish for terms referring to the Ottoman Empire, and the Kurdish for specifically Kurdish terms. Between brackets the corresponding forms in Kurdish c.q. Arabic are given.

- agha (K: aḡa) chieftain (of tribe or section thereof).
- baraka (K: bereket) blessing, especially as carried by anything that is or has been in contact with a saint.
- bavik shallow lineage.
- beg "feudal" lord: chieftain invested with an office as a governor.
- beglerbegi (Ott. Emp.), governor of large province (eyalet or beglerbegilik, consisting of a number of sanjaqs).
- dervish (K: derwêş) someone following a spiritual discipline, be it as a "begging monk", be it as a member of one of the mystical orders. In Kurdistan the term is generally reserved for disciples of the Qadiri order.
- eşîr, eşîret (Ar: ashîra) tribe, both in the organizational sense and as a "caste" setting itself apart from non-tribal subjects.
- eyalet large Ottoman province, consisting of a number of sanjaqs.
- Ekrad begligi "Kurdish sanjaq", province incorporated in the Ottoman Empire, where governorship is hereditary within a Kurdish ruling family.
- fetva (Ar: fatwa) (religious) decree, issued by an expert of canonical law (müfti) in answer to a concrete legal question posed to him.
- ijāza permission, especially to teach the doctrine and method of a tariqa.
- jizye poll-tax paid by non-muslim subjects in muslim countries.
- keramet (Ar: karāma, pl. karāmāt) special graces (received from God), especially the power to perform miracles.
- khalīfa (K: xelife) "deputy"; a person who has received from a shaikh the permission (ijaza) to teach a tariqa.
- khānaqā (K: xaneqa) place where dervishes and sufis hold their ritual meetings. In Kurdistan the terms xaneqa and tekiye are used as synonyms.
- kharaj 1. (kharaj-i erziye) a tax paid on land originally held by non-muslims.
2. =jizye.
- khatma (K: xatime) the ritual meeting of the Naqshbandi order (the Arabic dictionary meaning is: "recital of the entire Koran").
- khutbe "sermon" in the Friday prayer.

Mahdī the islamic Messiah-figure.

majlis (K: meclis) "gathering": the ritual meeting of the members of a mystical order.

mezheb (Ar: madhhab) one of the four basic schools of religious law and ritual practice, systematizing the rulings laid down in the Koran and the Traditions.

mezin "great", "old": elder of (small) tribe or lineage.

miskēn (Ar. miskīn) "poor", "submissive", "servile". Term used in southern Kurdistan to denote the subject (non-tribal) peasantry.

mīr (Ar: amīr) ruler of semi-independent principality (emirate).

murīd (K: mirīd) "disciple": follower of a shaikh, both in a narrow and in a very general sense.

murshīd (K: miršīd) "teacher", "instructor": someone who instructs in a specific tariqa, generally the shaikh of an order.

mūfti expert on (religious) law.

naqib ul-eshraf representative and administrator of the seyyids of a certain district.

ojaqliq autonomous district in the Ottoman part of Kurdistan, under its own ruling family, paying no tribute to the treasury and not regularly contributing soldiers to the sultan's armies.

qadi judge in a court of (religious) law.

qebile (Ar: qabīla) (small) tribe, subtribe.

rayet (K: reyet, Ar: ra'ya, pl. ra'āyā) "flock": the tax-paying subjects; originally the non-muslims in muslim empires, later all those who did not belong to the military class. In Kurdistan the term is used especially for the non-tribal subject peasantry.

sanjaq "standard": administrative territorial unit in the Ottoman Empire (province), governed by an appointed sanjaqbegi.

seyyid descendant of the prophet Muhammad.

shahada muslim confession of faith: "la illaha illa 'llah, Muhammadun rasulu 'llah" ("there is no God but God, Muhammad is the prophet of God").

shaikh (K: šēx) "old man". In Arabic this term has a wide range of meanings, but in Kurdistan it only denotes saintly persons, especially the heads of the mystical orders.

shariat (Ar. shar', shir'a) the canonical law of Islam.

silsila "chain" : spiritual pedigree, chain of transmission of a spiritual path.

sipahi (Ott. Emp.) member of the "feudal" cavalry, granted with a "fief" as a reward for his services.

ṣūfī (K: sofi) mystic. In Kurdistan the term is generally used for members of the Naqshbandi order, but also for old and pious men.

- taife (Ar: tā'ifa) tribe, clan, brotherhood (term used for tribes and their subdivisions as well as the dervish orders).
- ṭarīqa (pl. ṭurūq; K: terīqet) spiritual path: a mystical method or system associated with a great sufi master. Around most of the turūq orders emerged that adopted the name of the tarīqa; with one tarīqa, however, a relatively large number of only loosely related orders may be associated. In common parlance the term is also used for the orders, not for the path only.
- tekiye originally a dervish lodge. Synonymous with khānaqā now, at least in Kurdistan.
- timar "fief" granted as a reward for military services by the sultan (or the beglerbegi) to a sipahi or (in later times) civil official.
- tīre section of a tribe.
- tobê (Ar: tawba) "penitence": a forswearing of all past sins and declaration of intent to lead a pure and sinless life. Required before entrance into an order.
- ṭurūq plural of tarīqa.
- vālī governor of a large province (in Ott. Emp. identical with beglerbegi).
- yurtluq identical with ojaqliq.
- zīkr (Ar: dhikr) "remembrance": recitation of God's name or short pious formulas, either mentally (among the Naqshbandis) or aloud (as among the Qadiris and many other dervish orders).

Notes

Notes to the Introduction

1. These cases were the Mexican, Russian, Chinese, Vietnam-ese, Algerian and Cuban revolutions.
2. These aspects were stressed (and much exaggerated) by official Iraqi propaganda. It should, however, be noted that also the Iraqi regimes often allied themselves with Kurdish traditional authorities in their attempts to oppose Barzani.
3. This change is readily perceived from the following works:
O'Ballance (1973; this book contains numerous errors and should not be used unless with extreme care; the changes in the Kurdish movement are, however, adequately reflected in it), Vanly (1970), Nebes (1972).
4. Beşikçi was tried during the martial law period (1971-73); in 1974 the freely elected new government issued an amnesty law under which Beşikçi came free.
5. See also Thoden van Velzen's critique of what he calls the "big man paradigm" (as embraced by Bailey, Barth et al.), "Robinson Crusoe and Friday: strength and weakness of the big man paradigm", *Man* 8 (1973): 592-612.
6. It would be an injustice to Alavi if I did not mention that he, too, stresses this fact: "We find that the factional mode of politics in peasant societies is not a repudiation of the model of class conflict; the two depict different modes of political alignments, in different conditions. Furthermore, primordial loyalties, such as those of kinship, which precede manifestations of class solidarity do not rule out the latter; rather they mediate complex political processes through which the latter are crystallized" (Alavi 1973: 59).

Notes to Chapter I

1. With exception of the fact that the makers of the original map reckoned also the Lurs and the Bakhtiari as Kurds, which I think is unjustified. I have corrected this. Copies of the original map are to be found in many publications, e.g. Rambout (1947), Vanly (1970).
2. Figures of the Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü (DİE, State Institute of Statistics, Ankara): Genel nüfus sayımı 1955.
3. I added the statistics for the sub-provinces with a Kurdish population, made an estimate of the percentage of non-Kurds in each, and subtracted the numbers thus calculated from the total. Figures from: DİE, Genel nüfus sayımı 25-10-1970. İdari bölünüş (Ankara 1973). In the absence of any relevant demographic data I assume that the rate of population increase of the Kurds equals that of Turkey as a whole. Similarly, I calculated the number of Kurds outside Kurdistan proper in 1975 from Vanlı's 1965 estimate, using the global growth rate for those years. The people who left Kurdistan between 1965 (Vanlı's figures) and 1970 (the date of the census figures of Kurdistan) are not accounted for. Thus the real number of Kurds in Turkey may be higher than the figure given.
4. The census is taken on a single day in October each five years, by a large number of half-trained counters/interviewers. As in Turkish Kurdistan many villages cannot be reached from the provincial centre in less than two days, it is well possible that the census is taken less scrupulously there. Nomads whom I met said that they were never counted.
5. A.T. Wilson (1931): 18n; H. Field, *The anthropology of Iraq*, part I, number 1 (Chicago, 1940): 104/5.
6. 1966 census, summarized in Almanac of Iran 1975 (Tehran 1975): 336.
7. Almanac of Iran 1975: 428. The same figure was given in preceding years, because of natural increase the number should be around 3.5 million in 1975. Figures on population growth and estimates for 1975 are also based on the Almanacs of 1975 and 1976.
8. A good description of this economy is given by Hütteroth (1959). He calls these semi-nomads "Yaylabauern", after the (Turkish) word for mountain-pasture.
9. Both Turkey and Iran have followed policies of forced settlement of nomads, under Atatürk and Reza Shah, respectively. See e.g. Beşikçi, *Kürtlerin 'Mecburî İskan'ı* (Ankara 1977) and P. Salzman, "National integration of the tribes in modern Iran". *M.E.J.* (1971): 325-336. Governments have also in a less direct way forced nomads to settle: by enforcing control on the borders they compelled those nomads whose summer and winter pastures lay in different countries to change their migrations or stop them completely.
10. The nomadic tribes of the Kurdish Taurus, their migration routes, etc. are described by Hütteroth (1959). The Turkish journalist Fikret Ötysam made a fascinating report on the nomadic Beritan tribe and their many difficulties (originally in the daily *Cumhuriyet*, reprinted in *Karasevdam Anadolu*, İstanbul, Çağdaş yay. 1976). Sociologist Beşikçi published a study on the large Elikan tribe, which I have unfortunately not been able to find: *Doğu'da değişim ve yapısal sorunlar* (Ankara, Doğan yay. 1969). Some of this material appeared in the periodical *Forum*, issues of 15/9, 1/10 and 15/10/1967.
11. Peter and Mugal Andrews drew my attention to the fact that the Kurdish black tent differs from those employed by other nomadic peoples (Arabs, some Turkic groups, Pashtuns) in that the stakes stick out through the tent roof, which they hold up by a strap, instead of supporting it from below. Indeed I found this to be true of all Kurdish tents, both in Kurdistan proper and in Khorasan.
12. These effects were noticeable very early for some industries. Around 1840 the missionary Badger noticed that the "many large calico printing manufactories" that had a few years before flourished in the (central Anatolian) town of Tokat had "well nigh disappeared" because the owners could not compete with the cheaper and better im-

(Notes to Chapter I, continued)

- ports from Liverpool and Manchester (Badger, I: 23). Von Moltke travelled aboard one of the Black Sea steamers in 1838, and noticed it carried over a million marks' worth of manufactured goods (Von Moltke 1882: 199). As a result of the new trade routes, several of the large towns of Kurdistan that had previously been important centres of trade (especially Diyarbekir and Bitlis) began to lose their importance (which Badger noticed already).
13. It used to be commonly accepted that Kurdish is a north-western Iranian language. MacKenzie however challenged this idea and showed that Kurdish may in fact have more in common with the southwestern Iranian languages (MacKenzie 1961).
14. Thus, a few examples may show the wide divergences between the dialect groups:
- | | | |
|------------|---------------|-------------------|
| | "I eat bread" | "I ate bread" |
| N.Kurdish | ez nan dirven | min nan xward |
| S.Kurdish | min nan exom | (min) nanim xward |
| SE.Kurdish | min nan exwen | (min) nan xwardim |
-
- | | | |
|------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | "I see you well" | "I saw you well" |
| N.Kurdish | ez te çê dibînim | min tu çê dit |
| S.Kurdish | min tû çak ebfînim | (min) çakim tû dit |
| SE.Kurdish | min tû çak ebfînim | (min) tû çak difim |
- (-in and -f are the suffixes of the 1st and 2nd person singular, respectively; xward- and xwe-(xo-) are the past and present stems of "to eat", dit- and bîn- of "to see").
15. On Zaza there is only the material collected by Mann and analyzed by Hadank (Mann/Hadank, 1932). Mann also collected material from several Gûranî dialects (Mann/Hadank, 1930). Only the Hevramî dialect has been studied in more detail: MacKenzie 1966; A.M. Benedictsen/A. Christensen, Les dialectes d'Awroman et de Pêwê (København 1921). Literary texts in Gûranî were published and analyzed by Soane (1921), religious texts in archaic Gûranî dialects were edited and translated by W. Mokri in several books and articles. On the properly Kurdish dialects there is a large body of literature. The most important descriptive grammars are: R. Lescot & K. Bedir Khan, Grammaire kurde, dialecte kurmandjî (Paris, 1970); D.N. MacKenzie, Kurdish dialect studies, vol I (London, 1961); E. MacCarus, A Kurdish grammar (NY 1958).
16. I prefer to mention a few good books only: Layard, 1849, I: 275-309 and 1953, I: 46-95 (Layard was friended with leading yezidis in Şexan, and interceded on behalf of the yezidis in Istanbul); Edmonds, A pilgrimage to Lalish (London 1967); E.S. Drower, Peacock Angel (London, 1941). On the controversial "sacred books", see I. Joseph, "Yezidi texts" Am. J. Semit. Lang. & Lit. 25 (1909): 111-119, 218-254; A. Mingana, "Devil-worshippers: their beliefs and their sacred books", J.R.A.S. (July 1916): 505-526.
17. Ch III, sec k. A fuller description, based on a perusal of most relevant sources, is to be found in J. Joseph's excellent study (1961).
18. quoted in Vanly (1970): 81.
19. Hasan al-Bakr, in power since July 1968, wanted to come to terms with the Kurds, but apparently preferred Talebani as a partner in negotiations. Barzani obviously did not like this, he considered himself the sole representative of the Kurds. For Talebani on the other hand, negotiating with the government was one of the best ways to increase his influence in Kurdistan. In October 1968, Barzani's men attacked Talebani, inflicting serious defeats on his forces: Talebani asked and received help from Baghdad. From then on, both he and the Baghdad government fought Barzani, in an obvious alliance of interests.
20. Essential reading on the Kurdish war in Iraq:
- On the early phases: U. Dann, Irak under Kassem (NY: Praeger 1969); D. Adamson (1964); D.A. Schmidt (1964); D. Kinnane, Kurdistan and the Kurds (OUP, 1964); H. Arfa (1966); A.R. Chasselou (1965).
On the late sixties up to the 1970 agreements: Vanly (1970); Nebez (1972).
On the 1970 agreement: G. Salomon, "Peace with the Kurds", New Outlook 14/4 (May, 1970): 35-42, 14/5 (June 1970): 32-40.
The most up-to-date publication that is generally available is M. Short & A. McMerrott, The Kurds, 3rd., revised ed. (London: Minority Rights Group, 1977).
The extent of U.S. involvement in the last war was a well-kept secret, until the Pike-report (of a Congress committee investigating CIA activities) was leaked to the press and published in The Village Voice. It has been published as a book since: The Pike Report on the CIA (London: Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, 1977).

Notes to Chapter II

1. Leach (1940): Barth (1953, 1960); Rudolph (1967). Other relevant works are the writings of Rondot (1937) and Hütteroth (1959, 1961).
2. Rondot (1937): 16-22.
3. M. Sahlins uses similar diagrams in his textbook Tribesmen; he identifies one of the levels with the village. The reader should be warned that these five levels are distinguished here only for the purpose of the discussion and do not necessarily correspond with the units actually found among the Kurds.
4. It is of course not accidental that these two conceptually quite different things can be identically represented. The relationships between the elements have been reduced here to the structurally identical ones of filiation and of segmentation; and both systems contain only one type of elements, individuals and segmentary groups, respectively.
5. Barth (1953): 25. The only place where I succeeded in compiling a census of household composition was four villages in the Balik area. I accompanied a medical team there that was inoculating all villagers; thus a census was easily made. I shall call the villagers A, B, C and D, and use categories that allow comparison with Barth:
- | | A | B | C | D | total |
|---|----|----|----|----|-------|
| incomplete | 1 | - | - | - | 1 |
| widow + children | 1 | 2 | - | - | 3 |
| elementary family | 26 | 28 | 24 | 18 | 96 |
| polygamous households | 4 | - | 2 | 1 | 7 |
| el.fam. + husband's mother + unmarried siblings | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| el.fam. + husband's unmarried siblings | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 9 |
| el.fam. + husband's father | - | 2 | 3 | 1 | 6 |
| patrilineal extended family | 1 | - | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| total | 40 | 35 | 32 | 26 | 133 |
6. Adequate statistics do not exist. The "Village Inventory Studies" (Ministry of village affairs, Ankara, 1964/65) give some indication: in the (Kurdish/Arabic) province of Urfa in Turkey out of the 644 villages 48 belong entirely to one person (i.e. all agricultural land is fully owned by one person), 29 belong entirely to one family, 28 belong entirely to one lineage. These figures do not give full credit to the degree of concentration of land and ownership by lineages: some lineages own more than one village, others own parts of several villages and are therefore not included above. In the face of the threat of landreform the lineage is quick to distribute its land among its individual members, infants included. Even if the law does not permit this there is a whole array of methods to persuade the officials executing the law to adopt a more favourable interpretation (I have witnessed this in Syria, Iran and Iraq; in Turkey landreform has been a farce until now).
- The ending -an is originally the suffix of the plural (oblique case), but in tribal names it is no longer declined: before an adjective of qualifying noun the -an is not changed into -ên (as would normally happen to a plural noun) but an extra -ên is suffixed: Elîkanên serxet, the Elîkan (or Elîkan area) north of the border. This form in -an denotes the tribe as well as the area; it is not only used for Kurdish tribes, though: e.g. "Tirkân" denotes the Turks as well as any area where Turks live, and by extension sometimes also the (multinational) state of Turkey. Any individual of the Elîkan tribe is called Elîki; also anything peculiar to the tribe (their dialect, a song, their sheep) is called Elîki; this is sometimes too, applied to the tribe as whole, but never to the territory. Often these tribal names in -an are derived from personal names (e.g. "Elîkan" from "Elîki"). Also the

(Notes to Chapter II, continued)

- emirates were often called after a person: the district of Behdinan (northern Iraq) perpetuates the name of the emirate that was founded here in the 14th century by a certain Bihadin (Baha ad-Din); "Bihadinan", (later Behdinan/Badinan) thus denoted the people and land of Bihadin.
- Some tribes are unambiguously called after an area, instead of the other way round, e.g. the Pijder. "Pijder" means "beyond the crevice". The name was first given as a general label to all small tribes of this specific region by their western neighbours; when they were united under a powerful leadership they adopted the name themselves too, even people living not exactly "beyond the crevice" are now called Pijder.
7. I use the term "shooting" rather than "fighting" because it is more descriptive of what actually happens in these tribal confrontations. The primary intention is apparently not so much to kill many people (which would start interminable, vehement bloodfeuds) as to impress and scare the enemy. This seems to be true for tribal warfare in general (see e.g. the analysis of the major battles between Mohammed's partisans and their Meccan adversaries in M. Rodinson's "Mohammed") - except when these tribal fights were imbedded in some larger war. In recent times, since arms and ammunition have become illegal and very expensive, tribal battles have become a form of conspicuous consumption. Of this particular battle (which took place when I was in Batman) I was told "The Bekiran fired continuously for 24 hours. They have many guns, they are a powerful tribe". No one was killed however. Of another battle (between the nomadic Teyyan and Jirkan, June 1975) proud participants told me they had shot "one million cartridges", without even wounding anyone, however. This contrasts with older reports, however. Ross, a doctor who visited the mir of Rivandiz in 1833 wrote: "The element of the Koord... is war... I have seen boys of 12 and 15 suffering under the most severe wounds, received in recent fights. I understand their battles are very sanguinary..." (in: Fraser (1840), I: 17/4).
 8. Barth (1953): 38.
 - 9a. It is said that in the past, when Kurdish emirs (mirs) ruled virtually independently in Kurdistan, their severe but just rule prevented such conflicts. Turkish government officials are generally accused of stimulating tribal conflicts, as part of a divide and rule policy.
 9. According to Turkish law, mountainous lands, including pastures, cannot be privately owned. They are state lands; but like state lands in the plains they are frequently usurped by locally powerful people who treat them as their private property. Hütteroth (1953: 150-52) claims that this is due to the introduction of a new administrative division (made in the mid-thirties) in which the whole land was neatly cut up and divided into provinces, sub-provinces, regions, municipalities and villages. The head of the municipality (elected, generally the most powerful man) tended to consider the land administratively included in his "territory" as his property, and started to demand rent from the nomads. If nomads would refuse to pay he would simply forbid them entrance into his territory, according to Hütteroth. Thus may have happened in a few cases, but I doubt whether it is valid as a general description. Hütteroth underestimates the element of naked power and manipulation in these relations. It is not just any head of a municipality who can demand rent from nomads (in fact, the inhabitants of the village of Kal in the same area pay rent to the nomadic Teyyan who consider the village lands theirs and have sufficient power to back up this claim). As the municipality head's claim to rent is not in accord with the law he cannot automatically count on state (i.e. gendarmerie) support. Only those who have their own armed men of have personal relations with powerful officials can think of exacting rent. The Giravi clearly have such relations: the present (1977) Minister of Defense and deputy for the province of Van, Ferit Melan, is narrowly allied with the Giravi (some people even claim he is a Giravi himself).
 - 9a. In 1975, this rent was said to amount to TL 70,000 (ca US \$ 5,000) for maybe a hundred Teyyan households who stayed on the pastures for some 3 or 4 months only. Also in another way are the Teyyan economically exploited by certain Giravi. On my way to Teyyan tent camps I met a Giravi trader who bought the cheese produced by the nomads. Intermediate traders make huge profits. The price of a kilogram of cheese was in 1975:
on the Teyyan summer pastures TL 10 - 12 (depending on quality)
in Pervazi, a nearby district centre TL 15 - 16.50
in Van and Siirt, provincial capitals TL 20 - 25.
 10. Rondot: 22.
 11. Although there is no certain evidence, there are some indications that collective rights in agricultural land were formerly vested in the village community. It is doubtful, however, whether musha'a tenure as described by Weulersse for Syria (where land was owned communally but farmed individually per household and periodically redistributed equally among all male adults) ever existed in Kurdistan proper. In the mountain villages of central Kurdistan every villager qua villager had a right to cultivate a parcel of the village land, a right that is still claimed. A distinction between ownership and possession, between share-cropper and small-holder was still unclear.
 12. Lambton claims that this was a general tendency of all Islamic governments: "The early Muslims may well have been influenced by considerations of general agricultural prosperity to treat the village as a unit, realizing that if the peasant had some interest in his land and some degree of local self-government he would be more likely to cultivate the better. In any case, whatever the motive, the tendency in early Islamic times was for the village to be treated as a corporate unit, and this tendency continued down to the 20th century A.D." A.K.S. Lambton, Landlord and peasant in Persia (London, 1953): 3.
 13. To say that all men of the village are present and assist in the rites mentioned would be a serious exaggeration. The piety varies quite much from one village to the next, depending on both the personality of the headman (or headmen) and on socio-economical factors. Rarely more than half of the adult men were present at the Friday prayers that I saw (in winter more than in summer, because then there is nothing else to do). In the sole rain-prayer I witnessed only the young boys of the village and some elderly men participated; the latter probably because during the ceremony they were to eat food specially prepared by the women of the village. The adolescents of the village watched the proceedings from a distance, somewhat mockingly.
 - 13a. Rondot: 22-26.
 14. Rich, vol I, 280n. Rich claims that sections from all tribes of Lorian and Persian Kurdistan lived under Caf protection. The Caf thus could mobilize an army of 300 mounted men and over 1000 infantry.
 15. Edmonds (1957): 146.
 16. The best description of the hierarchical organization of the Caf is given by Barth (1953), 34-44.
 17. Millingen (1870): 283.
 18. *ibid.*, 284.
 - 18a. Taylor (1865): 55 gave the contemporary strength of the Milan as 600 tents. A. Jaba (1870) quoted older figures (pre-1850) and ascribed 4000 tents to the Milan. Fragmentary data on later developments in Sykes (1908): 469ff; Rondot (1937): 34-38, and in the official paper "Notes on Kurdish tribes..." (Baghdad, gov. press, 1919). Ibrahim's success was enhanced by his appointment as a commander of the irregular Hamidiye troops. His career is described more extensively in that connection in Ch III, sec.m.
 19. For instance, there is a tribe called Elikan in the Hevêrkan confederation, while further east there is another small group called Elikan. Since Elk is a not uncommon personal name, these two groups may be independently called after different Elks. But among the Kelikan (S.W. of the Tor Abdin mountains) I encountered a clan called Hesinan; 150 km further east there is a major tribe of the same name. "Hesin" means "iron" (this is also the popular etymology among both groups); the name is one much less likely to have been adopted independently by two unrelated groups.
 - 19a. Important enumerations of tribes in the Sharafname (1536), Jaba (1870), Sykes (1908), and a number of official publications by the British occupying authorities in Iraq (1918-1920).
 20. Leach (1940): 13/4.
 21. Barth (1953): 36-37.
 22. Rudolph (1967): 23, 27.
 23. e.g. Barth (1953): 35; Edmonds (1957): 145-148.
 24. On the Ahl-e Haqq religion see Minor'sky's article "Ahl-e Hak" in the Encyclopaedia of Islam and the literature quoted there. In Kurdistan the religion is confessed in three separate areas: near Kirkûk, west of Kermanshah

(Notes to Chapter II, continued).

- (in the mountains north of the Baghdad-Kermanshah road), and between Kermanshah and Hamadan; the last-mentioned two regions formerly formed one vast Ahl-e Haqq area, but have been separated by the advancing state religion (Shi'a Islam). The second of these groups, comprising the Gûran confederation (some groups excepted) and sections of the Senecabi and Kelhor tribes are sometimes called the Ahl-e Haqq of Dalehd after the Dalehd mountains where their main places of pilgrimage are located. For all Ahl-e Haqq this area is what Mekka is for the Muslims. The local Ahl-e Haqq are heterodox even by the standards of their sect.
25. Rudolph (1967): 27.
26. Ali Razm-ara, *Jughrafiya-ye nizami-ye Iran* (Military geography of Iran), volumes "Fosht-e Kuh", "Kermanshahan", "Kordostan", and "Azerbayjan-e Bakhteri". (Tehran A.H. 1320 (A.D. 1941)).
27. E.g. the Bilbas, who were a confederation of seminomadic tribes living east of Kirkûk, are also called an "esfret". I never came across a term generally used in the meaning of "confederation". It should be noted that European observers called many tribes "confederations" because of the looseness of ties between the constituent clans and, I suppose, because of preconceived notions that a tribe should be a tight, corporate unit. A clear criterion to distinguish tribe and confederation does not exist, so these labels retain a certain degree of arbitrariness.
28. "gûran" (or "goran") is the name given, in eastern and southern Kurdistan to the non-tribal, subjected peasantry, synonymously with the term "miskûn" in certain parts of Iraqi Kurdistan. It should not be confused with the tribal name "Gûran". See the discussion in sections II. k and l.
29. C. Sandreczki (1857), II: 263.
30. Rudolph (1967): 28-29.
31. Hay (1921): 65.
32. Rudolph (1967; 28) emphatically denies that it is ever used with that connotation. I do not think, however, that the term "fl" is a proper synonym of "esfret" in its primary meaning, as Rudolph does. The term is of Turk-ish origin, and denoted large tribal confederations as well as the territories associated with these. Acc. to Lambton ("Ilat", *Encyclopedia of Islam*) the term was used in Persia in Ilkhanid times, and then denoted nomadic (or semi-nomadic) tribes. In this meaning it was still used by 19th century travellers.
33. See, e.g. Garthwaite (1977) on the Bakhtyari.
34. Hay (1921): 65.
35. Rondot: 4, 15.
- 35a. Koran 5: 45; 2: 178 (Mr D'Wood's translation, Penguin-books).
36. Barth (1953): 72-77.
37. Taylor (1865), 51.
38. Koran 2: 179, immediately following the previous quotation.
39. I was often told that in the past the elders of the tribe (ri epi) came together when there was a conflict, and tried to resolve it. All important decisions were said to have been taken by such a council, both in the esfret and on lower levels. I have never, however, heard of a concrete case where this actually happened.
40. Quoted by Rondot (1937): 34n.
41. Barth's statistics are unfortunately not very extensive either: out of the 21 marriages of tribal Hemewend which he traced, 9 were with father's brother's daughter, another 6 with other relatives. Among the non-tribal peasantry the tendency to father's brother's daughter marriage is much less marked: out of 53 marriages 6 were with father's brother's daughter, 12 with other relatives (Barth 1953: 68). These latter numbers are not much higher than what might be expected if partners were assigned by chance, dependent only on physical proximity. My impression is that father's brother's daughter-marriage is more frequent among the tribes of northern Kurdistan than among the Hemewend.
- 41a. This seemed to be the case in the anthropologists' favourite prototype of a segmentary society, the Beduin. In the words of Evans-Pritchard, the Bedu (of Cyrenaica) is "loyal to his bait' against other bays, to his 'aila against other 'allat, and to his qabila against other qabail. Nevertheless he has a strong feeling of communion with all the Bedouin of his country, regardless of their tribal affiliations, in common opposition to the town...". while townsman and nomad, as Arabs, feel one against the Turks, and the Italian invasion brought Arab and Turk together, as Muslims opposing the unbelievers. Evans-Pritchard (1949): 103.
42. Badger, I: xii, 183, 265. According to another account (Fraser (1840), I: 68/9) the emirate was already split by many feuds at the time of conquest.
43. J. Malcolm, *The history of Persia* (London 1815): 541-542.
44. Rondot: 25-26.
45. I heard very fragmentary versions of the legend in Turkish Kurdistan; Sykes mentions it (1908: 470) and notices a general confusion of the legendary Milan with their present namesakes. Several informants mentioned not 2, but 3 original tribes. From the third, the Baba Kurdî, the southern tribes (as well as many that moved into central Kurdistan) derived. Firat (a Kurdish author) gives names of tribes belonging to each of the three groups. (Firat 1946: 10-23, 144-149).
46. Rondot: 25.
47. Barth, "Segmentary opposition and the theory of games: a study of Pathan organization". *J.R.A.I.* 82 (1959): 5-21.
48. A notorious instance is that of the Pijder (see also p 94/7) one of whose chieftains, Babekr AXa, was a favourite of the British officials. Edmonds, one of the Political Officers who had dealings with this man, writes in retrospect that in the tribe being pro-Babekr or anti-Babekr became synonymous with being pro- or anti-government (Edmonds 1957: 230).
49. One is tempted to call quarrelling the "traditional" road to power, and recourse to outside support (usually the state) the "modern" one. But this latter road, generally more secure and often more profitable, has been gone for many centuries; the Kurds have always lived on the frontiers of empires. If the word "traditional" is applied to tribal society, it should certainly not be thought to imply that this "traditional society" was isolated from outside influences and that its social organization was autonomous. See Ch III.
50. E.g. Hay (1921), Edmonds (1957), and reports from political officers in the Foreign Office files (Public Records Office, London).
51. Described (for the Caf) by Barth (1953): 34-44. On the Herki there is no recent reliable material. Effective closure of the borders has split the tribe into 3 separate groups (in Turkey, Iran and Iraq). The Begzade have lost much of their traditional authority, and live among the Iranian Herki as a separate tribe now.
52. The Caf Begzade are divided into 3 branches; two of these have a common ancestor 7 generations removed (at Barth's time), the third is also related but somewhat further removed. "The political head may be drawn from any of these (branches)" (Barth 1953: 41).
53. Nikitine (1925: 11-14) claims the the sons of Bitîfa, Botan, Behdman, Hekant and Riwardiz belonged to one and the same family - probably incorrectly, but the fact that he was apparently told so is significant.
54. A son of the agha of the Xelican, who has seen all his judiciary powers taken away from him by the Turkish administration, told me "the agha of today is no longer a real agha, but more of a maqûl: he does not rule anymore ("hukm na ke").
55. The title of agha thus means something else in Kurdish than in Turkish ("ağa"). The Turkish ağa is the rich man of the village, the owner of the land, who does not necessarily exercise political power; the Kurdish agha is the man who rules, but may be quite poor.
56. "It is on his guesthouse that a chief's reputation largely depends. The more lavish his hospitality, the greater his claim to be called a 'piao' or 'man'" (Hay 1921: 47). In northern Kurdish there are two forms that correspond to the Persian word for "man" ("mard"): "merâ" and "mér". The first means "generous", the second "man", but with strong over-tones of "courageous". An agha must be both mér and merd.
57. A recurrent theme in Kurdish folk-tales is that of the tragic lover whose beloved has disappeared, and who then builds a tea-house at a crossing of roads, as the surest way to get information on the beloved's whereabouts. During the Kurdish war in Iraq the guest-house was where couriers and fighters coming back from the fronts slept when passing by; this provided the villagers with their main information on the state of the war, more concrete than the propaganda broadcast by radio.

(Notes to Chapter II, continued)

58. "In reality the guest-house in most places is more of a village club than the private property of the headman". (Hay 1921: 52).
59. Leach (1940): 28.
60. The same pattern of rising or remaining seated for a person who enters a room or passes by is still universally observed. There are even gradations in the respect shown by rising; one may simply make a gesture as if one is going to rise without actually doing so; or get up, but not further than a crouching position and immediately sit back again; stand up straight; or stand up with bent head as a sign of the highest reverence.
61. The disruptive effect of seasonal labour migration on relations between the common villagers should not be over-estimated, however. Usually they go as a group. In Turkey, recruiters for cotton or fruit plantations in the west visit these villages in winter, and have the villagers sign a contract. These recruiters use the traditional network of family and tribal relations, and make one or two elderly men of the village responsible for the others. In the west the migrants have hardly any contact with others than their co-villagers.
62. Barth (1953): 104.
63. Edmonds (1957: 224) and Bois (1965: 36-37) write that the term zekat is used strictly for the tithe of cereals; they give a long list of other "feudal" dues or taxes, but do unfortunately not tell us which ones were quite general, and where the other ones were exacted, nor whether they were exacted equally from tribesmen and non-tribal subjects, so that their contribution to our understanding of the nature and dynamics of Kurdish "feudalism" is limited. That zekat as exacted by the aghas is a usurpation of the "alms-tax" seems not unreasonable in the case of the village agha who uses it to maintain his guest-house; feeding hungry travellers is included in the prescriptions concerning alms (e.g. Koran 92: 17-18; 70: 22ff), so that there is a certain correspondence between the uses of zekat in Islamic theory and in tribal practice. On the place of zekat in Islamic law, and the precise legal specifications see Juynboll (1930): 80ff.
64. When I visited the Şekir section of the Balik in 1975 (this section was not visited by Leach) they denied this, and said they had never given the agha such a large share of the crop as Leach mentions (50%) - Leach never actually observed how much was given and seems to doubt his own data, which contradict Hay's (Hay mentions the ubiquitous 10%). The Şekir never paid more than 10%, acc. to their own claims. They added that occasionally bēgar, unpaid labour dues, was performed. But their memories of these things were clearly not very sharp, and I would regard them as tenuous evidence.
65. Leach: 15.
66. On tapu registration, see Ch III. sec. 1.
67. Leach: 17.
68. Leach: 18.
69. Hay: 68.
70. Edmonds (1957): 224-225.
71. This has historical reasons: both the Mengür and the Mameş once formed part of a large confederation, Bilbas, which in the 1830's was reduced by the mir of Riwandiz, Kor Papa. Part of the confederation (the majority of Mameş and Mengür) thereafter migrated to Persian Kurdistan. The confederation does not exist any more, even its name is rarely mentioned, but among the original component tribes a sense of belonging together still persists. The Iraqi Mameş have no powerful chieftain. In their winter residence, the villages, they gravitate towards Elif Axa of the Mengür (who used to be the most powerful man of the area). On the summer pastures, across the Iranian frontier (!), distant from those of the Mengür, but contiguous with those of the Iranian Mameş, Mela Qader Ebbas, chieftain of the Iranian Mameş, is recognized as the supreme authority, or Kixa Bawis Axa, nominally chieftain of the Iraqi Mameş but resident in Iran (my informants were inconsistent on this point). Here is a clear case of separation of political and economic domination: until 1961 the (Iraqi) Mameş villagers were forced to pay their zekat to Pijder aghas (Babekr branch; see the descr. of Pijder on p 34ff). Every year Babekr's armed men came to collect the tithe; sometimes they also took people with them to perform bēgar. The Mameş were too weak (only 6 villages) to defend themselves, and the Mengür probably did not feel like risking a conflict with the military powerful Pijder for the sake of the Mameş. The domination by the Pijder remained purely economic. Mameş would never think of joining the Pijder in a conflict with another tribe, and conflicts that could not be resolved internally were brought before Elif Axa, not before Babekr Axa for his sons. In the late 50's Babekr tried to appropriate the Mameş lands fully (this was the time that a new and definitive land registration was carried through in the region), and the Mameş resisted. Qassem's coup and the anti-landlord movement made the Mameş nearly independent for a few years, but in 1961 Babekr's sons sent some 300 horse-men to attack the Mameş: 4 villages were burnt down, 14 Mameş were killed. The Mameş left their villages and took refuge at a safe distance. They remained resolute, however, and refused ever more to pay zekat to the Pijder; the following political developments prevented further similar acts by the Pijder. (This is how the Mameş described the incident. They may have mixed up the sequence of the events. Comparison with press reports from those years suggests the identification with an incident that was described as a clash of the Pijder with the People's Resistance Forces (PRF, the anti-landlord militants) in May 1959, after which the Pijder also occupied a number of frontier and police posts. Hereupon the PRF with Iraqi air force support were reported to have forced the Pijder across the Persian border. (quoted in E. O'Ballance, The Kurdish Revolt 1961-1970 (London 1973): 74). If this identification is correct it would suggest a more active role of the Mameş in, or immediately previous to the incident. It would also explain why, after 1961, the Pijder have never tried to come back and submit them again.
- 71a. The quotation is from P. Anderson (1974): 108n. Thought-provoking remarks on the rise of such retinue systems in several (in most the retainers were recruited from outside the tribe!) in a review article by Owen Lattimore (1957), esp. p 52. (Anderson referred to this article, too).
- 71b. E.A. Thompson, The early Germans (Oxford, 1965), paraphrased by Anderson (1974): 107/8.
72. I wonder whether the Mirwalef would understand Edmonds' distinction between the (apparent) legality of their rule over the Mürədfin and the illegality of their subjection of other groups.
73. Hay: "...the wisest and greatest of the many tribal chiefs I have met..."; "Notes on the tribes of southern Kurdistan" (Baghdad, govt press, 1919), p 16: "...a fine man, strongly in favour of law and order...".
74. Edmonds (1957): 217.
75. "Notes on the tribes of southern Kurdistan", p 11.
- 75a. Information on the events of the past 30 years from interviews with a few Pijder subjects and one agha, Feb./March, 1975.
76. Described by Barth (1953): 53-55.
77. Barth (1953): 56.
78. Barth (1953): 59.
79. Naval Intelligence Division, Iraq and the Persian Gulf (1944): p 375.
80. "Notes on the tribes of southern Kurdistan": 10.
81. Hay: 165.
82. Quoted in A.T. Wilson (1931): 112.
83. This point is made, among others, in P. Anderson (1974): 151n. There was a native peasantry in the Crusader State, which was to form the serf class, but all its former overlords had been removed, and with them, the political organization and specific mode of production.
84. e.g. Rich, II: 108-110; Forbes (1839): 409-411; Von Moltke: 246; Sykes (1908): passim; Lehmann-Haupt II/1: 240.
85. "Diary of Major E. Noel on special duty 17-IV-1919" (Baghdad, govt pr.).
86. Montagne (1932): 58.
87. The proud Miran tribe, who were the most respected nomads of Central Kurdistan had to give up their migrations because of the closure of the Turkish-Syrian border, after which they remained in Syria. Until 1945 they continued to live under the tent, and refused to start cultivating; even now many still refuse to touch the plough. Mechanization solved this problem: now they can hire machinery with the operators so that they can cultivate without lowering themselves to the level of a common peasant.

(Notes to Chapter II, continued)

88. A. Legally also Mihemed's descendants and Osman each had part of the land in tapu holding, but they did not receive the title. Clearly at that time it still was a tax paid to the political leader, not a rent to him as a landowner.
- B. I have not found out whether the flocks were divided among Ebbas' descendants or also owned communally and administered by the paramount agha. However, I have never come across a case where animals were not thus distributed after the death of the owner. Unlike land, they are generally private property. Therefore it is probable that here too each member of the family had some private income from his flocks. But animals do not provide much cash income where there is hardly any urban population nearby. Moreover, the number of sheep the family could keep was necessarily limited since they no longer migrated. Agriculture, on the other hand, became ever more important as a source of income, but it was monopolized by the agha.
89. My informants claimed that this arrangement was new at the time - which seems hardly credible. The particular situation of the Cezfire, however, caused a proliferation of arrangements of this type, so that it may not be a serious exaggeration to speak of a "new class".
90. I do not know which of the branches of the family held this particular village in tapu; my informants said that that did not matter yet, only the paramount chief could sell it.
91. Traditional wisdom perceives father's brothers and brother's sons as rivals, whereas maternal uncles and nephews are thought to assist each other, (because there are no economic conflicts of interest between them): "xala xwarzir ra kirin, (maternal uncles help their nephews up, apa brazir da kirin" paternal uncles put their nephews down). These inherent conflicts may be the reason why father's brother's daughter-marriage is preferential: they are a way of reconciling two possibly contradictory interests. Cf. a related argument in Barth (1954). A maternal uncle may give a daughter to a nephew simply to help him, but parallel cousin marriages have a more political content. Xalib's generosity towards his nephews is not a cheap gesture, since the bride-price for daughters from chiefly families is normally at least 18,500 - \$ 1,500 (if the claimant is related; for a stranger the price is double that amount or even more).
- 91a. On the significance of standing up for a person, see note 60.
92. On Elk, his revolts and protection of the christians there are also some remarks to be found in the British Foreign Office files (F.O. 371), numbers 1919: 44A/107502/149523/163688/3050. Elk's brother-in-arms, the christian Sem'qn Hanna, is the subject of many heroic tales told by the christians of Tor Abdin.
93. This is the same phenomenon that is also frequently noticed in election time in Turkish Kurdistan. Local factions or feuding tribal sections ally themselves with opposing political parties. Each 4 years, when elections are approaching, old conflicts flare up again, and more violently than before the association with political parties!
- 93a. According to a Giravi informant, in his village out of 60 families 20 are Giravi, in a neighbouring village 10 out of 50 families. All the land is owned by Giravi. I could not discover how high the share of the crop exacted is, but gathered it is well over 50%.
- 93b. There are some examples of a mass exodus of the miskin, however. In the early 1830's, when the authority of the Baban princes was weakened by intestine struggles and when the plague ravaged the country (1831/2), peasants massively left their lands and went north, to the areas under the control of the powerful and severe but just mir of Riwandiz. (Fraser 1840, I: 177).
94. Described by Lynch II: 421-423, Christoff (1935): 24ff; Friddin 1944: 18-19.
95. Below a certain minimal number of ewes (variously estimated at 80-200) nomadic husbandry is not profitable or even impossible. As among other nomads (see e.g. Barth 1962: 350, and his description of the Basseri case in Nomads of South Persia) it is the poorest and the very rich who are the first to settle, for quite different reasons. The rich settle in towns mainly, to improve their trading connections and to be near the sources of political power. The kind of settlement that interests us here, however, is that of the poor.
96. The turbulent history of this tribe is rather well documented. The first Europeans who passed through their territory did not yet give much information; Rich merely mentioned them (I: 281); Fraser (who passed in 1834) called them the terror of the many times more numerous Caf (1840: I, 167) and Ainsworth (1898) found them in open rebellion against Turkish authority. Most informative about this rebellion, about their exploits as robbers and their exile to Cyrenaica and return are: Lehmann-Haupt II/1: 297. Soane (1912): 171-183. Edmonds (1957): 39-40. Naval Intelligence Division, Iraq and the Persian Gulf (1944): 263, 268, 374. "Notes on the tribes of Southern Kurdistan" (Govt. Press, Baghdad, 1919): 11.
97. As a definition this is still unsatisfactory. The differences are not absolute, but a matter of degree. With a little stretching of the concept, any two Kurdish tribes can be considered "ethnically different": interaction between tribes is much less frequent and intensive than within tribes; their histories may be virtually independent; and between any two tribes there are differences of dialect. The problem is that there were (and still are) no natural units beyond the tribe; delimitation of an ethnic group is therefore always arbitrary.
98. See K. Hadank, "Einleitung" in Mann/Hadank 1930 (pp. 1-94); V. Minorsky (1928, 1943) and art "Senna" and "Kurden" in E.I.; MacKenzie's art "Guran" in E.I.2 is short but has a few useful additional remarks; also his article of 1961 is pertinent.
99. European linguists call this language usually "Girani"; locally it is sometimes called "maqû", after the form of "he says" these dialects have in common and which distinguishes them from the Kurdish dialects; as far as I know native speakers do not have a name for the whole dialect group; they only name the sub-dialects, e.g. Hewramani, Pawef, 'Omranf,.... The first to stress that these dialects belonged to another language than Kurdish was Oskar Mann (in his Kurdish - Persische Forschungen, Abt I, S. XXIII, Ann. I (1909); the material in Gûranf dialects that he had collected was - after his death - edited and published by Karl Hadank (Mann/Hadank 1930). The Danish linguist Benedictsen collected some material of the related dialects of Hewraman and Pawe in 1901; he also realised that these dialects were not Kurdish, but it was only in 1921 that his notes were posthumously published, edited by A. Christensen. The third serious study is that by McKenzie (1966), which is unfortunately based solely on what he elicited from a single native speaker whom he met in England.
100. Soane (1912): K. Fuad (1973): XVII, XXI - XXIII.
- 100a. Lambton, art "Ilat" in E.I.2; Minorsky, art "Kurden" in E.I.2; Minorsky 1943: 75.
101. The poem is about the conversion of the Kurd (nomad) Abidin, who was a muslim, to the ahl-e haqq religion by its founder Soltan Sohak, who is called a gûran. According to the tradition Soltan's father, Şêx İsf, was a seyid who came from Hemedan and established himself in Hewraman; Soltan Sohak apparently spoke Hewramani; all his deeds and miracles are set in Hewraman. Interestingly, the very influential (Kurdish) shaikhs of Berzence (of whom Şêx Mehmed, the famous nationalist leader, politician and rebel, is the best known) claim descent from Şêx İsf's brother Şêx Mûsaf (who had come with him from Hemedan). The population of Hewraman is not ahl-e haqq now but muslim, and the influence of the orthodox Islamic Berzenci shaikhs is very great.
102. Kurds do not employ the label "Kurd" in a single sense: it refers to different groups, depending on the context. Sometimes it is used as an ethnic label, as I use it in this book; frequently, however, it merely indicates that one speaks Kurdish. When I asked people in ethnically mixed areas whether they were Kurds of Turks or Persians I frequently got answers such as "I am a Kurd as well as a Persian and a Turk". When I insisted and asked what they originally were, some answered "my father also speaks all three languages".
103. Soane 1912: 377ff.
104. It is not true that there are no non-tribal peasants further north, but it is true that these are not called "gûran" there.

(Notes to Chapter II, continued)

105. There is another enclave of people speaking a related language, the so-called Zaza of northern Kurdistan. Zaza is the name these people and their language are given by their neighbours; they name themselves Dimilî. It appears to be agreed now by linguists that this name is derived from "Daylami" (Minorsky 1928: 91, 105; Hadank in Mann/Hadank 1930: 18-19; and in Mann/Hadank 1932: 4-6). The Daylamites were an Iranian people originally living south of the Caspian Sea. It is known that they expanded westward. In the 9th century they adopted shiasm, probably of the Ismaili variety. A dynasty from among them, the Buyids, conquered large parts of Persia and in 945 even took Baghdad, which cost the caliph his last remaining powers though not his title. They only let him remain in office to lend an appearance of legality to their rule among sunni muslims. That many common people came (south-) westward with the conquest is at least suggested by place-names. The Arab geographer Yaquf mentioned a place called Daylamistan in Şehrizor (Minorsky 1943: 81). The Egyptian author Şihab ad-Din al-'Umari wrote that the Mongol invasions caused enormous displacements of population groups; the Kurdish inhabitants of Şehrizor migrated to Syria and Egypt, and their place was taken by another nation that was not properly Kurdish (according to Şihab ad-Din; Minorsky 1943: 83-84). The name of the newcomers is not decipherable, but Minorsky felt they could hardly be anything else but the Gûran. This identification seems to me a little doubtful; elsewhere Şihab ad-Din called the Gûran simply by this name and called them "a nation of Kurds". At the time he wrote (1543 A.D.) these inhabited the mountains of Şehrizor and Hemedan (ibid).
106. Important later sources are the chronicle Nikitine discovered in manuscript and summarized in Nikitine 1925; and the book "Farikh-e Ardalan" (in Persian) by the Kurdish poetess Masture (printed ed.; with an introd. by Naer Azadpur, n.p. (Sanandaj), n.d.). See also Rôhrborn (1966): 79-80 and the sources quoted there. An extremely important document has recently been found and published: the memoirs of Me'mûn Beg, a prince of the Erdelan family who ruled for a short time in Şehrizor at the time that the Ottomans were establishing their rule there (in the late 1530's). These memoirs were written in 1577 in Osmanî Turkish; they deal with the crucial period when the principality was split up, due to the power struggle between the two contending empires, each of which had their "agents" within the Erdelan family. They are published (in facsimile, with a latin transcription and an introduction) in Parmaksizoglu 1973.
107. Thus I interpret a passage in Me'mûn Beg's memoirs (see note 106): "...One of the Kurdish emirs educated by (at the court of?) Begû Beg (Me'mûn Beg's father) called Hacı Şeh Beg, held the liwa of Baban as a chief ..." (Parmaksizoglu 1973, p 11A of the facsimile).
108. Sharafname, (ed. M. 'Abbasi, Tehran, n.d.) p 383: "pûshîde namânad ke asl-e hokkâm-e Bradost az tayfe-ye Gûran ast" ("it is not unknown that the rulers of Bradost originate from the Gûran tribe").
109. E.g. the extraordinary shaped hat Rich noticed on Hewramî soldiers; Hadank (in Mann/Hadank 1930: 5-10) discusses this extensively as a cultural item formerly common to Gûran, and setting them apart from the Kurds (kelawspî, "white-cap", is still the term Bilbas tribes use to denote their subjected non-tribal peasants; it refers obviously to the same hat-type). The hat is no longer worn. Among the Kurds, the Hewramî enjoy great renown as skilled craftsmen, capable of making just anything out of wood.
110. Quoted, after Quatremère's translation, by Minorsky 1943: 83-84.
111. Sharafname: p 23-24 (ed. Abbasi).
112. These are the Caff Teyfî and the Caff Qadir Murîd Weyfî. They joined the Gûran around 1850, acc. to Minorsky (art. "Senna", E.I.I.). See also Rabino (1920), 22 and Nikitine (1922): 79 n2.
113. The Qelxanî do not have their own cem (religious assemblies) although they may participate in a cem when they happen to be in a village. They do not know any of the religious songs which play such an important part in the ahl-e haqq religion. The Qelxanî I talked with showed little interest in reincarnation - a major tenet. After a death their mourning is loud and conspicuous, whereas the real ahl-e haqq should - at least in theory - not be too mournful, for the spirit does not die but has freed itself from a clumsy body and will soon be reborn in a young one. The only religious activity in which the Qelxanî indulge are their pilgrimages to the ahl-e haqq shrines and religious leaders.
114. Rabino (1920): 22.
115. On the origins of the Gûran confederation and its exact relations with the Gûran mentioned by Şihab ad-Din al-'Umari and Şeref Xan, opinions differ. Minorsky apparently considered the present confederation (minus the Kurds that recently attached themselves to it) as descendants of these original Gûran. Rawlinson (a British officer who commanded a regiment of Gûran tribesmen for the Persian prince that governed Kirmanşah) stated that the Kelhor (a very large Kurdish tribe, twice as numerous as the Gûran and living to their south) claimed that the Gûran were but an offshoot of their tribe, and that this Gûran informants themselves admitted this to be true (Rawlinson 1839: 36). A variant is Mann and Rabino's opinion that the Gûran confederation was formed through conquest of the original (Gûran-speaking) sedentary population by Kurdish tribes, notably the Kelhor and Zengene (Rabino 1920: 8-9). The rulers of the Gûran confederation, however, were not Kelhor, although they intermarried with the Kelhor leaders (personal information). What did happen is that the Kelhor chieftains in the 18th/19th centuries pushed back the influence of the Gûran rulers, which was once more considerable than around 1900. (This may lie at the root of Mann and Rabino's opinions). Around 1808, when the Persian prince Mohammed Ali Mirza incorporated the district of Zohab (which includes the Gûran territories, and had formerly nominally belonged to the Ottoman Empire) into Persia, he appointed the rulers of the Gûran to the governorship (Rabino, 1920: 15-16; Soane, 1912: 382). The relations of the Gûran and the Kelhor are rather intensive. Some Kelhor are ahl-e haqq (the majority are ordinary shiites, however). There is a cryptical remark in the Sharafname in the section dealing with the rulers ("omârâ va hokkâm") of the Kelhor (under which label Şeref Xan apparently grouped all tribes from Kirmanşah and northern Lorisân): "their (i.e. these rulers) tribe is called (or considered) Gûran" ("tashîret-e Ishân râ Gûran mi-khând" Sharafname p 408). Whatever this may mean, it establishes a long-lasting relation between Gûran and Kelhor, but not one of simple domination of one by the other.
- Thus the Sharafname and the chronicles of Erdelan, see note 106. According to these sources Baba Erdel was a descendant of the Mervanid dynasty. His descendant Me'mûn Beg disclaimed this ancestry of Baba Erdel; instead he claimed as ancestors - in accordance with the custom among ruling families in his time - some Arabs close to the Prophet (Parmaksizoglu 1973: fasc. 2B).
117. Not necessarily from the north, as Rich supposed: the Caf, for example, had come from the east, from Persian Kurdistan, where still some sections of the tribe remain. They had been tributary to the Erdelan princes there. Many tribes of southern Kurdistan, however, have a tradition of having come from further north (see e.g. Minorsky's art. "Lak" in E.I.I., where he notes this for the Kelhor and other Lekî-speaking (Kurdish) tribes).
118. Thus Sandreckzi (1857) II: 263.
119. Garmatî Ismailî propaganda made much progress among the Daylamites in the 11th century A.D. It won at least the temporary allegiance of Daylamite leaders like Asfar, Mardawîj and later of some rulers of the Muşafirid dynasty. See W. Madelung, "Isma'iliyya", p 15.
120. The religion of the Dersim Kurds has been seriously misrepresented by many western authors, who based themselves mainly on information by orthodox muslims (who detest the alevî's). The best accounts in a western language are by my knowledge still Molynux-Seel (1914) and Trowbridge (1909). More material is to be found in two books written by local people (in Turkish): dr. Huri Dersimî (1952): 21-32; M.S. Firat (1970): 231-254. These two works are interesting in that they give much information on rituals and religious folklore. However, they avoid mentioning the more heterodox tenets. Trowbridge is more informative on this point.
121. According to Hadank and others, the most likely derivation of "dimilî" is from "Daylami". See note 105.
122. A story that recurs several times is that of a miracle-working contest: one of the rival magicians or saints challenges the other by riding toward him mounted on a lion, using a serpent as a whip. The other reacts by mounting (or ordering a disciple to mount) a brick wall and ordering the wall to gallop, upon which his rival recognizes him as his superior. According to a song I recorded in Dalehd the victorious miracle-worker was

(Notes to Chapter II, continued)

- Soltan Sokak, his rival a certain Pir Mikafil. Molyneux-Seel heard a similar story in Bersim - the rivals were local seyids here, and he was even shown the wall (Molyneux-Seel 1914: 58). Lucy Garnett (1912:163) retold the same story with Haci Bektaş (who has a similar position for the alevi's as Soltan Sokak for the ahl-e haqq) in the main role. The story has even wider circulation: I bought a cheap religious print in Pakistan that depicts the contest. The protagonists are two local saints Hazrat Shah Mîna Sahib (on the wall) and Hazrat Shah Mudar Sahib.
123. Even in Bersim, many of the small tribes are Kurmanji-speaking, see the list in Bersimi (1952): 42-56.
124. In Dalehd the only reference to Haci Bektaş was in a poem by the local mystic Nûrîz (d.ca. 1850) "...tacer-e hocer-e Haci Bektaş im" ("I am a trader of Haci Bektaş' cell"), a phrase that was not understood by anyone there. The people who knew his name considered him as an incarnation of one of the seven leading spiritual personalities. The Kakaf, however (an ahl-e haqq community living near Kerkuk, and said to have come from Hevraman originally), identify Haci Bektaş with Soltan Sokak: Soltan once left his disciples in Hevraman and went to Anatolia in the appearance of Haci Bektaş. For 100 years he wandered about Anatolia, and then returned to Hevraman, where the duration of his absence was perceived as less than 24 hours (Edmonds 1969: 93). The same story was told to me by dr. Behram Elahi, spiritual leader of a Tehran-based branch of the ahl-e haqq (grandson of Hajî Ni'mabullah, the reformer on whose writings so many studies of the ahl-e haqq lean too heavily).
- 124a. In an article I read after finishing this chapter (Trowbridge, 1909) I found a confirmation of this supposition. Trowbridge's alevi informants (unfortunately he did not indicate from which part of Turkey they were; Trowbridge resided in Ainteb = Gaziantep) told him that "the geographical center of their religion is in the town of Kirind, Kermanshah province, Persia". They even gave him (correctly) the names of the leading seyids of the Dalehd region (o.c. 342)! This implies that around 1900 alevi from Turkey went on pilgrimages to the ahl-e haqq saints and shrines.
125. Hadank in Mann/Hadank (1930): 33-42.
126. The best descriptions are by Edmonds (1957, 1969).
127. The ahl-e haqq of Dalehd venerate Satan, as do the yezidis; they know his yezidi name of Melek Ta'da. Some ahl-e haqq in Dalehd told me they consider the yezidi to really belong to their own religion.
128. Minorsky (1943: 77) quotes a text from Socin (Kurdische Sammlungen, S 174): "I was not a Jew, nor a Muslim, Nor a Christian, nor a Goran". "Goran" apparently indicates here a fourth religion, which lends credibility to the etymology *gebr-an* > *goran*. Or would the term indicate not Zoroastrianism but ahl-e haqq, the religion of the Gîran? It should be noted that there are no indications of a significant zoroastrian influence on the ahl-e haqq religion. The ahl-e haqq of Dalehd do worship Satan, but for them he is not the evil principle as Ahriman is in Zoroastrianism. Fire is treated with respect by the ahl-e haqq, but so is it by many muslim Kurds (urinating on a burning fire is considered extremely shameful in most parts of Kurdistan).
129. Minorsky (1943): 78, 86.
130. Minorsky (1943): 77-78.
131. "A nation is a historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up, manifested in a community of culture". J. Stalin, *Marxism and the national question* (1913). As is well known, Stalin became in 1917 People's Commissar for Affairs of Nationalities in Revolutionary Russia (see e.g. E.H. Carr, *The Bolshevik revolution*, vol I: 281ff).
132. The greatest authority on early Kurdish history, the late Minorsky, considered the Medes the ancestors of the Kurds, on the basis of the historical and linguistic evidence he collated (Minorsky 1940). He believed a common Median basis to be the main reason of the unity of Kurdish culture, especially language. The able linguist McKenzie, however, using other linguistic evidence and arranging it differently, gathers that Kurdish is not a northwestern Iranian dialect (as Median and Parthian), but a southwestern one. The people who spoke these dialects had however a social structure similar to that of the Medes.
133. Thus e.g. Lehmann-Haupt, II, pt 1: 438 on the inhabitants of Saşîn. Similar observations in Minorsky's art "Kurdien" (B.I.1).
134. The very fact that Ottoman law books forbode the re'aya (common subjects, mainly peasants) to have themselves registered as sipahi (members of the military "nobility") suggests that this was a rather common practice, at least in some parts of the empire.
135. Lehmann-Haupt (vol. I: p 289-290) mentioned the existence of Kurdish and nestorian subjected peasantry. Rich related the adventures of the first Turkish messenger who crossed the territories of the nestorian tribes. The man was more frightened by them than by the fiercest Kurdish tribesmen. To his horror he found out that they did not even know of the existence of the sultan (Rich I: 275-280).
136. Hütteroth 1959: 57. The Ermeni-Varto spoke Kurdish, and had forgotten most of their religion.
137. Soane (1912: 406-407) listed 20 important tribes, of which 9 call themselves "kirmanc"; of the southern tribes these are: Pijder, Bilbas, Şivan and Baban. The others ("kord") include (southern tribes only:) Merivan, Bane, Caf, Hemewend, Şerefbeyan, Becilan, Hewramî (!), Gîran (!), Kelhor and Sencabi. I do not understand what the basis for this distinction is; it is certainly not linguistic: the second group is quite varied linguistically, and the dialects of the Caf and Baban (second and first group, respectively), on the other hand, differ little.
138. As elsewhere, it is the outdoor instruments, esp. the *zûrne* (shawm) and the *def* or *dehol* (big drum) on which a taboo rests. It is extremely shameful for a Kurd to play such an instrument. The same prejudice rests on the *kemence* (fiddle) in some areas. The *tombûr* (a long-necked lute), however, may be played by Kurds without inviting contempt. "Even aghas may play it", people said to indicate how acceptable it is.

Notes to Chapter III

1. "...most tribes seem to be secondary phenomena in a very specific sense: they may well be the product of processes stimulated by the appearance of relatively highly organized societies amidst other societies which are organized more simply. If this can be demonstrated, tribalism can be viewed as a reaction to the formation of complex political structures rather than a necessary preliminary step in its evolution". M. Fried (1968):15.
2. E.A. Thompson, *The early Germans* (Oxford, 1965). Summarized by P. Anderson in *Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism* (London, 1974): 107-109.
3. One aspect was noted by several anthropologists: P. Brown coined the term "(colonial) satrapy" for it.

(P. Brown, "From anarchy to satrapy", AA 65 (1963): 1-15): "giving native officials unprecedented power or allowing them free reign and supporting them with the force of colonial administration". She describes an example from New Guinea, where she did fieldwork, and quotes colleagues who remarked on the same phenomenon elsewhere. In some cases chieftains were created here previously there were none, in others "although some sort of traditional leader existed before colonial rule was established, his social role changed greatly after he was recognized as a chief with administrative authority" (13). I believe that the influence of states on tribes is even more fundamental than is apparent from these cases.

(Notes to Chapter III, continued)

4. See art. "Shah-sewan" in E.I.¹ (by V. Minorsky). Richard Tapper (1974) showed that the accepted notion of the Shahsavans as created by Shah Abbas is untenable. The Shahsavans of Erdebil probably did not become a confederation until the late 17th century. The term "shah-sewan" had been used previously (since Shah-Isma'il) for those who rallied to the shah's appeals for loyal warriors, but there is no evidence that these were organized into (pseudo)tribal units of the name then. Breaking up and regrouping tribes was a common practice of the shahs, but the term "creation of a tribe" should not be taken strictly literally.
5. This revolt by itself was not sufficient to shake the government; it had a stronger impact because it coincided with other revolts, both politically progressive and reactionary ones, against the rule of the shah and his reform programme. See: P. Avery, *Modern Iran* (London, 1968): 504.
6. The Italian econometricist/sociologist Pareto (1848-1923) proposed a general theory of political change (which, to him, was nothing but a circulation of elites), according to which every elite, after having been in power "becomes softer, more humane, and less apt to defend its own power", and is then soon overthrown by a new, more vigorous elite. His study was translated as: V. Pareto, *The rise and fall of the elites* (Potsdam, N.J. 1968).
7. Not always did tribesmen arrive at the dominating position by pure conquest of the land and subjection of its settled inhabitants (who might or might not have had an already well-developed state apparatus). In several cases foreign tribesmen were welcomed by local people as mercenaries who could protect them. Sometimes higher forms of social organization developed out of such a symbiosis. An example is the Mitanni empire (2nd millennium B.C.). The Hurrites, a people in northern Mesopotamia, who spoke a non-Semitic, non-Indo-Aryan language, were not united into one state until they were joined by a group of warrior tribes. These were Indo-Aryans, who came westward from the Gurgan plain (SE of the Caspian) and came to live among the Hurrites. They were austere warriors, horsemen with an army of war-carts. Without conflicts (apparently) the Indo-Aryans became the ruling stratum of what developed into the Mitanni empire. According to Chirshman (1977: 26) the evidence suggests that no conquest took place: the Indo-Aryans simply organized the state, a thing the Hurrites themselves had not been capable of. In the words of another expert "the co-existence of both, so heterogeneous components of the population - Hurrites and Indo-Aryans - appears, after the sources, so close, that one has coined the expression of symbiosis" (H. Otten, "Hethiter, Hurriter und Mitanni" in *Fischer Weltgeschichte* 3. Die altorientalische Reiche, II: 129).
8. A topic that I do not want to go into here, but only point at, is the conceptual confusions that lie in the lurch because the same term "tribe" is used for so many conceptually different units, as e.g. the pre-state political unit, the half-integrated tribe in the periphery of an empire, and the tribe that rules an empire. On the one hand, these types of "tribes" have much in common, and, in fact, the same unit may assume all three appearances at different times, on the other hand, there are some essential differences. I take the pragmatic approach in this book: I call "tribe" and "tribal" what the Kurds themselves call so, without much philosophizing on what a tribe "really" is. On p 145-147; summarized the main characteristics of the Kurdish tribes as I found them.
9. In the Ottoman Empire, the bureaucracy too was classified as "military".
10. E.g. Rich, I: 88.
11. Chirshman (1977): 51; R. Lebet in *Fischer Weltgeschichte* 24. 4. Die altorientalische Reiche, III: 19.
12. Nationalist Kurds have adopted this date as the starting point of the "Median" or "Kurdish" time reckoning. Kurdish calendars for 1977 thus bear the date of 2589.
13. Probable it is, but not beyond doubt. The historical evidence, as collated by Minorsky, the greatest expert on the subject ("Kurden", in E.I.¹; Minorsky 1940) makes it plausible that many Medians settled in what is now Kurdistan and became ancestors to the Kurds; statistics about population movements, however, do not exist. From the fact alone that Median kings ruled over northern Mesopotamia for quite some time one can conclude next to nothing about the ethnic composition of their subjects. On the linguistic evidence there is no unanimity. Minorsky (1940) concluded that the Kurdish dialects have a strong common Median base, while MacKenzie adduces strong arguments for his thesis that Kurdish belongs to the southwestern group of Iranian dialects (instead of the northwestern group to which Median is supposed to have belonged). He therefore argues that the Kurds do not descend from the Medians, but from another Iranian group, that had first moved down to the southwestern part of Iranian territory and from there moved into Kurdistan (MacKenzie 1969). It seems to me that both authors give undue weight to linguistic evidence; the group that gave the Kurds most of their language was not necessarily the group that gave them most of their genes.
14. Numerous examples are given in Minorsky's article "Kurden" (E.I.¹).
15. Kurdish nationalists have therefore quite ambiguous feelings about this famous Kurd. For the same reasons the Iraqi government baptized the Kurdish para-military units it recruited to combat the Kurdish nationalists (from 1962 on) "Saladin brigades" (firasah Salah id-Din). In Europe these brigades are better known under the name the Kurdish nationalists gave them: *ceş* (jash: "donkey-foal").
16. Barzani's position was certainly not due to outside support alone. The old reputation of his family (shaikhs and inveterate nationalists), his military prowess and successes as a guerrilla leader, increased nationalism among the population, all these factors contributed, as well as his Machiavellian talents for manipulation. However, the increasing support he received from Iran (and, since 1972, from the U.S.A.) significantly changed the nature of his rule, which ever more resembled the shah's rule in Iran. The ministers he appointed in 1974 were responsible to him alone, and so was the military; while internal security (and political oppression) was the affair of his secret service Farastin - established in 1966 by the shah's SAVAK as a rather exact copy. The revolutionary council, a sort of parliament that had existed from 1966 to 1970, was never reinstated.
17. An important source for the history is a 12th century chronicle by Ibn al-Azraq al-Farisi. The sections dealing with the Merwanids were published in Egypt and are now available in a Turkish translation by M.E. Bozarslan: *Ibn 'ul-Ezrak, Mervan Kirtleri tarihi* ("History of the Merwanid Kurds") Istanbul: Koral, 1975. References are to this edition. An excerpt of the document, with some notes, is Amedroz's article (1903), while some additional information is contained in the E.I. articles "Kurden" (Minorsky) and "Marwanid" (E.V. Zetterst6fen).
18. Ibn 'ul-Ezrak, 69: "When Adud ad-Dawla died Bad became (even) more powerful, and his following increased".
19. Diyar Bekr, now the name of its central town, was originally the name given to the vast province including Amid, Meyyaferrin, Mardin and (sometimes) Cezire, and extending as far east as Lake Van.
20. Ibn 'ul-Ezrak: 73.
21. Ibid, 74-75. The inhabitants of Mosul took care that Bad was given a proper muslim funeral, which is an indication of the respect he commanded there.
22. Ibid. 115: "Emir Abd Nasr fortified his rule. Apart from Amid, he took every corner of (the province) Diyar Bekr under his sovereignty. He corresponded with the kings (in the plural; so probably not only with the Byzantine emperor but also with the Armenian sovereigns), the Caliph and the Buyid Baha ad-Dawla. Thus his rule was strengthened and no one dared oppose him".
23. Ibid. 118-120. The author concluded: "Thus Nasr ad-Dawla's glory became more exalted and his power increased, and the country attained stability". Amedroz: 133/4.
24. Minorsky, "Kurden", E.I.¹, p 1218. The Begnewi (or Becewfi) were an important (nomadic) Kurdish tribe, territory whose territory was north of the Tor Abdin.
25. See e.g. O. Turan (1973): 231/2; also note 26.
26. Ibid 'ul-Ezrak: 82.
27. Armenians were in the majority in the northern and eastern parts of the Merwanid's dominions (Xerpat, M6s, Bitlis, the area around Lake Van), while in Mardin, Hisnkeyf, Meyyaferrin and Amid Jacobite Syrians predominated. Jews were almost entirely town-based, mainly in the western half (Turan 1973: 232).
28. In this period the Kurds "were in general a mountain people", who "practised animal husbandry and brigandage, and occupied themselves but little with agricul-

(Notes to Chapter III, continued)

- ture" (Turan 1973: 236). Turan adduces the 12th century traveller Ibn Jubayr, who related that Kurdish highway robbers were a veritable plague in the districts that he passed (Nesefin, Goghisar, Mesdl).
30. Ibn 'Ul-Ezrak: 169. The Turkish translation uses the rather general term "beylikler" ("princedom" or "governorates"), Amedroz, in his resumé, speaks of "territorial grant".
31. Ibn 'Ul-Ezrak: 169. This must have been in the order of 10% of the total annual revenue of the Merwands' territories, as might be gathered from a later figure. In Saljuq times someone was made a governor of the same territories upon promising a revenue of one million dinars in 3 year's office (ibid. 202).
32. This does not contradict the fact that many tribal chieftains and other accepted local rulers are of foreign origin. Being an outsider may be an asset - but only if one has other (e.g. charismatic) qualities as well.
33. In the preceding chapter I drew attention to the same process on a lower "level of integration". When, in Atatürk's time, many tribal leaders and shaihs were killed or sent into exile the number of inter- and intra-tribal conflicts increased, and were difficult to bring to an end, because persons with sufficient authority to do so were lacking (see p 65/6).
34. Sharafname, p 498 of the Persian edition by M. Abbasi.
35. The historical review is based mainly on the following sources: The Sharafname (References are unless indicated otherwise, to Charuqoy's translation. Where literal quotations are given I have translated these from the Persian text, after the Persian edition by M. Abbasi); Iskandar Beg Turkmen, 'Alam-ara-ye 'Abbasi (ed. by Iraq Afshar, Tehran 1350 (1971); J. von Hammer, Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches, Pesth, 1827-1835 (10 vol.); W. Hinz (1936); H. B. Schweide (1965); M. Schmidt-Dumont (1970); M. Mazzaoui (1972); Gh. Sarwar (1939); P. Sumer (1976); S.J. Shaw (1976); I. Parnakiazoglu (1973). Other sources used will be mentioned in the notes.
36. Cahen (1968): 316.
37. Hinz (1936): 51; Cahen (1968): 361/5; Mazzaoui (1972): 10; Sharafname: passim.
38. Sharafname II/4: 248-252.
39. In the Tarikh al-Ghiyati (ed. Schmidt-Dumont, 1970) no Kurdish tribes or leaders are mentioned in this connection, nor in the other sources adduced by the editor.
40. Hinz (1936): 51, 136/7; Sharafname: passim; Minorsky, "Kurden".
41. Sharafname II/I: 3; Tehran ed. 216.
42. Schmidt-Dumont (1970): 78/9; Mazzaoui (1972): 11/2.
43. Hinz (1936): 53/4; Schmidt-Dumont (1970): 74.
44. On Safi ad-Din's life, and his orthodox religious attitudes, see especially Schweide (1965): 96-117, and Mazzaoui (1972): 46-51.
45. According to Fadl Allah ibn Ruzbihan Khunji (late 16th century), a staunch sunni and therefore strongly opposed to the Safavids, followers "openly called Shaikh Junayd God, and his son son of God... In his praise they said 'he is the Living One, there is no God but he'". (V. Minorsky, Persia in AD 1478-1490, an abridged translation of the Tarikh-e 'Alam-ara-ye Aminu (London 1957: 63).
46. The "tribes" mentioned in this connection are: Ustajlu, Shazlu, Rumlu, Tekelu, Zul-Qadir, Afshar, Qajar, Farsaq, (Mazzaoui, 1972: 81; Sumer, 1976: 18/9). These are not all Qizilbash groups; at other occasions others are mentioned, e.g. Sarasmanlu, Bayat, Bayburtlu. Nor should it be thought that these groups were entirely Qizilbash, or even that all members who were Qizilbash joined Isma'ili. Teke (SW Anatolia), Rum (central Anatolia) and Sham (Syria) were large, and but vaguely delineated, regions, of which the population included sunni muslims, moderate shiites and extremist shiites, of whom some were Qizilbash. Thus we find Tekelu, Rumlu, etc. both on the Safavid and on the Ottoman sides in later years. In Qeldiran for instance, Zulqadir chieftains were in command on both sides (see the lists in Sarwar, 1939: 79-80).
47. See e.g. Sumer, 1976: 53/6. More on the Çe mişkezek will be found in the sections f and i of this Chapter.
48. Sarwar (1939): 30-33; Mazzaoui (1972): 70-82.
49. Sarwar (1939): 43-57.
50. This beylik (princedom) was established in 1378 when the Turkish chieftain Zeyn ad-Din Qaraja Zul-Qadir conquered Mer'as and Elbistan. His son further expanded his possessions. Ottoman and Mamluk sultans frequently intervened actively in the succession to rulership of the beylik by supporting their favourite candidates. It became nominally a vassal state to the Ottoman Empire, but maintained a precarious autonomy, which came to an end when, in 1514, Sultan Selim killed its last ruler Ala ad-Dawla for not joining him in the battle of Qeldiran.
51. The Ustajlu were one of the first Turkish tribes to join Isma'ili in 1500 (Mazzaoui, 1972: 81). It seems probable that Muhammad Beg was their chieftain (or one of their chieftains). On this appointment the shah lent him the title of *khan* (Sarwar: 53).
52. Sarwar: 52/4, 72; Sharafname: passim. On Muhammad Khan Ustajlu's pillage of Cezire see also the contemporary Aramaic document translated by A. Scher (1910: 123/6), "Fillage de Gazarta et de ses villages". A part of this document is translated below in this book (p 167).
53. This will be illustrated by the case studies in the next section. See esp. *Hekef*, p 174 ff.
54. These Kurdish chieftains were: Melik Kelil of Hiskeyf, Şah Eli of Cezire Mir Şemseddin of Bitlis, Mir Dadd of Xizan Eli Beg of Sasun, Mir Şah Mihemed Sirwi, and 10 others. The last-named two were not imprisoned by the Shah; all others were. (Sharafname, II/I: 289-291)
55. Translated into French by Scher (1910): 123/6.
56. See e.g. Schweide (1965): 145-158.
57. Ibid., 162. See also Ş. Altındağ, "Selim I", an Islam Ansiklopedisi.
58. As related above, Muhammad Beg had received the title of khan from Shah Isma'ili, upon his appointment at Diyar Bekr.
59. Detailed accounts of the battle of Qeldiran and the developments that preceded it, in: Von Hammer, GOR 2: 392 ff. Shorter, but very precise and readable is Sarwar's rendering (1939): 72-85; as well as the article "Selim I" in Islam Ansiklopedisi, vol 10 (by Ş. Altındağ). The events in the Ottoman lands receive extensive treatment in Schweide (1965): 138-164.
60. Sharafname II/I: 295 ff.
61. See Von Hammer, GOR 2: 433.
62. The following Kurdish Mirs were mentioned as actively fighting the Qizilbash: Mir Şeref of Bitlis, who retook the town of Bitlis; Melik Kelil, formerly of Hiskeyf and Şirîrd, who retook both; Mihemed Beg of Sasun and Hezû, who conquered Herzen and fought the Qizilbash; Seyd Emed Beg Rifki, who took the castles of Etek and Meyraferqin; Qasim Beg Marifaf, who conquered Pald and planted the Ottomans' banner on its castle; Seid Beg of Soran, who took Kerûk and Erbil; Şah Eli Beg of Cezire; and others, altogether 25 chieftains (Von Hammer, GOR 2: 433/4). The Sharafname mentions explicitly the following chieftains who assisted Mir Şeref to regain Bitlis and ward off a subsequent attack from Iran: Mihemed Beg of Hezû; Mir Dadd of Xizan; Mir Şah Mihemed Sirwi; and the mirs of Muks and İspîrîrd (Sh II/I: 297).
63. See section III, g below.
64. Paraphrased after the Sharafname, II/I: 296/7.
65. The historian Abu'l-Fasl, son of Idris Bitlifî (1).
66. More detailed (though very incomplete) narratives of the events in Kurdistan in this period are to be found in: Sarwar (1939); Von Hammer, GOR 2: 433-461; Sharafname II/I: 294/8 and passim.
67. The *Khutbe* is a sort of ceremonial sermon pronounced at the Friday prayer meeting, which contains prayers for the prophet, the four (rightly guided) caliphs, the present caliph (when there still was one), and usually for the ruler who was regarded as sovereign. Having one's name read in the *khutbe* thus was tantamount to proclaiming full independence. The same is true for the minting of coins.
68. Sharafname I/2: 164.
69. Ibid.

(Notes to Chapter III, continued)

70. Ibid. I/2: 114-132. On their relations with the Mehmdid and Dimbuli also II/I: 158-177.
71. The history of these Nestorians is described in J. Joseph's *The Nestorians and their Muslim Neighbours*. (Princeton, 1961). Before their mass exodus the Nestorians constituted a high proportion of the population of Hekari. Cuinet gave the following statistics for the province (sanjaq) of Hekari around 1870: Kurds 165,000; Assyrians 97,000, of whom 52,000 "auto-nomous" (the "tribal" Nestorians).
72. "Kurden", E.I. 1.
73. After its incorporation into the Ottoman Empire Van had been made into an eyalet, administered by a centrally appointed vali; the government of most subdistricts remained in the hands of Kurdish ruling families, as apparent from Evliya Celebi's *Seyahatname* (Book IV: 1226/8 in the edition of Temelkuran and Aktas. For a discussion of this form of indirect rule, see p 189 ff.
74. Seyd Mihemed was apparently suspected of having acted as a go-between for Sultan Süleyman's rebellious son Mustafa 84. and the Persian Shah Tahmasb (Sharafname I/2: 127).
75. Sharafname II/I: 1-16.
76. Ibid II/I, 2. As said several times before, many of the chieftains of large tribes, confederations or emirates are of foreign origin; and even when they are not, they often claim so. Especially heroes of Islam are likely to be invoked as ancestors. Thus the Çemşekzek family pretended to descend from the Abbasids.
77. It is not possible to say how many of the Çemşekzek subjects were shiites, but the number probably was considerable. The mîr, Hacı Rüstem Beg, was probably a follower of the Safavid order, for he and a large number of aghas fought on the Safavid side in Çaldıran. As written in the text, after this battle some Çemşekzek returned to the Ottoman Empire; others, however, remained in Iran. Seref Yan mentioned 1,000 Çemşekzek families who were Qizilbash in Iran. A century later Shah Abbas was to send these as frontier guards to Khorasan (see p 215ff). At present the majority of the population of the district of Çemşekzek are alevi (shiites). According to Bersini (1952), all its inhabitants are alevi, which may be an exaggeration. Cuinet's statistics for ca 1870 are not entirely clear, because the categories are not defined:
10% Armenian; 50% Qizilbash; 20% Muslim and 20% Kurd. (Cuinet, II: 392).
78. This sub-section is based mainly on the following works; P.A. von Tschendorf (1871); J. von Hammer, *Des osmanischen Reiches Staatsverfassung und Staatsverwaltung*. 2 Bde (Wien, 1845); H. Inalçik (1955); H. Inalçik (1973); A.H. Lybyer (1913); S.J. Shaw (1976); K.H. Karpat (1974).
79. The aqche was a silver coin, of approximately 0.7 gr by the middle of the 16th century. Both the weight of the aqche and the rate of exchange against other coins used changed over time. The rate of devaluation is immediately apparent from the weight of aqches minted under the following sultans:
Mehmed I (1413-1421) 1.121 gr
Mehmed II (1451-1481) 0.865 gr
Selim I (1512-1520) 0.69 gr
Murad III (1574-1595) 0.43 gr
This devaluation necessitated regular revisions of the rates of taxation, which generally lagged considerably behind. The above figures were compiled by N. Beldiceanu, in "La crise monétaire ottomane au XVI^e-^eme siècle et son influence sur les principautés roumaines", *Südost-Forschungen* XVI/I (München, 1957): 70-86. A more complete list on p 74 of that article.
An indication of the purchasing power of the aqche is that the price of 1 kile (ca. 25.6 kg) of wheat in eastern Anatolia around 1515 was 8 aqches, that of 1 kile of barley 6 aqches (Hinz 1950: 185 n).
80. The difference between zeamet and timar is not simply one of level of revenue, as the specifications generally given seem to imply. They belonged to different ranks of grantees; also was the unit of revenue for which one had to maintain a jebelli different in both types of fief. The timar-holder had to maintain one for every 3,000 aqches; the zeamet-holder for every 5,000 aqches, above a certain minimum (Shaw, 1976: 125; Inalçik 1973: 113). In practice, some timars had higher revenues than some zeamets. Thus in Palestine in the 16th century the highest timar revenue was 19,225 aqches, the lowest zeamet revenue 10,000 (B. Lewis 1954: 481-2).
81. Inalçik (1973): 108.
82. Von Tschendorf: 49 (after d'Ohsson). This figure may seem too high; it has been questioned, also because d'Ohsson was not a contemporary. However, other sources, more contemporary, give reason to believe it is correct. In fact, it is even a conservative estimate compared to the others. See the discussion (by Mutafçieva) in: V.P. Mutafçieva & S.A. Dimitrov, *Sur l'état du système des timars des XVII^e-XVIII^ees ss* (Sofia: Académie Bulgare des Sciences, 1968): 10 f.
83. The term re'aya ("the flock"; plural of ra'yat) denoted at first only non-muslims subjects, who were obliged to pay taxes to the muslims who had subjected them. This always remained the primary meaning of the term, and thus is it used in Ottoman law-books. However, it came to be used, by extension, for all dependent peasants, both christian and muslim. (In Hekari tribal christians (Assyrians) dominated muslim re'aya see p 138). Not all re'aya were peasants, many were merchants or craftsmen. Especially in the European parts of the empire, large groups of privileged christian re'aya existed.
84. In fact, quite a few members of the peasant class managed to receive timars, as it appears from the frequent fulminations in law books that condemn this practice. See e.g. the laws in Von Hammer's *Staatsverfassung*, vol I: 350, 366, 371/2).
85. Thus e.g. in Albania in 1431, 16% of the sipahis were former (christian) fiefholders, 30% Anatolian Turks, 50% qullar of the sultan or begs (the remaining 4% were qadis, bishops (!), and palace favourites). Inalçik (1973): 114. Inalçik published his source as: Hinz 835 tarihî suret-i defter-i sancak-ı Arvanid (T.T.K. Yayınlarından XIV. seri, No 1, Ankara 1954).
86. The sheriat was thus interpreted that the sovereign had a right to a certain fraction of these children. Recruiting agents went around the empire to select them. Those who seemed fit received the best professional training available. On this "alavé institution" (or devshirme system) see Lybyer (1913): 45-61, 90-119 and Shaw (1976): 112-163, and especially B.D. Papoulias *Ursprung und Wesen der "Knechtenlese im osmanischen Reich"* (München, 1963).
87. These taxes are a rather confusing subject. A survey is given by von Hammer in *Staatsverfassung*, vol. I. Von Hammer also gave summary of a number of qanunnames, dealing with taxation. The work remains very theoretical, however, and gives little indication of how taxation was actually applied. The same may be said of the more systematic and concise resumés by Lybyer (1913): 175-182 and Shaw (1976): 119-129.
A better insight is provided by the few detailed studies of specific areas (based on archival materials) that have so far appeared, e.g. S.J. Shaw, *The financial and administrative organization and development of Ottoman Egypt, 1517-1798*. Princeton 1962; M.T. Çökülgin, *XV-XVI. asırlarda Edirne ve Paşa livası. Vakıflar-Mülkler-Mukataalar*. İstanbul 1952; B. Lewis, "Studies in the Ottoman archives - I" *B.S.O.A.S.* 16 (1954), 469-501.
In recent years a number of qanunnames have been published, all of which (by my knowledge) however deal with European parts of the empire. To date, very few studies dealing with the Kurdish provinces have appeared. The best that I know of is Hinz (1950) and the works of O.L. Barkan that he quotes; also relevant are N. Göyünç, *XVI. Yüzyılda Mardin sancağı* (İstanbul: Edeb. Fak 1965), and I. Miroğlu, "XVI yüzyılın başlarında Erzincaan şehri (1516-1530)", *Tarih Dergisi* 28-29 (1975).
88. "The jiziye belonged to the Bait al-Mâl (central treasury, from which military expenses were paid. IVB) and, unlike some other revenues, was never granted to fief-holders or holders of khases" (Lewis 1954: 485). Not infrequently, however, the jizya of a certain district was assigned as the regular pay (oqaqliq) of a specific military unit (Inalçik "Djizya [in Ottoman]", E.I.2). Every rule, however, has its exceptions. Thus as we shall see, in Bitlis half of the jiziye was the local ruler's. E.I.2 A seminal study on the jiziye is Hadžibegović, "Džizja ili harač", *Prilozi* 3/4 (1952/3): 55-135 and 5 (1954/5): 43-102. (French summary in second part, p 100-102).
89. Von Hammer gave the following stipulations as the average for the empire (16th or 17th century):
For a chiftlik one paid 42 aqches per annum (=ca. 130 kg of wheat, see note 79), for half a chiftlik 21 aqches per annum; those holding less paid 12 aqches, 6 aqches or nothing at all. The 42 aqches were divided among the sipahi and the officers in proportions that differed per

(Notes to Chapter III, continued)

- province. Frequently 27 were for the sipahi, 12 for the subashi, 3 for the sanjaqbegi; elsewhere, 27 were for the sipahi and the remaining 15 all for the sanjaqbegi (Von Hammer, Staatsverfassung, I: 187).
90. The dimensions of the dönüm varied from one area to another. Generally it was around 0.1 hectare (0.25 acres) or slightly less.
91. Canonical specifications of the zekat are to be found in Juynboll (1930: 80ff). Zekat is only to be paid when one's income exceeds a certain threshold value. The specifications for agricultural crops and flocks are: 10% of the crop from field and gardens (incl vineyards and orchards). In case of artificial irrigation only 5% has to be given.
From a flock of 1 to 39 sheep/goats nothing has to be given.
40 to 120 : one animal over 2 years old
121 to 200 : two " " "
201 to 399 : three " " "
more than 400 : one animal per 150.
92. Inalcik (1973): 111/2.
93. These later taxes, often introduced as a one-time contribution to the financing of a special project, e.g. a military campaign, and afterwards institutionalized as annual tributes, have been little studied yet. See e.g. M. Bowen; "Avarid" (E.I.2); B. Cvetkova, "Contribution à l'étude des impôts extraordinaires (avariz-i divaniye ve tekelif-i Srfiye) en Bulgarie sous la domination turque". Rocznik Orientalistyczny 23 (1959): 57-65.
94. The districts are: Erzincan, Xerpat, Mardin and Hircok. The specifications of taxation are summarized by W. Hinz (1950): 183, 201.
95. This qanunname is summarily translated by Von Hammer in Staatsverfassung, vol. I: 245-248. It was first issued by Sultan Süleyman I (1520-1566) and later amplified by Sultan Ahmed I (1603-1617).
96. Inalcik 1973: 116.
97. An excellent study on the introduction and development of the iltizam-system is: B. Cvetkova, "Recherches sur le système d'affermage (iltizam) dans l'Empire Ottoman au cours du XVII^e-XVIII^e s. par rapport aux contrées bulgares", Rocznik Orientalistyczny 21/3 (Warsaw, 1954): 111-132. On the economic crisis that obliged the empire to adopt this system, see: H. Inalcik, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun kuruluş ve inkişaf devrinde 'Türkiye'nin iktisadi vaziyeti üzerinde bir tetkik münasebetiyle", Belleten XV, no 60 (1951): 629-690.
98. For a description of the way the Ottoman land regime was effected by the alternating weakening and strengthening of central government control, see Karpat (1974), Shaw (1976).
99. On this division see Von Hammer, GOR 2: 456/7, 650/1, 677/80.
100. Von Hammer (GOR 2: 650) gave the following list: Ekrad hükümetleri : Fald, Eşil, Genc, Heçd, Çeşine Ekrad beylikleri : Şaman, Gdlb, Mihanr, Eteq, Bertek, Çeşerçerç, Çermik, Perçil.
Ordinary Ottoman san jaqs : Diyarbekr-centre, Xerpat, Ervanf, Süverek, Nestlbn, Hienkeyf, Meyyaferrfn, Aqeçale, Şelird, Sincar, Çemişkezek.
Evliya Çelebi gives an identical list (I: 125 and IV: 1116 in Temelkuran and Aktaş' edition). Both are probably based on qanunnames from the second half of the 16th century, as is apparent from e.g. the omission of Bitlis (which was part of Diyar Bekr until the constitution of the beylerbeylik of Van in 1548, when it became part of that province), and the inclusion of Hienkeyf and Çemişkezek among the ordinary sanjaqs (in 1515 they were left autonomous, see the histories of these emirates, p 172f, 173f).
101. Bitlis is not mentioned in Von Hammer's list (note 92), but it had clearly the status of an Ekrad begliği.
102. The famous traveller Evliya Çelebi himself was an eyewitness, and was narrowly involved in the events at Bitlis (see also p 196). A short summary of the relevant parts of Books IV and V of his Book of Travels is given by A. Sakisian (1937).
103. Evliya, Book I (Von Hammer's translation), part I, p 24 (part of this section is lacking in the printed Turkish edition).
104. Ibid.
105. Ibid, I/1: 104 (Von Hammer); I: 134 (Temelkuran & Aktaş).
106. Von Hammer, Staatsverfassung, II. 266. The eyalet of Şehrizor was much larger than the plain of the same name in southern Kurdistan; it included all of Silêmanî and Kerkûk districts, and thus mountainous areas which were hard to control.
107. Birken's list of sanjaqs of Diyar Bekr (Birken 1976: 185-195) includes several ones that were at one time or another ruled by autonomous Kurdish rulers on a hereditary basis, and that are not included in Von Hammer's (and Evliya's) list: Fasul, Cunguş, Kenock, Hilwan, Kozat, Mardin, Poşadi, Söwerek, Zerîqi. See also the list for 1631 in Akbal (1951): 622.
108. After Birken 1976: 154.
109. The evidence is all of a negative kind. Virtually the only sources on Ottoman policy towards the Kurds in this period are the Sharafname (which was, however, written 80 years after date) and a chronicle of Selim's rule written by İdris himself and finished by his son Abu'l-Fasl. The latter text has not been published, unfortunately, but both Von Hammer and Sarwar used manuscript copies extensively, and neither of them mentioned any transplantation of Kurds. The Sharafname does not mention any Kurds inhabiting the Armenian plateau. The French traveller Tavernier, who crossed the plateau around 1655 wrote that (the northern part of) the plateau was almost exclusively inhabited by christians (Tavernier, vol I: 25).
110. The Gerniyan had been moulded into a tribe 'd'origine confuse' around 1275, and emerged as a separate principality, with its capital at Rhtahya, around 1300 AD. (Cohen, "Le problème ethnique en Anatolie", Cahiers d'Histoire Mondiale, 1954: 356). On Gerniyan, see the articles "Gerniyan" (by I. Melikoff) and "Anadolu" (by F. Taeschner) in E.I.I.; also Cohen (1963): 355/5. Two major works on the Gerniyan which I did not consult should be mentioned: M.Ç. Varlık, Gerniyan-ogullari tarihi 1300-1429 (Ankara: Atatürk Un-vayı no. 288, Ed.fek. yay.no. 57, 1974); and I.H. Uzunçayışli, Anadolu beylikleri (Ankara T.T.K. yay, ser VIII, no 2a, 1969).
111. Two short studies based on Evliya's description of Bitlis appeared half a century ago: Sakisian (1937) and Khler (1928). The first of these is a short summary of Evliya's text, strongly focusing on the personality of the mir, the second a translation of 10 pages of a manuscript, with introduction and commentary. They are certainly interesting, but I found I had comb the Turkish text for the kind of details that I wanted.
112. Tavernier, Les six voyages... (1679) I: 305/6.
113. According to the 18th-century Armenian historian Chamchian, quoted by W. Khler (1928): 27/8.
114. It is also conceivable that these muslims were converted ex-christians, but it would be difficult to explain why those in the hills were converted while those in the plain remained christian.
115. The number of 24 occurs several times as the number of tribes in a confederation; it must have had a symbolic meaning: the Turkish Oguz tribes were said to number 24 (sardier: 9); in the Caucasus a Kurdish confederation was known as "Yirmidört", which is Turkish for "twenty-four".
116. The Bilbanî consisted of: 1 Keleşirî; 2 Kirbelî; 3 Baliki or Bayigi; 4 Kiyarti; 5 Gûri; 6 Berîgi; 7 Sekri; 8 Garisi or Karasi; 9 Biduri; 10 Bela Kurdi. and the Qewallig of: 11 Zerûdî; 12 Endaki; 13 Pertafi; 14 Kurdiki or Girdiki; 15 Suhrewerdi; 16 Kaçaki; 17 Xalidi; 18 Estûdki or İztûki; 19 Erizan (Sharafname II/1: 232; or p 494 in the Tehran edition). The number of sub-tribes given is almost certainly determined by Şeref Yan's wish to arrive at a total number of 24 qebiles. It should be noted that the Kurdiki (or Girdiki; the Arabic script allows both readings) who are given here as a subtribe of the Qewallig (nr 14), are elsewhere mentioned as the large tribe residing in Bitlis before the Rojeqi conquest (Sharafname II/1: 229).
117. Evliya probably inferred this number from the number of aghas he met at Bitlis (also 70).
118. Evliya's estimates are not consistent. Shortly after his first arrival at Bitlis he mentioned 70,000 soldiers (Evliya IV: 1162) - probably a repetition of the mir's boast; later he gave a figure of around 47,000 (Ibid 1227). Tavernier was the mir's guest; probably some time before Evliya (he does not mention when he was at Bitlis). He reported that Ebdal Xan could put 20 to 25 thousand horse in the field at any time he wanted, as well as a

(Notes to Chapter III, continued)

- large number of foot-soldiers, hardy herdemen (Tavernier, I: 304). This compared very favourably with the military power of the beglerbegi of Diyar Bekr (20,000 horse) and the sanjaqbegi of Mardin (2,000 horse) whom Tavernier had also visited.
119. This reminds one of the struggles for succession in the Ottoman as well as the Persian Empire (or, indeed, in all monarchies that do not possess strict rules of succession). In the Ottoman Empire the main political forces (Turkish sipahis, Janissaries, the court) often each had their own favourite candidate. During succession struggles changes in the balance of power between these groups came out into the open, and were consolidated - for some time, until the next succession.
120. Mihemed Axa Gelhoki. The Gelhoki do not occur in Şeref Xan's list of 24 tribes, nor elsewhere in the Sharafname. This agha and his son Hacı Şeref, however, played important political roles in Bitlis. Previously Mihemed Axa had entered Aqqoyunlu service in order to find the mir's family in its exile. He had then persuaded two elder brothers of Şah Mihemed to escape and return to Bitlis. While he was preparing a total rising of the Rojeki these two brothers kept themselves in hiding in Hekarî. In tribal wars there they were accidentally killed before the revolt that should have brought them back to Bitlis started.
121. The Turkish scholar N. Sevgen found the original edicts (hükâm-ı şerif) instating Şerefîdin in 1578; he reproduced them, with a rendering in simplified (modern) Turkish in B.T.T.D. nr 2 (1968): 74/6.
122. The term "kharaj" was used ambiguously in the 16th century: sometimes it denoted a tax (paid by christians) the rate of which depended on the amount of land held (and therefore interpreted as a land tax); sometimes it was a fixed sum, and apparently identical with the jizye, the land tax was then called kharaj-i erziye, in order to distinguish it. The fact that "jizye and kharaj" are a fixed sum here seems to suggest that only the poll-tax is meant and that land-tax is not yet included in it. It is, however, a rather high sum. European residents of Diyarbekir in the early 16th century under the Aqqoyunlu paid 55 aqoche as jizye (Hinz: 1950: 182n, after early documents published by Ö.L. Barkan); no figures for the jizye paid by peasants have, by my knowledge been published yet. It is not impossible that "kharaj" refers in this case to another tax, distinct from both the ordinary poll-tax and the land tax.
123. The original text (first printed edition) gives the term "nöker", a word of Mongolian (meaning "friend", "companion") that is often used to denote a sort of retainers. In the 16th century registers of eastern Anatolia "nökere" are frequently mentioned, but it is unclear what precisely they were. I. Miroğlu (Tarih Dergisi 28-29 (1975): 72n) calls the term a synonym of "sipahi" but that is obviously wrong: there are too many nökere in the urban registers he presents. Beldiceanu gives a good discussion of the term in a review of another work by Miroğlu (Turcica IX/1 (1977): 278/9).
124. The naqib ül-eshraf is the officially recognized leader/administrator of all seyids (or ehraf), descendants of the prophet, in a certain district.
125. The printed edition of Evliya gives the incredible amount of 80 kise ("purses"), which was equivalent to 3.2 million aqoche (around 1650 a kise amounted to ca. 40,000 aqoche, acc. to Von Hammer, Staatsverfassung, II: 171).
126. Orthodox Islam recognises four rites or legal schools (mezheb); there are only minor differences in the interpretation of the shariat between these schools (e.g. on how the hands are to be held during prayer, on what breaks ritual purity, etc.). However, following one rite rather than another is often a matter of articulating one's belonging to one ethnic group as against others. (Sunni) Kurds are nearly all shafaites, their sunni neighbours (Turks, Arabs) hanefites. According to Von Hammer every müfti of the empire had to make his legal decisions according to the rulings of Abu Hanefi. The only exceptions he mentioned were Mekka, Medina, Cairo, Aleppo, Jerusalem and Damascus. These towns are inhabited by a majority of followers of other rites; beside the hanefite müfti there were also müftis of other schools there, who were, however, only allowed to make decisions in questions "immediately concerning the rites" (Staatsverfassung, II: 391). Against this background, the independence of Bitlis is extraordinary indeed.
127. Evliya enumerated 20 city quarters, and said that 11 of them were inhabited by Arabs and Jacobites (Evliya
- IV: 1163, {Evliya erroneously called all christians in Bitlis Jacobites}).
128. Around 1870 the districts of the former emirate had the following religious/ethnic composition:
- | | muslim | yezidi | christian |
|----------------------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Bitlis (Incl. Axlak) | 70,500 (65%) | 1,000 (1%) | 37,000 (34%) |
| Hîç | 66,750 (54%) | 1,000 (1%) | 55,500 (45%) |
| Xînus | 16,750 (6%) | - | 10,000 (37%) |
- 40,000 of the 254,000 muslims of the vilayet (province) of Bitlis (districts Bitlis, Mîç, Genc, and Şê'îrd) were still full nomads. After V. Guinet, La Turquie d'Asie, tome I; 136; tome II, 526/7.
129. Non-muslims subjects (reaya) were not allowed to carry weapons in the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, many instances are known where Kurds and their christian neighbours/subjects fought shoulder to shoulder against a common enemy.
130. The best source on the role of Baban in Iraqi history is still Longrigg (1925) (passim).
131. This "feudal" organization predated incorporation in the Ottoman Empire. The first Baban prince mentioned in the Sharafname, Pir Budağ, was said to have installed mir-i liwa (sanjaqbegis) in the districts under his sovereignty, and have given these drum and standard as insignia - the same as the Ottoman sultans were to give to their sanjaqbegis (this may be a projection of more recent practices back into the past, however). (Sharafname II/1: 136) In Şeref Xan's own time (1597) "each of the aghas of the different tribes was placed over a district of this country..." (Ibid 144).
132. In the 16th century, he was second only to the Grand Vizier and the Sheikh ül-Islam (the highest müfti of the empire). "His influence stemmed from his power to provide access to and communication with the sultan and exploitation of harem rivalries and factions." (Shaw, 1976: 115).
133. This section is based mainly on information that members of the ruling families of these tribes provided to me. I have made little use yet of the written sources available (chronicles, local histories and travel reports), which I have not yet been able to analyze sufficiently.
134. Sharafname II/1: 189-191.
135. "Derebey", in E.I.¹ (by J.H. Mordtmann/E. Lewis).
136. There is much literature, both western and oriental, on Mirî Kor and his revolt. The most interesting primary source in a western language is Fraser (1840) vol I: 63-83. It contains an account of a visit by Dr. Ross, physician of the British residency at Baghdad, to the mir. Many other sources are used in the best secondary accounts I know: Jwaideh (1960): 147-173, and Nebez (1970).
137. I sketch here only the main events; a full historical description and analysis I intend to give elsewhere.
138. The following is based on oral information, collected in Botan, spring and summer of 1976.
139. The names of the tribes and other groups composing these confederations are:
- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| <u>Çoxsor</u> | : Miran, Didğan, Elikan, Soran (?), Garisan (?) |
| <u>Şillet</u> | : Batuan, Kiçan, Teyyan, Xêrikan, Mîşreğan |
| <u>Hacı Beyran</u> | : Şêrtî, Çteyan, Hevêrtî (all three nomadic), Goyan (semi-nomadic), and the non-tribal Kurdish and Armenian peasants of the sub-districts Şîrnax and Şilopi. |
| <u>Dehi</u> | : Garisan (nomadic), Dêrsêvtî, Xerêrtî, Xêrtî, Şûrtî, Çilan |
- Two other tribes of the Çezire district, the Harunan and Hesinan, did not belong to any of these confederations.
140. Çezire was in this time no longer an autonomous hükümet, as in the 16th century. Bedr Xan Beg was not only the officially recognized mir, he was also mîtesellim (provincial governor) and a miralay ("colonel") of the "asker-i redife (reserve militias, formed after 1833), according to Ottoman documents published by N. Sevgen in B.T.T.D. II (Aug. 1968): 49. (Miralay is a rank that corresponds with the level of sanjaqbegi). Von Moltke related how Bedr Xan Beg acquired the latter title. In May, 1838, he had surrendered to Reshid Pasha (after a siege lasting 40 days). He then participated in the subjection of his former "ally" Sefî Beg (at which also Von Moltke was present) and received the rank of miralay of a redife-regiment that did not yet exist as a reward. (Von Moltke 1882: 256.)

(Notes to Chapter III, continued)

141. What the third part of this three-liner refers to is entirely obscure to me; no one could give me a satisfactory explanation.
142. According to Safraastian (1948): 55.
143. The missionaries Wright and Breath, who visited Bedr Xan Beg in 1846 gave a few instances of the security in those parts of Kurdistan, which compared favourably with the situation elsewhere. "Visits of Messrs Wright and Breath to Bader Khan Bey", Missionary Herald 42 (Nov. 1846): 378-383. On their way from Urmiye to the mir they spent the night in a village of (self-confessed) former robbers, who admitted that before Bedr Xan's time they would certainly have robbed them of their belongings (380). After their stay with the mir they concluded: "The guilty under his government found no escape. Bribery, favouritism, etc. which too often, in these countries, pervert the course of justice and nullify the force of law, are unknown here" (381).
144. This term (Ar. ghulām) is used in a wide range of meaning. In the Ottoman Empire it was the term used to denote the (private) slaves of the ruling class, recruited through the devshirme system, sale or capture in war. Thence it acquired the secondary meaning of bodyguard. It has strong connotations of vassalry rather than servitude. It is still used in Kurdistan now for the (big) aghas' retainers.
145. According to a list of allied chieftains in Bletch Chirguh (1930): 14. This brochure (a publication of the Kurdish national league Xoybûn) was probably written by Bedr Xan's descendant Sureya Bedirxan.
146. The documents dealing with Bedr Xan Beg that were found in Ottoman archives and published by N. Sevgin in the B.T.T.D. 11-19 (1968/9) suggest an other reason for the revolt. There were plans for administrative reorganization, according to which Botan was to be split, and divided between the two eyalets Diyar Bekr and Mosul. Bedr Xan vehemently protested against these plans, which, he thought, were designed to break his power.
147. According to Bedr Xan's visitors Wright and Breath (see note 143).
148. Ibid.; Missionary Herald 42 (1846): 381.
149. Of course, it is conceivable that the mir wanted to keep his real designs hidden from his visitors. But that would contrast much with the behaviour of all later nationalist leaders, who, without exception, tried to enlist foreign support through the intermediary of whatever foreigners were around.
150. "Visits of Messrs. Laurie and Smith to Asheta and Julamerk" Missionary Herald 41 (Apr. 1845): 120/1.
151. Layard, who cannot be accused of nurturing sympathies for Bedr Xan, visited the Riyaz district not long after the massacre by the Kurds and saw the ruins of these buildings. He admitted that Kurdish fears and suspicions were understandable; "There are circumstances connected with the massacre of the Nestorians most painful to contemplate...." Layard (1849), I: 179.
152. This is the version Laurie and Smith (see note 150) gave of the changes leading to the first Nestorian massacre. Other sources give slightly different versions. In all, Bedr Xan is the main responsible of the attack, and it was directed primarily against the Mar Shimun. Several Nestorian opponents of the Mar Shimun remained not only unharmed but even received gifts from Bedr Xan because they had previously proclaimed their loyalty to him (Smith and Laurie's letter (note 150), p 118).
153. This impression is confirmed by documents in the Ottoman state archives. Sevgin (B.T.T.D. 24 (Sep 1969): 43) gives a partial list of tribal chieftains that joined the insurgents. The districts that sent most support were Sirwan, Erx and Xizan. There is no indication as to the participation of the nomads.
154. Especially the brochure "Le question Kurde..." by Bletch Chirguh.
155. The best discussions I know are by Lewis (1968, esp. pp 75-128) and Shaw and Shaw (1977: 1-171). For southern Kurdistan, the short governorship of Midhat Pasha in Baghdad (1869-1872) was to bring the application of reform legislation. See Longrigg (1925): 298-324.
156. This is illustrated, e.g. by the following observation Von Moltke made in 1838: "The state of offices remains the great, main source of the state's income. The candidate borrows the purchase money at a high rate of interest from an Armenian business house, and the government allows these tax-farmers to exploit these provinces as they want, in order to indemnify themselves. However, they live in the fear that a competitor make a higher bid before they have had sufficient time to become rich. And once they have become rich, it is the fisc they have to fear" (Von Moltke, 1882: 48).
157. A full translation of the Land Code is to be found in S. Fischer, Ottoman Land Laws... (London 1919).
158. A map in Dowson 1931 (plate I) shows that most of the plains of Iraqi Kurdistan had been registered, as well as a number of valleys. But a large part of Behdinan, Rivandiz, Pijder and Şehrîzor still remained unregistered.
159. Longrigg (1925): 307.
160. Dowson (1931). Dowson made his study of land problems in Iraq at the request of the government of Iraq.
161. This was not an entirely new phenomenon; formerly timar-holders, mütezims and other officials had developed that life-style. It became more generalized then, and was no longer associated with officialdom only.
162. Art. 23 of the Land Code stated that whoever rented land from its legal possessor could never acquire permanent rights.
163. The best, and most reliable source is Dowson's study (1931). A note on the situation as the British found it, on Turkish practices in recent times and British measures, is to be found in the government paper "Review of the Civil Administration of the occupied territories of al-'Iraq, 1914-1918" (Baghdad, gov't press, Nov. 1918). In 1932 the government of Iraq issued as law no 50 the Land Settlement Law (text enclosed in FO 371/17874/03284), which brought some recognition to traditional forms of tenure also.
164. Lt. Col. E.B. Howell, "Note on Land Policy", Baghdad 1919; quoted by P. Sluglett (1976): 239.
165. See Sluglett (1976): 249-253.
166. Abdulhamid's image in the west, as the brutal, ruthless, bigoted, paranoid tyrant and enemy of progress has been spread by biased European contemporaries. Recent historical studies tend to stress that the reforms did not come to a halt suddenly, but were continued under his rule, and, secondly, that for many of his reactionary measures he had hardly any choice at all, given the international situation and imperialist agitation inside the empire. See e.g. Shaw and Shaw (1977): 172-271 and Duguid (1973).
167. A short description of this revolt is given in the Appendix to Chapter IV (Table II, nr 2).
168. For a fuller description of the background and also of the context of the sultan's other measures, see Shaw & Shaw (1977) and Duguid (1973).
169. This is a summary of Shaw & Shaw (1977): 246. The primary sources these authors used are contemporary British consular reports from eastern Anatolia.
170. Duguid (1973): 145/6, after consul Anderson at Diyarbekr (1892).
171. Maj. E. Noel, "Note on the Kurdish situation" (Baghdad, 1919). Enclosed in FO 371 1919: 44A/112202/3050.
172. What I know of Mistefa Paşa is mainly based on interviews with his descendants at Qerqoş (NE Syria) in May, 1976, and a few remarks by Lehmann-Haupt and Noel that confirm this information.
173. The Hamidiye had the same military ranks as the ordinary army: ontashi (headman of ten), vîbashi (headman of hundred, "captain"). I do not know which of the tribes were originally enlisted in Mistefa Paşa's Hamidiye regiment. In the Balkan War (1912/3), when the old Hamidiye were revived (under the name of "militia"), Mistefa Paşa's son Abdulkermîm Beg led a regiment consisting of four tribes only: Miran, Kişan, Teyyan and Xerikan.
174. Lehmann-Haupt I: 363/5; II: 228/9.
175. Oral information, from representatives of several tribes.
176. This point is elaborated upon by Duguid (1973, esp p 152). He also suggests that the Hamidiye were meant by the sultan to counterbalance the influence of local urban-based notables, who filled most offices.
177. "Notes on Kurdish tribes (on and beyond the borders of the Mosul vilayet and westward to the Euphrates)". Baghdad, gov't press, 1919. Enclosed in FO 371 1919: 44A/149523/3050 (Publ.Rec.Off.).

(Notes to Chapter III, continued)

178. E.g. M. Wiedeman, "Ibrahim Paschas Glick und Ende", *Asien* 8 (1909): 34-37, 52-54; *Ziya Gökalp, Kürt asiretleri hakkinda sovyolojik incelemeler* (contemporary manuscript, published in 1975 at Kosal, Ankara); M. Sykss (1906): 469ff; E.B. Soane (1926): 43; B. Nikitine (1925b): 15; Rondot (1937): 34-38; Longrigg (1925): 286ff.
179. This episode is described by Rondot (1937: 35/6). A Kurdish ballad referring to it was published in the Kurdish journal *Hawar* nr 24 (Damascus, 1934; repr. Berlin 1976): "Delalê Berîyê", Kurdish text with French translation and commentary by C. Bedirxan.
180. E.B. Şapolyo, *Ziya Gökalp, İttihadi, terakki ve meşrutiyet tarihi* (Ankara 1941): 43.
181. According to Wiedemann (see note 178).
182. Capt. Woolley. FO 371 1919: ME44/91479/3050 (publ. Rec.Off.).
183. Duguid (1973): 149. After the British consul at Erzerum. Population statistics show a relatively small decrease in the numbers of Armenians as a consequence of these massacres (the figures are, however, for the entire empire; locally there may have been dramatic decreases):
- | year | number of Armenians | as percentage of total population |
|------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1882 | 1.125 million | 6.47 % |
| 1895 | 1.167 million | 6.12 % |
| 1906 | 1.280 million | 6.10 % |
| 1914 | 1.295 million | 6.11 % |
- (Shaw & Shaw, 1977: 205)
Of these 1.3 million Armenians some 200,000 were to perish as a result of deportation, famine, disease, war
- action and deliberate massacre during the First World War. These figures were calculated by Shaw & Shaw (1977): 316. Armenian nationalists claim that over a million Armenians were killed. Shaw & Shaw attribute this number to the false assumption that there were 2.5 million Armenians in the empire before the war. The figures the authors give are based on Ottoman census figures.
184. Noticed e.g. by Leach (1940). The salary of the paramount chieftain of the *Balik* was stopped a few years before Leach's visit (1938), with the result that his influence as tribal leader declined rapidly; also, "the *Balik* have scarcely any functioning unity as a tribe at the present time" (Leach 1940: 19).
185. See Vanli (n.d.); Beşikçi (1969); Beşikçi (1977); Rambout (1947): 23-45; D.D.K.O. dava dosyasi (Ankara: Kosal 1975).
186. R. Stavenhagen, "Seven fallacies about Latin America" in: J. Petras & M. Zeitlin (eds), *Latin America: Reform or revolution?* Greenwich: Fawcett, 1968 (this article was originally written in 1965); A.G. Frank, "The development of underdevelopment", *Monthly Review*, Sep. 1966 (reprinted several times since); A.G. Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*, New York, 1967. Frank's exposition, especially, is too radical and not entirely borne out by the facts. The basic idea as summarized here can however hardly be contested. For a review of discussions on Frank's and related interpretations, see A. Foster-Carter, "The modes of production controversy", *New Left Review* 197 (Jan./Feb., 1979): 47-77.
187. Many examples in Perry (1975).

Notes to Chapter IV

- I am, of course, not the first to identify these two external means whereby individuals may gain power over others. One of the great anarchist Bakunin's essays is entitled "God and the State"; he identified these two as the main enemies of the free individual and the major impediments to an egalitarian society without oppression.
- Husain ibn Mansur al-Hallaq was crucified (1) in Baghdad in 922 for having exclaimed repeatedly "ana 'l-haqq 'i an God" (lit: "the Truth", "Reality"), and reciting verses in which he stated in no uncertain terms that the distinction between himself and God had ceased to exist. After his crucifixion Mansur was considered a saint by many. Some Qadiri shaikhs (spuriouly) include him in their silsila (spiritual pedigree). Qadiri dervishes in Sine, uneducated people, sang for me a religious poem about Hallaq, and gave me a perfectly orthodox explanation of the "ana 'l-haqq". Still, those who would seriously repeat Hallaq's claim would probably be treated as blasphemists and be ostracized - or worse.
- According to official British sources Şêx Ehmedê Barzanî (elder brother of Meša Mistefa, the nationalist leader) was proclaimed an incarnation of God by one of his disciples in 1927 (Report by H.B.M.'s Government to the Council of the League of Nations on the Administration of Iraq. 1927: 23, quoted by Trimmingham (1971): 125). It is not clear what attitude Ehmed himself took; according to Longrigg, who does not hide his prejudices and calls the shaikh "half-mad", "this half-witted Dere Bey, obscurely prompted by some resentful megalomania, proclaimed himself Almighty and gained some converts by the preaching of a devoted Mulla". (Longrigg 1953: 194). At any rate, the disciple died not much later, and everyone forgot about the incident.
- The Ahl-e Haqq of Balahê are now divided into two opposing camps, associated respectively with Baba Yadigar and Ibrahim, incarnations of divine emanations that lived in the area 5 centuries ago. The Yadigaris now deny that Ibrahim was such a high incarnation, they ascribe an ordinary human soul to him, and even accuse him of having murdered Yadigar in one of his incarnations (in fact, another saint, Ali Qalandar, who is thought to have been an incarnation of Baba Yadigar, was killed un-mysterious circumstances). The Ibrahimis simply deny this accusation, they do not entertain symmetrical beliefs about Yadigar. Some erudite Ibrahimis told me that the whole story (to which indeed there is no reference in the older scriptures of the Ahl-e Haqq) was made up by Seyyid Berake in a (successful) attempt to weaken his (Ibrahimi) political rivals.
- Several Kurdish shaikhs in later times became known (in limited circles) as the ghawth of the time: Şêx Ebdusse-lam I of Barzan arrogated this title, while Şêx SibXet-ullah of Xizan (near Bitlis) is still generally referred to as 'ghawth of Xizan'. I know nothing about the circumstances under which the title was associated with them. Şêx Osman of Dard is another candidate for the title. When I visited him for the second time I met a group of Lebanese Haqshbandis who had come to stay with him, and confided me that they were convinced that he is the ghawth of this age. I heard one other shaikh be called ghawth, in a context that makes clear how diluted and banal concepts of the "high" sufi tradition may become when they filter down to popular, devotional mysticism. An agha with whom I stayed (in the Syrian Cezire) once overheard me talk with his son about the concept of ghawth, rather academically. He interrupted us: "Ghawth, ghawth... you are talking about the ghawth while you do not even know what a ghawth is. Let me tell you how a ghawth may be recognized. When he walks in the rain, his clothes do not get wet. My own shaikh, Brahm Heqqî, was a ghawth; many times I have seen how he went out in pouring rain without getting wet..."
- Lucy Garnett learned from her informants (mainly dervishes, apparently) a slightly different version of this hierarchy, which I reproduce here, mainly because it shows that the idea of this spiritual hierarchy was still quite alive in Turkey early this century. Below the ghawth there are (descending order): 2 "faithful ones"; 4 "intermediate ones" (evlad); 5 "lights" (envar); 7 "very good" (akhyar); 40 "absent ones" (rijal-i ghaib) or "martyrs" (shuheda) and a great number of abdal ("holy idiots") (Garnett 1912: 34-37).
- "Awliya" is the Arabic plural form of "wali", "saint"; but in Turkish and sometimes in Kurdish it is treated as a singular; it gets for instance plural suffixes. (The spelling is "evliya" in Turkish and "ewliya" in Kurdish).
- On the development of this concept, and the different meanings and associations attached to it at different times, see MacDonald's art. "Mahdi" in E.I.1. Hughes in his "Dictionary of Islam", quotes the traditions concerning the Mahdi that he heard in India and that are to

(Notes to Chapter IV, continued)

- be found in the collection *Mishkat ul-Masabih*. There is a wealth of literature on the Mahdi concept and on the Mahdist revolts that have occurred all over the Islamic world. See the literature quoted in the E.I. art. I know of no more recent systematic review.
9. I have given the events here in the sequence in which they were told me. In other versions the Dajjal's coming precedes the Mahdi's, and Isa loses his function. This is the version that was clearly adopted in the few Mahdist revolts in Kurdistan of which I know (see section IV. c). Obviously this version is potentially more useful as the theory behind anti-foreign and anti-modernist revolts: foreign invaders (British, Russian) or secularist reformers (Atatürk) are easily identified with the Dajjal.
 10. These Qadiri seyyids, who belong to but a few families, respecting the law of value and scarcity, do not allow anyone but their sons to become shaikhs. The monopoly they thus hold led many people to believe that only seyyids may become shaikhs in this order (thus many of my informants, and also Garnett 1912: 120). But in fact there is at least one family of Qadiri shaikhs in Kurdistan who are not seyyids: the Talebanis (see p. 280/1).
 11. The revolt of the mir of Riwandiz, his conquests and defeat were described in the preceding chapter, p. 221/2.
 - 11a. Within the group of mullahs there is a certain gradation as to the amount of learning and ritual competences. The *imam* is the prayer-leader, the *khatib* is the mullah who is allowed to say the *khutba* in the Friday prayer. The latter function requires more learning.
 12. It may seem strange that the shaikh in 1925 knew the term "gangster", and maybe Mela Hesen projected it back from a later period; but it is well possible. The shaikh was in regular contact with nationalist circles in Istanbul, who in turn had frequent contacts with all kinds of European and American representatives, and had quite accurate knowledge of what was happening abroad.
 13. Heqe is the name given to the followers of the heterodox Naqshbandi shaikh Ebdulkerim of Bergeld (in Iraq) and his successors. See the notes to Table I, nr 4 of the Appendix.
 14. A good survey is to be found in Trimmingham 1971, ch III: "The formation of Ta'rifas".
 15. Trimmingham found the term "ta'ifa" applied as early as A.H. 200 (ca. 800 A.D.) in Egypt (1971: 5). Orders proper, however, did not really develop until the 15th century A.D. (1971: 67ff).
 16. Obviously, popular mysticism, with the importance of saint worship and miracleworking in it, has absorbed much from pre-Islamic religious practices. This is especially clear in central Asia, where the shrines of muslim saints, planted with flagpoles, are hardly distinguishable from Buddhist shrines by anything but the writing on the flags; something similar is true for Kurdistan. Here one still finds strangely shaped trees or rocks covered with rags tied onto them by people who came here to effect a cure for a disease or so. More usually one sees such rags tied to shrines of saints of all kinds, or to a tree near the shrine; in some cases however there is no sign that here has ever been a grave, which suggests that we have to do with survivals of some primitive nature worship. When questioned people usually answer that the place is associated with a holy man whose name is now forgotten - clearly a rationalization of what would otherwise be a pagan practice.
 17. There is no historical reason to consider these four *turnuq* as most basic, although to the adepts they may represent four basic attitudes and types of mystical techniques. On the Suhrawardi and Kubrawi orders none of my informants could tell me anything specific, but the great differences in basic outlook and method between Naqshbandi and Qadiri paths are proverbial. One shaikh with whom I stayed, Mirullah, son of Şax Saïda of Cezire, told me that his father had an *ijaza* in a number of different *turnuq*, among which the Suhrawardi, and that he himself, too, had been initiated in all of them. He declined, however, to tell me more about it, the only path he practised was the Naqshbandi one. As orders the Kubrawiyya and Suhrawardiyya do not exist in Kurdistan.
 18. Lucy Garnett heard something similar from her - obviously better educated - informants. They quoted the following traditions:

When Ali asked the prophet what he ought to do in order to obtain divine assistance, his uncle answered him "Call loudly and without ceasing on the name of Allah!". When Abu Bakr and the Prophet, on their nightly escape from Mekka, were hiding in a cave Muhammad exhorted his companion to recite mentally the *Zikr*, or invocation of the Divine Name". (Garnett 1912: 122).
 19. Trimmingham (1971: 103) makes the following, simplified, division into stages:

"First (khanqa) stage: the Golden age of mysticism. Master and his circle of pupils, frequently itinerant, having minimum regulations for living a common life, leading in the tenth century to the formation of undifferentiated, unspecialized lodges and convents. Guidance under a master becomes an accepted principle. Intellectually and emotionally an aristocratic movement. Individualistic and communal methods of contemplation and exercises for the inducement of ecstasy.

Second (tariqa) stage. Thirteenth century, Seljuq period. Formative period - A.D. 1100-1400. The transmission of a doctrine, a rule and a method. Development of continuous teaching schools of mysticism, silsila-tariqas, deriving from an illuminate. Bourgeois movement. Conforming and making docile the mystical spirit within organized Sufism to the standards of tradition and legalism. Development of new types of collectivistic methods for inducing ecstasy.

Third (ta'ifa) stage. Fifteenth century, period of founding of the Ottoman Empire. The transmission of an allegiance alongside the doctrine and rule. Sufism becomes a popular movement. New foundations formed in tariqa lines, branching into numerous "corporations" or "orders" fully incorporated with the saint cult."
 20. Most authors assume that this is the Caspian province Gilan; there is however another district Gilan, in southern Kurdistan (south of the Baghdad-Kirmanqah road). Most Kurds take it for granted that this is Abd al-Qadir's birthplace.
 21. About Abd al-Qadir and the myths around his person the best account that I found is Trimmingham (1971): 40-44. See also: Schimmel (1975): 247-248 and Brown (1868): 100-116 (very uncritical, but based on first-hand oral and written information from dervishes, and therefore valuable).
 22. According to Gibb & Bowen (1957 vol II: 196) the order was founded in Baghdad around 1200 A.D. but not introduced into Asia Minor and Europe until the 16th century.
 23. According to a manuscript found in Silêmani that came into Minorsky's possession, a genealogy of the seyyids of Kurdistan (such as were used by the authorities to check self-proclaimed seyyids' claims), two brothers, Seyyid Isa and Seyyid Mûsa, sons of Baba Resil, came to Berzenc in or around 760 AH = 1358 A.D. (M. Mokri, "Etude d'une titre de propriété..." in M. Mokri, Recherches de Kurdologie (Paris, 1973): 315). This document not only fixes the approximate date of the introduction of the Qadiri order into (southern) Kurdistan, but is also of importance for the chronology of the Ahle-Haqq religion: the same Şax Isa is, according to tradition, also the father of Soltan Şahak, founder, or rather reformer, of the Ahle-Haqq religion. Soltan Şahak himself, often thought to be a purely imaginary figure is, incidentally also mentioned in this document.
 24. Similarly, Mansur al-Hallaj is never mentioned in silsilas, although most Sufis have a great respect and admiration for him. In fact, several Qadiris told me that Mansur is in their silsila, although when they recited the silsila, he was never mentioned.
 25. Trimmingham (1971: 262) mentions this same double silsila for Ma'ruf of Karkh, who beside having the silsila given above, was also associated with the eighth Imam Musa ar-Risa.
 26. The classic description of Rifa'i séances in north Africa is by E.W. Lane in his excellent *The manners and Customs of the modern Egyptians* (London, 1836).
 27. According to Trimmingham (1971: 37) "the way of Ahmad ibn 'Ali ar-Rifa'i is no derivative from the Qadiriyya as has been claimed. On the contrary, he himself inherited a family silsila and his order came into existence as a distinctive way from his lifetime whereas the Qadiriyya did not emerge as a khirqa line until much later".
 28. Schimmel (1975): 248-249; Trimmingham (1971): 38.
 29. It is worth noting that Rifa'i dervishes bring the specific traits of their order in connection with

(Notes to Chapter IV, continued)

- Abd al-Qadir, from whom Ahmad ar-Rifa'i is said to have received the power to heal the wounds inflicted by swords and other sharp objects during their performances (e.g. Brown 1866: 281).
30. Some people claim that the brothers Isa and Musa descended from Abd al-Qadir himself. Edmonds (1957: 68-70) partially reproduces a family tree as he heard it from a leading member of the Berzenci family, and according to which 96r Isa is a descendant (?), in the 7th generation, of the 7th Imam Musa al-Kazim (and thus not a descendant of Abd al-Qadir). In Sine I found (in the khanaga of Kelifa Fete) a written version of this same family tree; it gives the same 6 intermediary names between Musa al-Kazim and Seyyid Isa, but in a more complete form and with addition of their place of residence, which may be an aid in identification. They all lived in Iran; where I could identify them I have also given their dates:
- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-----------|
| Seyyid Musa al-Kazim | (Baghdad) | d. 799 |
| Seyyid Isma'il Muhaddas | (Asperiz) | |
| Seyyid Soltan Abdullah | (Sine) | |
| Seyyid 'Abd al-Aziz | (Shahr-e Rey) | |
| Seyyid Shaikh Muhammad Mansur | (Zarand) | |
| Seyyid Shaikh Baba Yusuf Hamadani | (Choltan) | 1049-1140 |
| Seyyid Shaikh Ali Hamadani | (Choltan) | 1314-1385 |
| Seyyid Shaikh Isa | (Berzenc) | |
- Yusuf Hamadani is a well-known mystic with central Asian connections (after study in Baghdad he lived in Merv and Herat; both the Naqshbandi and the Bektashi orders are influenced by him, see Trimmingham (1971: 52-54 and Molé (1959), passim).
- 'Ali Hamadani (who may have been Isa and Musa's father; his dates correspond well with the documented arrival of both brothers in Sefirz around 1360) is also relatively well-known. He was a Kubrawi (!), was born in Hamadan and also died in central Asia (Trimingham 1971: 57). There is no other evidence that he may have been a descendant of Yusuf Hamadani. Some caution with respect to this family tree is necessary: the brothers Isa and Musa are known to have come from Hamadan, and Yusuf and Ali are the only mystics of fame who were born or lived near that town; they are therefore the most likely persons with whom later Qadiri's might attempt to associate themselves.
31. Trimmingham (1971): 12-13. Schimmel (1975 : 28-29) quotes a tradition that the Prophet knew of Uways' piety, and referred to him with the words "The breath of the Merciful comes to me from Yemen".
32. On Melaye Cezeri there is astonishingly little literature, though his is without doubt the best Kurdish poet of the past. There is a short notice in Jaha (1870: 7-8). M. Hartman describes a manuscript of the Diwan that he acquired ("Zur Kurdischen Literatur" Wiener Z.f.d. Kunde des Morgenlandes 12 (1898): 102-112) and later published a photo-lithography of the manuscript (Berlin, 1904 S. Calvary und 36hne). A number of poems from the Diwan were printed (in romanized script) in the Kurdish magazine Baxar, nos 35 and 36 (Basmasus 1941, reprinted Berlin 1975); the former issue also contains two poems in French translation by Roger Lesoot. In 1958 the mufti of Qamisli, Ahmad bin al-mulla Muhammad, published an edition of the Diwan with a commentary (in Arabic) that managed to do away with all that might be offensive to the austere, orthodox (which is approximately all that is essential in the Diwan).
33. See p251/3. Abd al-Qadir is even considered higher than the other incumbents of this position; he is often called "ghawth-e a'zam", "supreme helper". When in Kurdistan people speak of the ghawth ("Xows" in Kurdish) it is usually Abd al-Qadir who is meant. An indication of his popularity is the fact that his name is used in exclamations and oaths: "ya Xewsi!"; "bi Xewsi Gflan!".
34. The Sadat-e Nehrf seem not to have built up such a network, nor did the family split into a number of (competing) branches. It seems that there was never more than one shaikh at a time.
35. The history of 96r Mahmud's revolts from the British point of view is told by Edmonds (1957: Ch III and IV for the first revolt, passim for the later ones); Lees (1928) and Elphinstone (1948). More sympathetic to the shaikh are Hambout (1947: Ch III) and Jwaideh (1969 : Ch X and XI).
36. The shaikh succeeded in winning the support of a section of the Caf tribe thanks to a conflict in the Ladins family (Lees 1928: 257 ff.). Similarly, minor sections of some tribes took the side of the British. The shaikh also received strong support from the hardy Hewram tribesmen, among whom his family had always had much influence, and even - according to a surviving participant - from some Bakhtiyari (a tribal group that lives far southeast of Kurdistan proper, in Iran).
37. "Progress report A.P.O. Kirkuk for period ending Dec. 29, 1918" (Public Records Office, FO 371 files 1919: 44A/122190/144).
38. "Notes on the tribes of southern Kurdistan", Baghdad, 1919.
39. Edmonds, who knew many members of the family, calls them "an excellent example of a house which in quite modern times rose to a position of wealth and worldly power by virtue of the religious influence of its dervish founder" (1957: 269-270).
40. An early biography of Baha ad-Din, partially translated in Molé 1959, relates an initiatory dream of Baha ad-Din, in which he appeared before Abd al-Khaliq (38-40).
41. Molé (1959): 36, 37; a full silsila of Baha ad-Din, compiled from a number of manuscripts is given by Molé on p. 65.
42. These rules are quoted in Trimmingham (1971): 203-204 and Subhan: 191-192. Among Abd al-Khaliq's 8 rules are the following:
- "h3sh dar dan", "awareness while breathing". Not a breath may be inhaled or exhaled in a state of forgetfulness of the Divine Presence. (Baha ad-Din later said "the external basis of this tariqa is the breath");
 - "nazar bar qadam", "watching one's steps". A sufi in walking should always have his eyes on his footsteps. This he is directed to do in order to restrain his mind from wandering, and to be able to concentrate his attention on the Divine Presence;
 - "khalwat dar anjuman", "solitude in a crowd". The aim is to achieve such power of concentration that, while busy in the affairs of the world, one may be able to meditate upon God;
- and among the 3 rules Baha ad-Din added:
- "wuqûf-i zamani", "temporal pause": keeping account of how one is spending one's time, whether rightly or wrongly;
 - wuqûf-i qalbi", "heart pause": to form in the mind a picture of one's heart with the word Allah engraved upon it in Arabic letters.
- The same or very similar instructions of meditation techniques were given me when I studied buddhist (vipassana) meditation in Bodhgaya for a short while.
- 42a. I have direct acquaintance with the (sunni) Qadiri, the (shiiite) Khaksar and Ne'matollahi orders and with the (extremist) Ahl-e Haqq sect. Also in the literature I sought in vain for related ideas.
43. None of my Naqshbandi informants was very informative about the part of the silsila preceding Mawlana Khalid. Between Baha ad-Din and Abdallah of Delhi only one shaikh is commonly inserted, Baqi bi'llah. A more complete silsila, beginning with Baha ad-Din's disciple Ya'qub Charkhi is copied after an Ottoman manuscript, the Mirat al-Muqasid, by H.A. Rose in an appendix to Brown's book (p 444). This manuscript was apparently written by an adept of the Kurdish branch of the order, since it does not mention any of the Naqshbandi shaikhs who lived in Turkey before the coming of Mawlana Khalid. A list of Naqshbandi saints in India, appended to Subhan's book, makes it possible to identify Mawlana Khalid's instructor as Shah Abdallah Ghulam Ali, who died in Delhi in 1824.
44. Several authors have written of Mawlana Khalid's reputation, and of his sudden nightly departure from Silġman; first of all Rich, who happened to be in Silġman at the time of the incident. Other important sources are: Edmonds (1957: 72-73, 77-78); Nikitine (1925: 156-157; 1956: 212-215); Trimmingham (1971: 124) and D.W. Mackenzie, "A Kurdish creed" (in: A Locust's leg. Studies in honour of S.H. Faizade, London 1962: 162-170). Mawlana Khalid's standing at Silġman was very high; the princely family paid him the highest respect. The prince even publicly placed him above himself, for he "used to stand before him (the shaikh) and fill his pipe for him" (Rich, I: 320). When members of the ruling family swore a solemn oath to each other (not to make a secret pact with outside powers against each other) they did so in front of the shaikh, and they promised each other that all letters from Persia or Turkey either of them might receive would be opened in 96r Khalid's house, in presence of all the others (Rich, I: 147-148). Then, suddenly and unexpectedly this high personage fled from the town. The next morning Rich wrote in his diary: "October 20.- This morning the great Sheikh Khalid ran

(Notes to Chapter IV, continued)

- away. Notwithstanding his escape was secret, he managed to carry his four wives with him. It is not yet known what direction he has taken. The other day the Koords placed him even above Abdul Kader, and the Pasha used to stand before him and fill his pipe for him; to-day they say he was a kafir or infidel, and tell numbers of stories of his arrogance and blasphemy. He lost his consideration on the death of the Pasha's son. He said he would save his life, and that he had inspected God's registers concerning him, &c. The cause of his flight is variously reported. Some say he has been making mischief between the Pasha and his brothers, who had decided that he should be confronted with them. Others say that he had formed the design of establishing a new sect, and making himself temporal as well as spiritual lord of the country. Of course a great deal more is laid to his charge than he is really guilty of. All the regular Ulama and Seyds, with Sheikh Maroof at their head, hated Sheikh Khaled, who, as long as his power lasted, threw them into the background". (Rich, I: 320-321; my underlining). Other reasons have been put forward for Mevlana Khalid's sudden departure. Edmonds, for instance, was told (apparently by partisans of the Berzenis) that he was put to flight after his failure in a miracle working contest with the leading Berzenic shaikh, Me'rûf Nodê (Rich's Sheikh Maroof). But the flight and sudden loss of charisma cannot have been the result of such a direct confrontation, for Şêx Me'rûf did not manage to take the prominent place in Silêmani Mevlana Khalid had left empty. It was only his son, Kak Emed, who was to fill it later. (for these Berzenis see the Appendix to Ch IV, Table I.) The arguments Rich put forward seem more convincing. The shaikh may have failed in some coup to take more secular power into his hands, exploiting the internal rivalries in the ruling family. His sudden loss of charisma is easy to explain: nothing succeeds like success, and nothing fails like failure. Also one should not forget that Rich was the guest of the ruling family, and the reactions he described are those of the people he met in that milieu. Others may have remained loyal to the shaikh, witness the fact that the Naqshbandi order did not lose all followers in Silêmanî. Mevlana Khalid was succeeded here by his khalifa, Şêx Osman of Biyare (east of Silêmanî), who is known to have had many murids.
45. According to Rich many people put Mevlana Khalid on nearly the same level as the Prophet, and called his words "inspired" (Rich I: 140). He was said to have 12,000 disciples. "In various parts of Turkey and Arabia" (ibid. 141).
46. I do not mean to say that other factors (e.g., psychological ones) do not contribute to social phenomena, but that explanations involving these factors are often not falsifiable and therefore of dubious value. Too often also are such factors invoked in order to hide the fact that a decent sociological explanation has not been found. I have toyed with the idea that the Naqshbandi order may have gained ground over the Qadiri order because of the very intimate relation between murid and murshid that is established in the Naqshbandi ritual (rabîta, see p 306), and for which there is no equivalent in the Qadiri order. This may have led to greater devotion to the shaikh among Naqshbandi disciples and thus make the order grow. I found it not possible, however, to arrive at a formulation that was both satisfactory and falsifiable.
47. The relations between some of the branches are even antagonistic, and maybe some should be drawn completely separately - which would further stress the unconnectedness of the Qadiri graph. The branch at Silêmanî claims to be the leading one, but is not generally recognized as such by the others. I have therefore not given it a central position in the graph, and drawn broken lines between all branches.
48. The three shaikhs whose rivalries disturbed the peace in the Oramar district so much around 1910 (see p 260). were all Naqshbandis. Perpetual power conflicts between Şêx Emed of Barzan and Şêx Resid Lolan, spiritual leader of the Bradost tribe, played an important rôle in the Kurdish national movement, and were eagerly exploited by the Iraqi government. See also the notes to Table II of the Appendix for earlier conflicts between the Sadatê Nohrê and the shaikhs of Barzan.
49. E.g., Ibrahim Haqqi Erzurumlu, who resided at Tillo, near Siirt (southern Kurdistan) was a Naqshbandi; an important section of his famous Ma'rîfatname is an exposition of the Naqshbandî path.
50. According to the (secret) handbook "Iraq and the Persian Gulf", prepared by the (British) Naval Intelligence Division (1944), Rich was "for long the second man in Iraq" (p 264).
51. Kurds and local christians had identical expectations of the presence of the missionaries. Armenian, Jacobite and Nestorian christians who converted to the Roman catholic or protestant churches never made it a secret that they did so to obtain French or British (later American) protection. Many British missionaries and other agents complained that the Kurds "misunderstood" their motives and invariably considered them as fore-runners of British conquest. Rich experienced difficulties in explaining to his hosts that his country had such a large and powerful army only because other states had them too, and that a "aged" wars of conquest in India only because it was attacked by enemies there. Rich laughed away the suggestion by a relative of the Baban prince that the British might have designs on Iraq (Rich I: 96ff). One year later the same Rich, in conflict with the vali of Baghdad on the commercial liberties the British were to get, sent warships up the Tigris! It was, however, to last another century before the British finally occupied Iraq military. Ainsworth, another British agent, related a similar incident; in 1840 he travelled in central Kurdistan, accompanied by a group of Assyrian christians. ("Chaldaeans"). The party met a Kurdish chieftain who addressed them: "What do you do here? Are you not aware that Franks are not allowed in this country? No dissimulation! I must know who you are, and what is your business. Who brought these people here?" One of the Chaldaeans turned around "in a haughty peremptory way" and said "... The Kurdish chieftain, who was all alone, looked at the members of the group and said, quietly and deliberately: "You are the fore-runners of those who come to take this country; therefore it is best that we should first take what you have, as you will afterwards have our property". (W.F. Ainsworth, 1842, II: 242).
52. H. von Moltke (1841), passim. Moltke was one of the German officers who acted as military advisers to the Ottoman army. He participated in the siege of the castle of the Kurdish ruler Seid Beg, and in the pacification of northern Kurdistan.
53. As soon as Mirî Kor had established himself he managed to put an end to criminality, especially robbery, in his dominions. The British traveller Fraser passed in 1834. "The whole craft and practice of robbery", he wrote, "has been cut short by a summary process; whoever is caught possessing himself of the goods of others is punished on the spot, or put to death, without mercy..." and again: "... were any man in the countries where the sway of the Meer is fully established, to see a purse of gold on the road, he would not touch it, but report the fact to the head of the next village, whose duty it would be to send for it and keep it, until properly claimed" (Fraser 1840: I: 65-66). Chronicles written by local christians (in Syriac) contain almost identical statements. Scher (1910) published a translation of a number of these chronicles. I quote a relevant fragment: "... An old man told me the following story: "I went once from Şeqlawa to Riwandiz; I found on the road a purse full of gold. Out of fear of Mirî Kor, I didn't dare to touch it. I had taken with me a sack of dates, to distribute among relatives and friends I had in Riwandiz; I lost the sack on the road. When I came back from Riwandiz, I saw the purse of gold still in the same spot. The sack of dates was also there; nobody had dared to touch it". I said him: "But you should have taken the purse of gold; nobody would have seen you". "But maybe", he said gravely, "the people of Mirî Kor kept themselves hidden in an ambush; and if I would have had the bad luck to touch the purse, they would have brought me to the pasha, who would have had me slaughtered immediately". (Scher 1910: 139). Not in all emirates law and order were thus strictly maintained. Rich wrote (in 1820) that the rulers of Amêdf were widely respected because of their descent (from the Abbasid Caliphs), but had no effective authority over the fierce warring tribes of their territory, and did not receive tribute from them (Rich, I: 153).
- Layard (1849), I: 173. See also p 226/7 of this book.
54. Ibid., 179.
- Layard (1849): 228. Şêx Taha "... exercises an immense influence over the Kurdish population, who look upon him as a saint and worker of miracles"; he "was urging Eder Khan Beg to prove his religious zeal by shedding anew the blood of the Chaldaeans" - which the mir was to do that very year. This shaikh thought so highly of himself that, when he rode into town he veiled his face in order not to be polluted by the mere sight of christians and other impurities (ibidem). From a remark in a later book by Layard (1853, I: 376) it is possible to

(Notes to Chapter IV, continued)

- identify him as Şeh Taha I of the Sadatê Nehri (see Appendix, Table II).
57. See art. "Şahdînan" in E.I.¹ (by B. Nikitine).
58. Ubeydullah extended his rule over a very large territory, and had ambitions to found an independent Kurdish state. In 1880 he marched at the head of tribal troops into Persian Kurdistan, which he wanted to become the first nucleus of his Kurdish state. See the notes to Table II of the Appendix.
59. Layard mentioned the following tribes: Şirwan, Gîrî, Bradost, Şendînan (!). Nemet Axa dominated the whole area from Iraq to the Persian frontier. (Layard 1853, I: 370-374).
60. Dickson (1910): 370.
61. Report of A.P.O. Amadia, March 1919. FO 371 files, 1919: 44A/147629/3050.
62. Except in 1920, when a section of this tribe, because of a conflict within the leading family, temporarily took the side of the shaikh - without however becoming his followers. (Lees 1928)
63. Murids often refer to the residence of their shaikh rather than to his personal name; they are attached to a dynasty of shaikhs rather than to the present incumbent of the office, apparently. They describe themselves as, e.g., murids of Xewsabâd. The two khanagahs in Mehabad are usually called the Xaneqah Xewsabâd and the Xaneqah Kripîne.
64. This is only the first part of the shahada: the second ("Muhammadun rasulullah") affirms that Muhammad is God's Prophet. Trimmingham (1971: 201/2) quotes some esoteric interpretations of the two parts of this formula (negation and affirmation) on which sufis are supposed to meditate while reciting it. None of my Qadiri informants ever mentioned them - but then, I never explicitly asked them about this.
65. Only later did I realize that this may have another reason: maybe dervishes are not allowed to do their sword-and-skever acts when the khalifa is not present. I never thought of asking this so explicitly. Some statements by dervishes suggest, in retrospect, this interpretation. It was often said that the dervishes could perform these acts only by permission of the khalifa, but I never understood whether this permission has to be given each time anew.
66. This song, incidentally, which blames the entire war on "those Armenian dogs", suggests that the orders may have been used by the Ottoman authorities to instigate the Armenian massacres. Until recently these songs were not only sung in the khanagah, but brought before a much wider audience by wandering dervishes who went from village to village. At night they stayed in the diwanvane and sang their songs (accompanied by the inevitable frame-drum), gave pious (though not always orthodox) talks, and sold amulets. They spread especially their shaikh's fame (by embellishing his exploits in the supernatural realm) and may have been quite effective propagandists.
67. I stayed with two Naqshbandi shaikhs in Turkey, but since the khanagahs are officially closed there (since 1927, by order of Atatürk), khatmas are held infrequently and in secret only.
68. This is more or less what is expected generally of life after death, although it differs slightly from orthodox's view. The belief is quite general that before the day of resurrection the deceased already undergo some form of punishment or reward. A current hadith says that "grave is a garden of Paradise or a pit of Hell". Religiously educated add that after death the soul of the deceased remains in one of two abodes: the *al-jîn* (for the unbelievers) or the *al-illiyîn* (for the believers). From those abodes they can see or experience some of the atmosphere of Hell and Paradise, respectively. Sometimes it seems that these abodes are (spatially) identified with the grave. It is in the physical grave, at any rate, that the angel is said to come and question the soul.
69. The meditations as practised in Kurdistan do not fully agree with those in the Naqshbandi literature. Shaikh Muhammad Amin al-Kurdi ash-Sha'fî al-Naqshbandî (d. 1914), one of the last classical sufi authors, was a Kurd of Erbil. His prescription of the Naqshbandi ritual should be closest to Kurdish practice, but in fact what he writes about the meditations (in "Tanwir al-qulub", summarized by Arberry (1950: 129-132) is rather vague and avoids to say anything that might give cause to unorthodox interpretations; he mentions the *rabita*, but in his formulation the shaikh is not clearly an intermediary between God and man. The same can be said of as-Sanusi's descrip-
- tion of the *rabita* (see Trimmingham 1971: 212-213). The only recent description (from second hand) of the Naqshbandi ritual as it is practised in Egypt (Habib: 46-48) does not even mention the death meditation and the *rabita*.
70. E.g., in the rules of the *tariqa* (see note 42). Some early theosophic authors who influenced the order, had themselves probably undergone buddhist influence, e.g. Hakim at-Tirmidhi (see p251; O. Yahya (Mélanges Massignon 7: 412) claims detecting hindu influences in at-Timidhi).
71. The Wahhabi movement was the most austere of late 18th/19th century Islamic revivalist movements. It preached return to what it considered "original" Islam, and rejected all innovations. Its conception of religion was extremely legalistic. Its political leaders (from whom the ruling dynasty of Saudi Arabia descend) had by 1814 conquered nearly all of Arabia proper and the territories north of there as far as Aleppo. Later they were pushed back, into the Arabian peninsula, but the ideological influence remained (and seems to increase again, thanks to the oil dollars. See Margoliouth - "Wahabiya", E.I.¹ and the literature quoted there).
72. Many philosophers in the western tradition (especially the sceptics and the analytical philosophers) have challenged the common-sense distinction between "real" and "imaginary", by attacking the foundations of "reality": empirical reality is, after all, also a construction of the mind. The psychology of perception has also contributed to making the distinction a blurred one. A person's claim that his spirit is brought into the presence of the Divine, for instance, can only meaningfully be denied if one assumes the Divine has a physical existence and that its presence has spatial dimensions. Other interpretations are possible, in which the experience can neither be labelled simply "real", nor "imaginary".
73. Jiyawuk, Mas'at Barzan al-mazlumah: 54, and Brifkani, Haqa'iq tarikhiya an al-qadiyah al-Barzaniyah, both quoted by Jwaideh (1961): 140.
74. "(The Naqshbandi order) is also accepted as orthodox, but, whether owing to the absence of any highly respectable Superior... in the neighbourhood, or owing to something in its teaching, uneducated members of this order in Kurdistan seem to be particularly prone to manifestations of eccentricity" (Edmonds 1957: 63).
75. M.E. Bozarslan fulminates against this superstition (and many others) in his *Islamiyet açisından eşyihlik-ağalık* (Ankara: Toplum, 1964). B. was at the time of writing müfti of Kulp (Prov. Diyarbekir) and a nationalist with social reformist ideas. He wanted to attack shaikhdom as an exploiting institution that kept the common people poor and ignorant. To make his criticism more effective he clothed it in arguments derived from the Koran and the hadith (traditions), which make it resemble the Wahhabi's (politically conservative) criticism.
76. E.g. B. Spooner, "The function of religion in Persian Society" Iran I (1963): 83-95. Spooner makes a distinction between the official religion ("religion of the mosque and the mulla", with the yearly cycle), which reaches the village from the great centres of religious learning, and the "religion of the shrine", which has deeper local roots. Also within sufism it is possible to perceive a similar distinction: the ascetic versus the theosophic tendencies (see e.g. Arberry 1950).
77. I met several sons of shaikhs who have the position of village mulla. They are still called "shaikh", but disclaimed being "real" shaikhs.
78. At the time this is written, a small-scale guerrilla warfare is going on in Iraqi Kurdistan. Two rival groups, followers of Barzani and a coalition of leftist groups under Talebani operate against the Iraqi troops and sometimes clash with each other. The Bradost tribe has apparently resumed its enmity to the Barzani groups, but does not collaborate with the government as in the past; towards the Talebani groups it remains neutral.
79. The only prayer for rain that I have witnessed was not led by a shaikh but by the local mulla (Şir Nisran, near Qamisli, NE Syria). But people told me another form of rain prayer that used to be performed in the past. The villagers collected and washed a large number of pebbles (70,000 or more, it was said). Young men of the village picked these up one by one, saying an *ayyat* on each (there is a special *ayyat* on rain in the Koran), and blowing on each pebble, after which they put them into a sack. It was essential for this ceremony that the men who participate be all "tobedar", in the state of ritual purity resulting from penitence. Therefore the shaikh who led the ceremony started by taking *tobê* from everyone.

(Notes to Chapter IV, continued)

- During the ceremony the sheep and lambs of the village were brought nearby, but were kept separated from each other, so that all the time there was a loud bleating of the lambs. Suckling babies were also separated from their mothers, so that they joined the concert. The babies' and lambs' cries for mother-milk symbolized the villagers' cries for rain. All villagers had to wear their oldest clothes, torn and frayed, which they had to wear inside out. When all pebbles had been put into sacks, the entire contents were dropped into a stream. If, after this effective ceremony, too much rain came, villagers would try to make it stop by taking pebbles out of the stream again. The last ceremony of this kind took place some 10 years ago; the pile of pebbles in the village stream is still recognizable.
80. Arfa (1966: 152/3) gives a list of names of influential landlords taking refuge in Iran in 1959, among whom ten shaihs occur.
81. Both the rosary and the recitation are called "tesbih". An ordinary rosary has 33 beads; sufis usually have one with 99 beads, in 3 groups of 33. I do not know what the reason for that number is.
82. A bullet-stopper is obviously an object of high value in bullet-ridden Kurdistan, and shaihs who can make them command the greatest respect. The most famous maker of gulebends was Kak Ehmed, the Bernençî shaikh (even Sultan Abdulhaid II is said to have worn one of Kak Ehmed's gulebends), another his descendant Şêx Mehmedî, whose men fought very bravely in his revolts because, it is said they were invulnerable due to the shaikh's gulebends. Kak Ehmed and Şêx Osman's great-grandfather exchanged tariqas, and this is how Şêx Osman may have "inherited" this skill. These amulets are not an exclusively Kurdish speciality. In Khorasan I also heard people talk about them. A man told me that a few years previously he had witnessed an experiment with a bullet-stopper hung around the neck of a cock; no one managed to shoot the poor animal. The maker of the amulet was a certain Shaikh Mulla Husain; people called him a jadugar, sorcerer.
83. It is especially Lanternari and Worsley who forcefully defend this interpretation. V. Lanternari, The religions of the oppressed: a study of modern messianic cults (London/New York, 1963); P. Worsley, The trumpet shall sound: a study of "cargo" cults in Melanesia (London 1957).
84. A balanced account of Ubeydullah's revolt is to be found in Joseph (1961) and in Jwaideh (1960: 242-289). Useful additional information in H. Arfa (1966): 23/4 and Halfin (1976): 95-113.
85. FO 371 files, 1926: E 2188/288/65 (Constantinople to London, March 30, 1926).
86. Thus e.g. Şêx Selaheddin of Mîzan (Appendix, Table 5, nr. 93, 4), who was influential enough for the D.P. to desire his support, and who, due to his position as a member of parliament, managed not only to consolidate, but even to extend his traditional-type influence (patronage?). The exact relationship in this stage (ca. 1945-1960) of this shaikh and others with nationalist elements is unclear. In the period of the great revolts (1925-1937) Şêx Selaheddin had always kept aloof from, or even opposed the nationalists, in order to safeguard his position vis-à-vis the government. It was only when his party tried to win the votes of all the diverse categories of people that were for one reason or another disaffected with Atatürk's policies, that he played on nationalist sentiments among the Kurds. The only written source on the subject that I have located is a rather biased one: four days after the military coup had toppled the D.P. government the daily Cumhuriyet (oppositional under the D.P. government, allied with the (Kemalist) Republican People's Party) "revealed" that a group of "reactionaries" in the D.P. had been preparing the establishment of an independent Kurdish state - an exaggeration, to say the least. To make the plot sound more dangerous the author of the article claimed that these D.P.-members were in league with a son of Şêx Sefî (the leader of the great revolt of 1925), who had been seen touring the countryside in a Russian-built (!) jeep (Cumhuriyet, 31-5-1950).
87. I owe most of my information on this rising to Ehmed Bamernî, who is from the village in question.
88. As early as 1919 a British ... wrote ... his shaikh: "(he has) great spiritual influence throughout the hills, which he to a certain extent, and his son Rauf to a greater ... it, have ... their own private ends, and enrich themselves at the expense of the Christians" (FO 371 files, 1919: 44A/147629/3050). Compare also the quotation from Dickson, op. p. 260, according to which Behadîn was one of the troublemakers in the Herki-Oramar district.
- See note 80 of Chapter V.
89. This rising is known in Turkish history as the "31 March incident" (following the old Greek-style calendar). On the revolt see B. Lewis, The emergence of modern Turkey. London (OUP) 1968, 2nd ed.: 214-216, and the literature quoted there.
90. "...in this (the Naqshbandî) order there appears a progressive development of its doctrine, and that, for the most part, in keeping with the teaching of orthodox Islam. In consequence, of all sufi orders, this one is the most orthodox in practice". (Subhan: 190, writing on the Indian Naqshbandîs).
91. One of a group of Kurdish aghas who were exiled from Kurdistan in 1960 (for nationalist activities) in a public statement:
"Sefî Kurdî was a great scholar. His looks were very imposing. Whoever saw him, felt respect for the majesty in his looks. He would get very angry with shaihs who exploited and robbed the people. Sefî Kurdî was not a miracle-worker. Because he was very angry with the shaihs of Eastern Turkey and struggled with them, he came rarely to the East. The shaihs were sore with him because he threw stones at their mechanism of exploitation. The Kurds love him as Sefî Kurdî even more than as Sefî Nûrsî, because he is one of those men who sign with their Kurdish name". (quoted by İsmail Beşikçi, 1969: 260).
92. Such exaggerated claims are made by leading members of the movement (e.g. N.P. Xisakîrek in: A.Ş. Lâç a.o., Nuruçuluk (Ankara 1968): 114). A vague indication of the number of followers of this movement may be inferred from election results. According to many of my informants, the movement has been associated with, and even formed the mainstream of two political parties in Turkey, the Millî Mîzan Partisi (Party of National Order, founded in 1970 and closed down for anti-secularist propaganda in 1971) and its successor, the Millî Selamet Partisi (Party of National Salvation, established in 1971). In the general elections of 1973 the MSP won 11.8% of the votes. The voters included however many other fundamentalist muslims as well as people who had other reasons to support this party. In 1977, the nurcu newspaper Yeni Asya had turned against the MSP and supported the Justice Party instead. That year the MSP received only 8.6% of the votes thrown. The nurcus were the only ones who as a group turned their backs on this party. With due reserve one may infer that the number of nurcus is in the order of magnitude of 3% of the population.
- There is an abundance of anti-communist quotations in nurcu literature; it is one of the features which seem to make the movement palatable to the non-religious right. I translate a typical passage (from a letter by Sefî Kurdî to the office of the Prime Minister and to the Ministries of Justice and Interior, 1948):
"... I have one single aim: in this time, while I am approaching my grave, we hear in our Fatherland, an Islamic country, the voices of Bolshevik owls (The owl is an ominous bird; its call is a foreboding of disaster. MVB). This voice shakes the religious foundations of the Islamic world. It ties the people, especially the young, to itself. All my life I have struggled against it, and have called the young and the muslims to Religion. I struggle against the mass of unbelievers. I want to continue this struggle until the day that I appear before God's presence. All my activities are just this. Those who keep me from these my duties may be, I fear, Bolsheviks..." (quoted in A.Ş. Lâç and others - Nuruçuluk (Ankara: Çiçek yayınevi, 1968): 106).
- The anti-communism of the nurcu movement is becoming increasingly militant. In 1976 the Party of National Salvation formed a new, militant youth movement, the akınçılar. Many times armed groups of akınçılar attacked leftist students or teachers, or alevites (unorthodox shiites, who to the nurcus are worse than unbelievers). According to newspaper reports these akınçılar receive para-military training beside religious education in the so-called nur kampları: ("camps of the Light"). Their activities are especially conspicuous in the areas of mixed sunni-alevi population (the NW part of Turkish Kurdistan).
- Some literature on nurcuçluk: dr. Çetin Üzek, "Türkiye'de gerici akınlar" ("Reactionary currents in Turkey") İstanbul: Gerçek yay. 1968: 180-185 for the vision of a kemalist. From the nurcu point of view: N. Şahiner, Bediüzzaman Said Nûrsî (İstanbul: Yeni Asya yay., 1974 (2nd pr.)); A.Ş. Lâç a.o., Nuruçuluk (Ankara: Çiçek yay. 1968); The Risale-i Nur pamphlets are published by Sösaler Yayınevi, İstanbul.

Notes to Chapter V

1. In Kurdish: Ger dê hebuwa me ittîfaqek,
Vêkra bikîra me inqiyadek,
Rom û Ereba û Eşem tenamî
Hemeyan jî me ra dikir xulamî.
Tekmîl dikir me dîn û dewlet,
Teshîl dikir me fîlm û hîkmet.

Men û Zîn was recently published in Turkey, in Roman script and with a Turkish translation by M.E. Bozarslan. A number of lines from the section "Derdê me" however, had to be left out, to spare the Turkish censor's sensibilities.
- 2a. When American missionaries visited the Urmiye district (Persian Kurdistan) in 1831, they found that the Kurds also welcomed them; they were taken for Russians, from whom the Kurds expected deliverance from Persian oppression. A Kurdish shepherd exclaimed: "Aha! You are just the men I have been waiting to see for a long time. Our government here oppresses, beats and kills us. This is Kurdistan; the Kurds are many in the Kuzulbashes (Persians) are few. When are you coming to take the country and allow us a chance to beat and kill them?" (Eli Smith, Researches of the Rev. E. Smith and the Rev. H.G.O. Dwight in Armenia, Boston 1833, II: 245. Quoted in Joseph 1961: 45).
2. In fact, there is less than unanimity in the European tradition as to what constitutes a nation. See the discussion on p 134.
3. They assumed this title from 1533, when the last descendant of the Abbasid caliphs, a powerless and unobtrusive person, died in Egypt. As the Ottomans were by then de facto masters of the central Islamic lands, their claims were not seriously contested (except by the Dutch islamologist Snouck Hurgronje, see the articles on the caliphate of Vol. 3 of his Verspreide Geschriften).
4. Zinnar Silopi (pseudonym of Qadri Beg Cemil Paşa), Doza Kürdistan: 38/9.
5. Interesting remarks on the development of nationalism in the late Ottoman Empire are made by B. Lewis (1961).
6. Cewdet, a medical doctor who greatly admired the achievements of the West, was one of the most influential "westernizers" among the Young Turks. He was to be a major intellectual influence on that strange apostle of Pan-Turkism, Ziya Gökalp (who, ironically, was a Kurd, too). After World War I Cewdet was to join the moderate wing of the Kurdish nationalist movement.
7. Previously, in 1876, the Empire had received its first constitution, providing for a parliament. In 1877 Abdulhamid II, using crisis in foreign politics as a pretext, had suspended parliament. The constitution was never officially abolished, but it remained an empty letter for the rest of Abdulhamid's reign.
8. There is much literature of a propagandistic nature on these massacres. For reasons of war propaganda the Allies circulated inflated figures on the number of people killed; for the same reasons Germans and Turks played these figures down. Turkish children still learn in school that it was the Armenians who massacred the Kurds instead of the other way round. Important sources are those based on contemporary diplomatic correspondence: Deutschland und Armenien 1914-1918 (Berlin 1919); The Treatment of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire (British government blue book, edited by A. Toynbee; London 1916); H. Morgenthau (U.S. Ambassador in Istanbul), Secrets of the Bosphorus (New York, 1918).
9. This representative Committee (Heyet-i temsiliye) consisted of 9 persons. Beside Mustafa Kemal himself and another military commander, Rauf Bey (Orbay) it included, among others: the Kurdish tribal chieftain Hafî Mîsa Beg (Xwîfî tribe, of Modkî), the urban notable Sedullah Efendi (from Bitlis, an ex-parlementarian) and the Naqshbandî shaikh Fawzî Efendi (from Erzurum). This committee was never convened (according to Mustafa Kemal, the Kurdish representatives never appeared at its meetings). At the Sivas congress a new representative committee was elected. Neither Hafî Mîsa nor Şek Fawzî were on the new committee. (Ş.S. Aydemir, Tek Adam, II: 122/3).
10. This was a step back from the demand of restoration of the Ottoman Empire. It seems to be a (realistic) concession to Arab nationalism. Southern Kurdistan, that like the Arab territories was occupied (by the British), was claimed for Turkey.
11. The only estimates of the ethnic composition of eastern Anatolia around this time seem rather biased in favour of the Kurds, but are probably not absurdly far removed from the truth. Captain Woolley, a British officer friendly to the Kurds, reported after an inspection tour in eastern Anatolia that 90 to 95% of the population of the "six vilayets" was Kurdish. (FO 371, 1919: ME 44/91479/3050). Major Noel, after an extensive tour through Diyarbekir, made the following informed estimates of the population of that province:

	pre-war	post-war
Kurds	750,000	600,000
Armenians	120,000	20,000
Syrians & Chaldaeans	81,000	23,000
Turks	3,000	2,500
others	10,000	3,000

 (FO 371, 1919: 44A/105775/3050).
12. For an eye-witness' account: Col. A. Rawlinson, Adventures in the Near East 1918-1922 (London, 1923), especially part II: Intelligence in Transcaucasia.
13. Art 13 of the treaty stated that "The borderline between Turkey and Iraq shall be decided in a friendly way between the governments of Turkey and Great Britain within a period of 9 months. In case an agreement between the two governments shall not be reached during the given period, the issue shall be forwarded to the council of the 'League of Nations' (quoted in A.R. Chassemlou, 1965: 66).
14. On these measures: Aydemir, İkinci Adam, I: 311-316.
15. "...If the ethnic argument alone had to be taken into account, the necessary conclusion would be that an independent Kurdish State should be created, since the Kurds form five-eighths of the population". Quoted from the Commission's report in Chassemlou (1965): 68.
16. Shaw & Shaw (1977): 376. Detailed discussion of the Mosul Question, from the British point of view, in Edmonds (1957), and Longrigg (1953).
17. Apart from a group around the journal *Kurdistan* that appeared from 1898 in Cairo. This group apparently consisted exclusively of members of the Bedirxan family.
18. Noel, from Aleppo, 23/9/1919. Enclosed in FO 371, 1919: 44A/141322/3050.
19. Xelîl Xeyalî, son of a prominent family of Modkî, who had studied in Istanbul; Mirî Katibzade Cemîl, an urban "notable", originally from Diyarbekir; and Kurdzade Ehmed Ramîz, from Lice (Silopi: 23-26). The newspaper *Kurdistan*, published under the auspices of the Society, was a continuation of the paper of that name had previously been published at Cairo by Sureyya Bedirxan. This same person, who had come to Istanbul, remained its major contributor. (Jwaideh 1960: 298/9, after a number of other sources).
20. This occupation was originally one of the Armenians' specializations. In the 1890's many of the Armenian porters had been killed in one of the massacres and Kurds had taken their place.
21. Jwaideh: 370, after British official sources. Şerîf Paşa then retired to his luxurious villa in southern France. After the war, at the Peace Conference, he found himself at the right spot to defend the interest of the Kurds. See also Arfa (1966): 31.
22. After the Russian revolution Ebdurrezâq remained in Anatolia, was arrested by the Turks and died in prison in Mosul (from poisoning, it is said). Kamîl was in 1919 still said to be in Tiflis. (Jwaideh 1960: 371; Silopi: 80; Nikitine 1956: 195).
23. His name and function are mentioned in the correspondence on a diplomatic incident involving agitation of Kurds against the kemalists, Sep. 1919 (Major Noel and a small group of Kurds from Kurdistan Taaîl Cemiyeti stayed with this governor under compromising circumstances).
24. Most of my informants claimed that all tribal militia units participated, Firat (an alevî local historian) however wrote that the former Hamidiye units (that were all sunnî) did not at all participate, and left the "sacred duty of defending the Turkish homeland" to the alevî units (especially his own tribe, the

(Notes to Chapter V, continued)

- Xormek). Firat: 180.
25. See the estimated statistics of ethnic composition of the population in note 11 above.
26. Major Noel quoted, in one of his reports, Ottoman regulations concerning the treatment of Kurdish refugees. According to art. 3, tribal chieftains, shaikhs, melas and other influential persons were to be separated from the tribesmen, and lodged separately, remote from their tribes, preferable in towns under direct government surveillance; and art. 12 ruled that the refugees were to be divided into "small groups of no more than 300 persons each, and to be sent to different zones, where they were not to exceed 5% of the population." ("Notes on the Kurdish situation", enclosed in FO 371, 1919: 44A/112202/3050).
27. Two of my informants had heard this story from Şêx Mehdi personally.
28. See Jwaideh (p 383-397), who quotes many British sources to that effect. Some informants told me similar things, but in vague terms, Mustafa Kemal, who was at Diyarbakir in 1916, as a commander of the 16th army corps, is said to have made friends with many leading Kurds and to have made them similar promises.
29. Enclosed in FO 371, 1919: W44/59486/3050.
30. Enclosed in FO 371, 1919: W44/79991/3050.
31. Silopi: 59; Dersimi: 120.
32. The leading committee of the Kûrdistan Taali Cemiyeti consisted of the following persons:
president: Seyyid Ebdulqadir (son of Şêx Ubeydullah)
1st vice-pres.: Emin Elî Bedirxan
2nd vice-pres.: General Fîad Paşa (son of the former foreign minister Sefî Paşa, from Silêmani)
secr.-gen.: General Hemîf Paşa, retired member of the general staff
treasurer: Seyyid Ebdullah (son of Seyyid Ebdulqadir)
important members:
military men:
Colonel (Miralay) Xelîl Beg from Dersim (head of the Istanbul police)
Retired colonel Mehmed Elî Bedirxan
Retired lieutenant-colonel Mehmed Emin Beg of Silêmani
religious authorities:
Xweça Elî Efendi, an influential cleric Şefîq Efendi, a mîderris (high clerical rank) from Ervas
others: Babanzade Şukru Beg, of the Baban family (editor-in-chief of the newspaper Tercüman)
Babanzade Fîad Beg, of the Baban family
Fethullah Beg (a trader)
Şukru Mehmed Beg Sekban, (professor of medicine) (Silopi: 52-54).
- A list of prominent members, sent to the British High Commission at Istanbul in 1919, mentions the same people and a few more of the same classes; in this list also a few names from the tribal milieu appeared, the most conspicuous of which is Elişan Beg, "a notable of Kogîrî". Elişan was one of the leaders of the revolt in western Dersim referred to in the text. (FO 371, 1919: ME 44/91082/3050).
- The Diyarbakir branch was at first apparently independently established (Silopi: 45). Most of its members had, before the war, been students in Istanbul and active in Hêvî. A central role was played by members of the family of Cemîl Paşa. Most of the other members mentioned by Silopi (=Qadir Beg Cemîl Paşa) belonged to the "great" feudal families of town and province. Also two doctors (Cewdet and Doctor Fîad) played important roles, while religious leaders as the mîftî Hacı İbrahim Efendi, the naqîb Ul-eshraf Bekir Sidîq Beg, the religious scholar Xweça Hemîf Efendi and Şêx Ehmed Gulşenî gave their benevolent support. In the town alone, the Society had over a thousand registered members (Silopi: 45-47). Major Noel visited Diyarbakir in June, 1919, and found the Society very active, and friendly to H.M. Government (FO 371: 1919: W44/90860/3050).
33. FO 371, 1919: ME44/91082/3050, 44A/147752/3050; E 5063/11/44.
34. The split in the organization (due to the old conflict between Seyyid Ebdulqadir and the Bedirxans, too?) occurred if Seyyid Ebdulqadir had publicly declared that his aim was not an independent Kurdistan (but rather a limited form of autonomy). The Bedirxans and most young nationalists left Seyyid Ebdulqadir and established the Teşkilat-ı İçtîma'îyye. Leading members were:
Emin Elî Bedirxan (president) and his sons Celadet and Kamran;
Ferîd Beg Bedirxan;
Babanzade Şukru, Fîad and Hikmet Beg;
Doctor Ebdullah Cewdet (the Young Turk "westernizer");
Doctor Şukru Mehmed Sekban
Kemal Fevzi Beg (ex-officer, productive journalist; was member of the first Hêvî);
Ekren Beg, of the Cemîl Paşa family;
Necmedîn Huseyn Beg, from Kerkûk (member of the first Hêvî);
Mewlanzade Rîfîat Beg (journalist, owner of the Kurdish newspaper Serbestî that was published in Istanbul in those days);
Memdûh Selîm Beg (one of the first members of the original Hêvî; lawyer; son of a moderately rich family of officials at Van) (Silopi: 59-60).
- The existence of this organization was apparently ephemeral, and many of its members remained in contact with Seyyid Ebdulqadir and his Society. This may have had a very simple reason: it was Seyyid Ebdulqadir who enjoyed the support of the Kurdish masses at Istanbul. In 1920 the Kurdish guilds, uniting numerous lower-class Kurds in Istanbul, declared him the only person authorized to speak in their name (FO 371, 1920: E 5063/11/44).
35. The rising is usually called after the tribe that played the most important part in it, the Kogîrî. Dr Muri Dersimi, a veterinary and himself the son of a Dersim agha, was sent to the alevi tribes of Sivas by a group of activist young people within the Kûrdistan Taali Cemiyeti. He took a central part in the rising, and reported later on it in his book, Kûrdistan tarihinde Dersim. Recently a booklet entirely dealing with this revolt appeared in Turkey: (anon.), Kogîrî halk hareketi (Komal, Ankara, 1975).
- The first ultimatum that the aghas sent (dated Nov. 15, 1920) demanded that the Ankara government state its attitude towards autonomy of Kurdistan, that all Kurdish prisoners in the provinces of Elaziz, Malatya, Sivas, and Erzincan be released, that Turkish officials be withdrawn from areas with a Kurdish majority, and that the military troops dispatched to eastern Sivas be immediately withdrawn. The second ultimatum (dated Nov. 25, 1920 and signed "the tribal chiefs of western Dersim") was more radical and demanded the establishment of an independent Kurdistan, encompassing the provinces of Diyarbakir, Elaziz, Van and Bitlis. The signatories threatened to take this independence by force if it were not granted voluntarily (Dersimi: 126/9).
36. "Our program was the following: at first the independence of Kurdistan was to be proclaimed in Dersim and the Kurdish flag to be raised at Xozat (present Tunceli, chief lieu of Dersim. MvB); then the Kurdish national forces were to proceed from the directions of Erzincan, Elaziz and Malatya toward Sivas and were to demand official recognition of Kurdistan by the Ankara government. The Turks would accept this demand, since our demand would be presented by force of arms." (Dersimi: 130).
37. According to Dersimi the first Assembly had 72 Kurdish deputies (ibid. 125n). On a total of 437 deputies this seems a reasonably proportional representation. Tables with the numbers of deputies per province in this and the following Assemblies are to be found in Appendix B of F.W. Frey, The Turkish political elite (Cambridge, Mass., 1965).
38. Dersimi: 122-125.
39. FO 371, 1919: ME44/90860/3050.
40. G. Bell, Review of the Civil Administration of Mesopotamia (London, 1920): 67. Quoted by Jwaideh (1960): 396. There is another possible explanation of this change. Diyarbakir's Kûrt Taali Cemiyeti counted among its members persons such as dr Ebdullah Cewdet, who had always been close to the young Turks. It is likely that these respected intellectuals were responsible for the pro-Turkish attitude prevailing in the beginning, and that more radical elements gradually overshadowed them. The Kurdish nationalist sources do not mention any activities of Cewdet's after 1919.
41. Lists of signatories of these telegrams in FO 371, 1919: 44A/163679/168763/3050, and in Dersimi: 125.
42. In full: Cîwata Azadiya Kurd (Society of Kurdish Freedom) later re-baptized as Cîwata Xweseriya Kurd (Society of Kurdish Independence). In the literature on Kurdish nationalism there is amazingly little reference to this organization. Jwaideh, who does mention a number of shady

(Notes to Chapter V, continued)

- Istanbul-based organizations with no more than a paper existence, nowhere mentions Azadi, which, according to my oral informants, was the most significant organization of that period. The reason may be that Azadi was active in Kurdistan itself, hidden to most outside observers, and never made any foreign propaganda, as did the other organizations. It was the cosmopolitan aristocrats, as the Bedirxans, who made the Kurdish problem known to Europe; Azadi had no, or few, such members.
43. Members of Azadi who after an abortive mutiny took refuge in Iraq (see next section) told the British intelligence officers who interrogated them a long list of anti-Turkish grievances:
 1. A new law on minorities aroused suspicion. Fears were that the Turks planned to despoise the Kurds over western Turkey, and settle Turks in their stead in the east.
 2. The caliphate, one of the last ties binding Kurds and Turks together, had been abolished.
 3. Use of the Kurdish language in schools and law courts was restricted. Kurdish education was forbidden, with the result that education among the Kurds was virtually non-existent.
 4. The word "Kurdistan" (used as a geographical term previously) was deleted from all geography books.
 5. All senior government officials in Kurdistan were Turks. Only on lower levels, carefully selected Kurds were appointed.
 6. Against the taxes paid, there were no comparable benefits received from the government.
 7. The government interfered in the eastern provinces in the 1923 elections for the Grand National Assembly.
 8. The government pursued the policy of continuously setting one tribe against another.
 9. Turkish soldiers frequently raided Kurdish villages, taking away animals; requisitioned food-supplies were often not or insufficiently paid.
 10. In the army the Kurdish rank-and-file were discriminated, and generally selected for rough and unpleasant duties.
 11. The Turkish government attempted to exploit Kurdish mineral wealth, with the aid of German capital. (FO 371, 1924: E 11093/11093/65).
 44. My only source on this congress is Mela Hesen Hîşyar, who was not himself present, but knew many of those who were. Unfortunately, I have not been able to find independent confirmation of his narrative.
 45. According to Memduh Selim, the British had been approached through at least three different channels, through their consul in Trabzon, and through high-ranking Kurds in Iraq.
 46. Thus B. Chirguh, *La Question Kurde*: 31, and a number of later publications which are probably all based on this source. Also Aydemir, *İkinci Adam*, I: 312 shortly mentions that "several sheikhs and aghas were removed from the area". For a list of Kurdish grievances, as formulated in 1924 (and therefore not in retrospect only) see note 43 above.
 47. On November 1, 1922, the Grand National Assembly passed a law that separated the caliphate from the sultanate, and abolished the latter. Sultan Vahideddin, who had been accused of collaborating with the British, did not wait for the kemalists to enter Istanbul, and fled aboard a British warship. The Assembly appointed Abdülmecid III, son of Sultan Abdulaziz (1861-1876) as caliph. On March 3, 1924, the caliphate was abolished, too. From outside (Malta at first, later Arabia) Vahideddin tried to organize opposition to the new regime, largely in vain. Turkish sources even ascribe to him a part in the preparation of Şerif Seid's revolt (see e.g. Avcioglu, *Millî Kurtuluş Tarihi*, III: 1333/4).
 48. Thus my informant (Mela Hesen). Probably Ebdurrezq Bedirxan was meant.
 49. Report "Kurdish nationalist society in East Anatolia", enclosed in FO 371, 1924: E11093/11093/65.
 50. Obviously the Azadi members exaggerated the degree of support for the Kurdish cause in order to make the British more interested in it, and more ready to give it material support.
 51. It is not improbable that this name was suggested first by the interrogators. The Bedirxan family was known to be pro-British.
 52. All other informants claim that Seyyid Ebdulqadir was not involved with Azadi. He may have been mentioned simply because he was known as one of the most influential personalities among the Kurds. After the revolt, Seyyid Ebdulqadir was also arrested. He admitted to have been visited by Şerif Seid's son Elif Riza, but denied any role in the preparation of the revolt. Nevertheless, he was hanged.
 53. The story is well-known in Kurdish nationalist circles. Dersimi (p 173/4), Silopi (p 82/3), Memduh Selim (interview) and Mela Hesen Hîşyar (interview) gave virtually identical accounts.
 54. This difference in treatment shows that the Turkish authorities perceived that they had to deal with two different kinds of rebels, the traditional chieftains whose loyalty was negotiable, and the motivated nationalists whose demands could not so easily be bought off.
 55. According to Firat (197/8), the shaikh gave testimony in Xinis, denied all contacts with Azadi and declared to be solely interested in religion and not to have political aims. After being heard he was released.
 56. Firat gives much information on the Cibra - Xormek relations (144-187). He also reprints Şerif Seid's letter to the Xormek chieftains (200).
 57. Mela Hesen was not present at these meetings. He joined the shaikh one or two days later. His account on the events and Firat's contradict each other in many details; both contain obvious mistakes. For the war plans I follow Mela Hesen, but reservation is due. Many details he told me were clearly intended to impress me. Therefore I give only the barest outline; it may contain factual incorrectnesses, but only minor ones.
 58. Mela Hesen gave me the following names: Baba Beg Cebrî (father's brother's son of Xalid Beg), Mehmed Axa Xelîlê Xeto (of Şerefdin, east of Çebeqçûr), Mehmed Beg Enzêr (of Bulanik), Mehmed Begê Xerîb (Musiyân tribe, Çebeqçûr), Sedîq Begê Medrag (from east of Çebeqçûr), Colonel Hacı Selim Axa Zikî (of Dêreyent), Colonel Şerîf (of Gokdere), Tevîb Elî (secretary of Azadi; representative of Çebeqçûr), Captain Fudîf Axa (of Dêreyent), Emerî Fardûq (Botiyân tribe, Xançûk), Beyder Axa (Tawds tribe, west of Xançûk), Heqqî Beg (of Lice), and "many others".
 59. Mela Hesen (whose dates are not very exact) thought the revolt had been planned for May 1925, but all other sources mention mid-March.
 60. Thus the planning according to Mela Hesen. The way he tells it is just a little too organized. Undoubtedly his account of the strategic plans is influenced by the events at the fronts as they later actually took place. I quote him more fully here because, even if the account is not factually correct, it gives a clear idea of the underlying conception.
 61. The accounts of the incident differ in minor details only. Only Firat has a slightly different version: when the shaikh came to Firan the local gendarme unit noticed among his hundred (armed) companions five outlaws, whom they tried to arrest.
 62. Ten thousand, according to Firat (204). An inhabitant of Diyarbekir estimated the number of Kurds that laid siege to the town (a much larger number) also at 10,000 (FO 371, 1925: E 3340/1091/44).
 63. Dersimi: 178; Firat: 208/13.
 64. Only Firat (204/5) mentions Şerif Eyub. According to the other sources it was Şerif Ebdurrehim who took Şewerek.
 65. Firat: 213-224; Silopi: 87/9; Dersimi: 178/9.
 66. *Cumhuriyet*, Feb. 26, March 2, 1925; FO 371, 1925: E 2195/1091/65.
 67. Extracts from an anonymous European's diary, in a report from the British military attaché at Istanbul, enclosed in FO 371, 1925: E 2359/362/65.
 - 67a. According to Firat (206/8) and Dersimi (180/1) it all happened much earlier, and the rebels entered the town on March 6. They could take it without a fight, for the townspeople were religious and saw them as fighters for shariat and caliphate. According to Dersimi, Şerif appointed the mufti Mehmed Efendi as vallî (governor).
 68. Interviewed by the British military attaché at Istanbul. see note 67.
 69. The British military attaché at Istanbul estimated in June 1925 that there were 50,000 regular troops in eastern Anatolia (FO 371, 1925: E 3970/362/65). A Persian diplomat even estimated them at 80,000! (M. Poroghi to the Persian Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

(Notes to Chapter V, continued)

- quoted in Ghassemlou 1965: 52n).
70. Others before them (a.o. Kalid Beg of the Hesenan) had reached Iran, and tried to use it as a base from which to return and wage guerrilla war (Dersimi: 180).
 71. Thus Mela Hesen. Also Firat (227-230) gives the impression that guerrilla activity remained considerable. Reports of it reached British and French intelligence services as well (FO 371, 1925: E5645/188/65, E4996/221, 65, and later dispatches).
 72. Minutes by an anonymous high official at the Foreign Office on a consular dispatch from Istanbul. FO 371, 1925: E1229/1091/44.
 73. Documents of the Third International dealing with the Kurdish problem were collected and published in Turkish translation recently: Kürt Millî Mecelesi. Komünist Enternasyonal Belgelerinde Türkiye dizisi - 2. Istanbul (Aydınlık yay.), 1977.
 74. FO 371, 1925: E3346/3541/1091/44.
 75. Oral information. According to Aydemir (İkinci Adam, I: 312n) in total 160,000 arms, of which 30,000 fire-arms, were collected by the government in eastern Anatolia.
 76. FO 371, 1925: E 3340/1091/44.
 77. Aydemir Tek Adam, III: 220ff), discusses both, and comes to the same conclusion (p 230). Mustafa Kemal, in his famous "Speech" tried to discredit the Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası by associating it with Şêx Sedî's revolt, but adduced no evidence whatsoever (vol II: 382-384 of the German translation. Kemal Pascha, Die Nationale Revolution, Leipzig 1929).
 78. Toynbee, Survey of international affairs 1925 (London, 1927): 508 n3.
 79. FO 371, 1925: E2195/1091/44, after a speech by İsmet Paşa in the Assembly.
 80. It has been noted repeatedly that peasant revolts originate not with the poorest, landless strata of the peasantry, but with the "middle peasantry", i.e. "a peasant population which has secure access to land of its own and cultivates it with family labour" (Wolf 1969b: 291). This is the only section of the peasantry that has some internal leverage, giving them the minimal tactical freedom that is required for lasting rebellious activity. See Wolf (1969a): passim; Wolf (1969b): 290-293; H. Alavi, "Peasants and Revolution". The socialist register, 1969 (R. Miliband & J. Saville, eds.): 241-277.
 81. Firat (p 228) claims that Cemîlê Çeto in July 1925 joined the chieftains of Modkî, Saadn and Xerzan in a revolt, and together with them ambushed Turkish troops. None of my informants mentioned this. According to a serial in the Turkish newspaper Dûnya, dealing with Kurdish revolts in Turkey, the mutually feuding Reman and Reşkotan tribes joined in an attack on Turkish troops in August 1925 (Dûnya, May 27, 1977).
 82. Firat: 207, 208.
 83. On the subject peasants of central Kurdistan and the Rezaie district: Nikitine (1956): 196. On those of the plains of northern Iraq: A.T. Wilson (1931): 112.
 84. Memo of an employee of the Banque Ottomane Impériale at Diyarbekir, enclosed in FO 371, 1925: E3340/1091/44.
 85. Articles from the newspaper Vakîf, dated 20/4, 7/5, and 14/5, 1925, translated in "Les massacres kurdes en Turquie". Of the leading members of the Kurdish Club, Dr. Fîad and Kemal Pevzî were condemned to death.
 86. E.E. Evans-Pritchard, The Sanusi of Cyrenaica (London, 1949), especially chapter III.
 87. Thus Firat: 196. According to Şêx Mihemed İsa, Mesûn was a nationalist, and had contacts with Şêx Sefâ, but refused to participate because he thought the revolt was doomed to failure.
 88. Firat: 198; report of the trial of Seyyid Ebdulqadir, reprinted in "Les massacres kurdes en Turquie".
 89. Beside the three shaikhs mentioned and their relatives, the following are named as participants in literature or by informants:
Şêx Şîrnî, a Kurmanji-speaking shaikh (the only one!) from Eleğgird;
The shaikhs of Çan: Mistefa Hesen, İbrahim;
Şêx Şemseddin (and his brother Seyfedin (according to some they were from near Silvan, according to others, from the village of Qamisîf in the Diyarbekir plain);
Şêx Eyub of Qerabağçe (Şêwerek).
 90. Evans-Pritchard (1949): 156-168.
 91. Many sources mention the shaikh's using this title. Firat (200n) reprints a letter the shaikh sent to the Kormek chieftains, signed with this title.
 92. The religious factor continues to play a role, but not an overriding one. Many religious Kurds, for instance, stress their being shafites, as opposed to their hanefite (Turks, Arabs) or shiite (Azəri Turks, Persians) neighbours. To them, the shafite mezheb is an essential aspect of the Kurdish identity.

Notes to Chapter VI

1. If we assume that the probability of conflict within a group is proportional to the number of relations between two persons possible within that group, this probability increases quadratically with the size of the group. The number of relations possible within a group of N persons is $\frac{1}{2}N(N-1) = \frac{1}{2}N^2 - \frac{1}{2}N$. For the not mathematically minded, the following may give an indication: In a group of 10 persons, the number of possible two-person relations is 45
In a group of 100 persons, the number of possible two-person relations is 4950
In a group of 1000 persons, the number of possible two-person relations is 499,500.
As long as N ranges in the hundreds, the assumption may be more or less correct, as all the group's members may see each other often enough to get into a conflict. For higher numbers the assumption is obviously not correct, since not all possible two-person relations will ever be realized.
2. Political Officer Leachman reported from Mosul (in 1918) on the Kurdish peasantry of that province, that the Kurds were strongly anti-Arab, but that "the view of the country population is that, though we have freed them from Turkey, we have yet to free them from the tyranny of landowners, who are the only class in favour of Arab Government" (quoted in A.T. Wilson 1931: 112).
3. I objected that the vote was secret and that they could thus vote for the party of their preference without anyone else's knowing who had voted for what. They answered that the agha required all whom he suspected of other sympathies to swear on the Koran that they would vote for his party.
4. Şîrnîx has also Armenian inhabitants, nearly all craftsmen, altogether maybe 10-20% of the population. Their voting behaviour is not clear (for obvious reasons they were reluctant to talk about it), but I have the impression that most of them supported the aghas' candidate.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

This is not a comprehensive bibliography. Only those books and articles that are of direct relevance for the subjects discussed in this book are listed. Further references are to be found in the notes.

The following abbreviations are used:

AA	American Anthropologist
BSOS(BSOAS)	Bulletin of the School of Oriental (and African) Studies
BTTD	Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi (Journal of Turkish History in Documents)
E.I. ¹	Enzyklopädie des Islam, 1st edition
E.I. ²	Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd edition
GJ	Geographical Journal
IJMES	International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies
JA	Journal Asiatique
JCAS	Journal of the Central Asian Society
JRAI	Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute
JRAS	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
JRGS	Journal of the Royal Geographical Society
MEJ	Middle East Journal
MW	The Muslim World
REI	Revue d'études islamiques
RHR	Revue d'histoire des religions
RMM	Revue du monde musulman
SWJA	Southwestern Journal of Anthropology
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft

- ADAMSON, D. (1964), *The Kurdish war*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- AINSWORTH, W.F. (1842), *Travels and researches in Asia Minor, Mesopotamia and Armenia*. 2 vols. London.
- AINSWORTH, W.F. (1888), *A personal narrative of the Euphrates expedition*. London.
- AKBAL, F. (1951), "1831 tarihinde osmanlı imparatorlugunda idari taksimat ve nüfus" ("Administrative division and population in the Ottoman Empire in the year 1831"), *Bulleten XV*, no 60: 617-627.
- ALAVI, H. (1973), "Peasant classes and primordial loyalties", *Journal of Peasant Studies I/1* : 23-62.
- AMEDROZ, H.F. (1903), "The Marwānid Dynasty at Mayyāfāriqīn in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries A.D.", *JRAS* (1903) :123-154.

- ANDERSON, P. (1974), *Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism*. London: New Left Books.
- ARBERRY, A. J. (1950), *Sufism: an account of the mystics of Islam*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- ARFA, H. (1966), *The Kurds. An historical and political study*. London: Oxford University Press.
- AVCIOĞLU, D. (1974), *Millî kurtuluş tarihi (History of the national liberation)*. 3 vols. Istanbul.
- AYDEMİR, Ş. S. , *Tek Adam. Mustafa Kemal (The only man. Mustafa Kemal)*. 3 vols. Istanbul: Remzi. (many editions, references are to the 5th impression, 1974/5)
- AYDEMİR, Ş. S. , *İkinci adam (The second man)*. 3 vols. Istanbul : Remzi. (references to the editions of 1975/6)
- BABINGER, F. (1927), *Geschichtsschreiber der Osmanen und ihre Werke*. Leipzig: Harrassowitz.
- BADGER, G. P. (1852), *The Nestorians and their rituals, with the narrative of a mission to Mesopotamia and Coordistan in 1842-1844 and a late visit to those countries in 1850*. 2 vols. London.
- BARTH, F. (1953), *Principles of social organization in Southern Kurdistan*. Oslo.
- BARTH, F. (1954), "Father's brother's daughter marriage in Kurdistan", *SWJA* 10 : 164-171.
- BARTH, F. (1959), "The land use pattern of migratory tribes of South Persia", *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift*, 17/1-4 (Oslo) : 1-11.
- BARTH, F. (1962), "Nomadism in the mountain and plateau areas of Southwest Asia", in: *The Problems of the Arid Zone* (Paris: UNESCO): 341-355.
- BELDICEANU, N. (1957), "La crise monétaire ottomane au XVI^e siècle et son influence sur les principautés roumaines", *Stădost-Forschungen (München)* XVI/1 : 70-86 (reprinted in Beldiceanu 1976).
- BELDICEANU, N. (1965), "Recherches sur la réforme foncière de Mehmed II", *Acta Historica (München)* IV : 27-39 (reprinted in Beldiceanu 1976).
- BELDICEANU, N. (1976), *Le Monde Ottoman des Balkans (1402-1566)*. London: Variorum reprints.
- BEŞİKÇİ, İ. (1969), *Doğu Anadolu'nun düzeni (The social order of Eastern Anatolia)*. Istanbul: e yayınları.
- BEŞİKÇİ, İ. (1977), *Kürtlerin "Mecburi İskan"ı ("Forced settlement" of the Kurds)*. Ankara: Komal.
- BIEGEL, L. C. (1972), *Minderheden in het Midden Oosten (Minorities in the Middle East)*. Deventer: Van Loghum-Slaterus.
- BIRKEN, A. (1976), *Die Provinzen des osmanischen Reiches*. Wiesbaden: Reichert.
- BITTNER, M. (1996), "Der Kurdengau Uschnâje und die Stadt Urumije. Reiseschilderung eines Persers, im Originaltexte herausgegeben, übersetzt und erläutert", *Sitzungsberichte der phil.-hist. der Kaiserl. Akad. d. Wissensch. (Wien)* Band CXXXIII, Abh. 3.

- BOBEK, H. (1938), "Forschungen im zentralkurdischen Hochgebirge zwischen Van- und Urmia-See", Petermanns Geogr. Mitteilungen 84 : 152-162, 215-228.
- BOIS, Th. (1961), "La religion des Kurdes", Proche Orient Chrétien (Jerusalem) XI/2 : 105-136.
- BOIS, Th. (1965), Connaissance des Kurdes. Beyrouth: Khayats.
- BROWN, J.P. (1868), The darvishes, or oriental spiritualism. Edited with an introduction and notes by H.A. Rose. London (reprinted London: Frank Cass & Co., 1968).
- CAHEN, C. (1954), "Le problème ethnique en Anatolie", Cahiers d'histoire mondiale II/2 : 347-362.
- CAHEN, C. (1968), Pre-Ottoman Turkey. A general survey of the material and spiritual culture and history, c. 1071-1330. London: Sidgwick & Jackson.
- CHARMOY, F.B. (1868-1875), Chèref-nâmech ou Fastes de la Nation Kourde, par Chèref-ou'ddîne, prince de Bitlis, dans l'IIâlèt d'Arzeroume. Traduits du Persan et commentés par F.B. Charmoy. St.-Petersbourg. (2 vols. in 4 parts)
- CHIRGUH, B. (1930), La question kurde, ses origines et ses causes. Cairo, 1930.
- CHRISTOFF, H. (1935), Kurden und Armenier. Hamburg: Bunte Folge der Wissenschaften, Band 2.
- CUINET, V. (1891-1894), La Turquie d'Asie. Géographie administrative, statistique descriptive et raisonnée de chaque province de l'Asie Mineure. 4 vols. Paris: E. Leroux.
- D.D.K.O. (1975), Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları dava dosyası -1 (File on the trial of the Revolutionary Cultural Clubs of Eastern Turkey). Ankara: Komal.
- DERSİMİ, M.N. (1952), Kürdistan tarihinde Dersim (Dersim in the history of Kurdistan. Halep.
- DICKSON, B. (1910), "Journeys in Kurdistan", GJ 35 : 357-379.
- DOWSON, Sir E. (1931), An inquiry into land tenure and related questions. Proposals for the initiation of reform. Baghdad: Government of el 'Iraq.
- DUGUID, S. (1973), "The politics of unity: Hamidian policy in Eastern Anatolia", Middle Eastern Studies 9/2 : 139-156.
- EAGLETON, W. (1963), The Kurdish republic of 1946. London: Oxford University Press.
- EDMONDS, C.J. (1957), Kurds, Turks, and Arabs. London: Oxford University Press.
- EDMONDS, C.J. (1958), "The place of the Kurds in the Middle Eastern scene", JRCAS XLV/2 (April 1958).
- EDMONDS, C.J. (1969), "The beliefs and practices of the Ahl-i Haqq of Iraq", Iran 7: 89-106.
- EDMONDS, C.J. (1971), "Kurdish nationalism". Journal of Contemporary History 6/1 : 87-106.
- EISENSTADT, S.N. (1963), The political systems of empires. New York: The Free Press.
- ELPHINSTON, W.G. (1946), "The Kurdish question", International Affairs

(London) 22 : 91-103.

- ELPHINSTON, W.G. (1948), "Kurds and the Kurdish question" JRCAS 35/1: 38-51.
- ERDEHA, K. (1975), Millî Mücadelede Vilâyetler ve valiler (The provinces and provincial governors in the National Struggle). Istanbul: Remzi.
- ESENGİN, K. (1976), Kürtçülük sorunu (The problem of Kurdism). Istanbul: Su yayinlari.
- EVANS-PRITCHARD, E.E. (1949), The Sanusi of Cyrenaica. London: Oxford University Press.
- EVLİYA CHELEBİ (= Muhammed Zilli ibn Derviş), Seyahâtname (Book of Travels). Printed edition, Istanbul 1896-1938 (10 vols). Other editions: see p. 13 of this book. Summary translation: Narrative of Travels in Europe, Asia and Africa in the 17th century by Evliyâ Efendî. Translated from the Turkish by the Ritter Joseph von Hammer. London, 1834 (vol I part 1), 1846 (I/2), 1850(II).
- FIRAT, M.Ş. (1970), Doğu illeri ve Varto tarihi (History of the eastern provinces and of Varto). Ankara. (original edition 1945)
- FISHER, S. (1919), Ottoman land laws. Containing the Ottoman Land Code and other legislation affecting land.... London: Oxford University Press.
- FORBES, F. (1839), "A visit to the Sinjar hills in 1838..." JRGS 2 : 409-430.
- FRASER, J.B. (1840), Travels in Koordistan, Mesopotamia, etc. London.
- FRIED, M. (1968), "On the concept of 'Tribe' and 'Tribal society'" in: June Helm (ed), Essays on the Problem of Tribe. Proceedings of the 1967 Annual Spring Meeting of the American Ethnological Society, p 3-20.
- FRÜDİN, J. (1944), "Neuere Kulturgeografischen Wandlungen in der Östlichen Türkei", Z. Gesch. Erdk. (Berlin), 1944 Heft 1/2: 1-20.
- FUAD, K. (1970), Kurdische Handschriften (Verz. d. orient. Handschr. in Deutschland XXX). Wiesbaden.
- GARNETT, Lucy M.J. (1912), Mysticism and magic in Turkey. An account of the religious doctrines, monastic organisation, and ecstatic powers of the dervish orders. London: Pitman & Son.
- GARTHWAITE, G.R. (1977), "The Bakhtiyārī Īlkhānī: an illusion of unity", IJMES, VIII : 145-160.
- GHASSEMLOU, A.R. (1965), Kurdistan and the Kurds. Prague: Czechoslovak Acad. of Sciences / London: Collet's.
- GHIRSHMAN, R. (1977), L'Iran et la migration des Indo-Aryens et des Iraniens. Leiden: Brill.
- GIBB, H.A.R. (1949), Mohammedanism. An historical account. London: Oxford University Press.
- GIBB, H.A.R. & BOWEN, H. (1950, 1957), Islamic Society and the West. London. vol I/1 (1950), vol I/2 (1957).
- GÖKALP, Ziya (1975), Kürt aşiretleri hakkında sosyolojik incelemeler (Sociological researches on the Kurdish tribes). Ankara: Komal.

- HABIB, M. (1969), "Some notes on the Naqshbandi order", MW 59 : 40-49.
- HADANK, K. see: MANN & HADANK
- HALFIN (1976), 19. yy'da Kürdistan üzerinde mücadele (The struggle for Kurdistan in the 19th century). Ankara: Komal.
(This Turkish translation was made after an Arabic translation of the Russian original)
- HAY, W.R. (1921), Two years in Kurdistan. Experiences of a political officer 1918-1920. London: Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd.
- HINZ, W. (1936), Irans Aufstieg zum Nationalstaat im 15. Jahrhundert. Berlin/Leipzig: De Gruyter.
- HINZ, W. (1950), "Das Steuerwesen Ostanatoliens im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert", ZDMG 100 : 177-201.
- HÜTTEROTH, W.D. (1959), Bergnomaden und Yaylabauern im mittleren kurdischen Taurus. Marburg (diss.).
- HÜTTEROTH, W.D. (1961), "Beobachtungen zur Sozialstruktur kurdischer Stämme im östlichen Taurus", Zeitschrift für Ethnologie 86 : 23-42.
- İbn ül-EZRAK (1975), Mervanî kürtler tarihi. Istanbul: Koral.
- İNALCIK, H. (1955), "Land problems in Turkish history", MW 45: 221-228.
- İNALCIK, H. (1973), The Ottoman Empire. The classical age 1300-1600. London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson.
- IVANOV, W. (1926), "Notes on the ethnology of Khorasan", GJ 67: 143-158.
- JABA, A. (1870), Recueil de notices et recits kourdes, servant à la connaissance de la littérature et des tribus de Kourdistan, réunis et traduits par A.Jaba. St. Petersburg.
- JOSEPH, J. (1961), The Nestorians and their muslim neighbours. Princeton University Press.
- JUYNBOLL, Th.W. (1903), Handleiding tot de kennis van de Mohammedaanse wet volgens de leer der Sjäfi'itische school (Guide to the knowledge of Muhammedan law according to the doctrine of the Shafeite school). Leiden : Brill.
- JWAIDEH, W. (1960), The Kurdish nationalist movement: its origins and development. Ph.D. diss., Syracuse University (available on University Microfilm).
- KARPAT, K.H. (1974), "The stages of Ottoman history. A structural-comparative approach" in: K.H.Karpat (ed), The Ottoman State and its place in World History. Leiden: Brill.
- KEMAL, MUSTAFA (=ATATÜRK), Gazi Mustafa Kemal hazretleri tarafından ...irade buyurulan nutuk.
German translation by P.Roth : Der Weg zur Freiheit 1919-1920, and Die nationale Revolution 1920-1927. Leipzig, 1928.
English translation: A speech delivered by the Ghazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha. Leipzig, 1928.
- KINNEIR, J.M. (1818), Journey through Asia Minor, Armenia and Koordistan in the years 1813 and 1814. London. (I used the Dutch translation: Reizen door Klein Azie, Armenie, en Koerdistan... Rotterdam: Arbon & Krap, 1819).
- KISSLING, H.J. (1954), "The role of the dervish orders in the Otto-

- man empire" in: G.E. von Grünebaum (ed), *Studies in Islamic Cultural History. American Anthropologist Memoir* no 76.
- KÖHLER, W. (1928), *Die Kurdenstadt Bitlis nach dem türkischen Reise-
werk des Ewlija Tschelebi. München (diss.)*.
- KRADER, L. (1968), *Formation of the State. Prentice-Hall, Inc.*
- LAMBTON, A.K.S. (1953), *Landlord and Peasant in Persia. A study of
land tenure and land revenue administration. London:
Oxford University Press.*
- LATTIMORE, O. (1957), "Feudalism in history", *Past and Present*,
no 12 (Nov. 1957) : 47-57.
- LAYARD, A.H. (1849), *Nineveh and its remains. 2 vols. London:
Murray.*
- LAYARD, A.H. (1853), *Discoveries in the ruins of Nineveh and Babylon...
2 vols. London : Murray.*
- LEACH, E.R. (1940), *Social and Economic organization of the Rowanduz
Kurds. Monographs in Social Anthropology no 3. London:
School of Economics and Political Science.*
- LEES, G.M. (1928), "Two years in South Kurdistan" *JCAS* XV/3 :
253-277.
- LEHMANN-HAUPT, C.F. (1910-1931), *Armenien einst und jetzt. Berlin,
1910 (Band I), 1926 (Band II/1), 1931 (Band II/2).*
- LE STRANGE, G. (1905), *The lands of the eastern caliphate: Mesopo-
tamia, Persia and Central Asia from the Muslim conquest
to the time of Timur. Cambridge. (reprinted in 1966)*
- LEWIS, B. (1951), "The Ottoman archives as a source for the history
of the Arab lands", *JRAS* Oct. 1951 : 139-155.
- LEWIS, B. (1954), "Studies in the Ottoman archives -I", *BSOAS* 16 :
469-501.
- LEWIS, B. (1961), *The emergence of modern Turkey. London: Oxford
University Press. (References are to the edition of 1968)*
- LONGRIGG, S.H. (1925), *Four centuries of modern Iraq. Oxford: 1925.*
- LONGRIGG, S.H. (1953), *'Iraq, 1900 to 1950. A political, social, and
economic history. London: Oxford University Press.*
- LYBYER, A.H. (1913), *The government of the Ottoman Empire in the time
of Süleyman the Magnificent. Cambridge, Mass. (Harvard
Historical Studies, vol 18).*
- LYNCH, H.F.B. (1901), *Armenia, travels and studies. 2 vols. London:
Longmans.*
- MACKENZIE, D.N. (1961), "The origins of Kurdish", *Transactions of
the philological society, 1961 : 68-86.*
- MACKENZIE, D.N. (1966), *The dialect of Awroman (Hawrāmān-ī Luhōn).
Hist. Filos. Skr. Dan. Vid. Selsk. 4, no 3. København.*
- MANN, O. / HADANK, K. (1950), *Mundarten der Gûran, besonders das Kân-
dûlâi, Auramâni, und Bâdschâlâni. Kurdisch-Persische
Forschungen, Abt. III, Band II. Berlin. (Material collect-
ed by Oskar Mann, analyzed and edited by Karl Hadank).*
- MANN O. / HADANK, K. (1932), *Mundarten der Zâza, hauptsächlich aus
Siwerek und Kor. Kurdisch-Persische Forschungen, Abt. III,*

Band IV. Berlin. (Mann's material, analyzed and edited by Hadank).

- Massacres kurdes en Turquie, Les. Publication de la Ligue nationale kurde Hoyboun, no 2. Le Caire, 1928.
- MAZZAOUI, M.M. (1972), The origins of the Şafawids. Šī'ism, Şūfism, and the Gulāt. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag.
- MILLINGEN, F. (1870), Wild life among the Koords. London: Hurst & Blackett.
- MINORSKY, V. (E.I.¹), articles "Kurden", "Kurdistan", "Lur", "Lur-i Küçik", "Lur-i Buzurg", "Luristan" in Enzyklopädie des Islam, 1st edition.
- MINORSKY, V. (1920), "Notes sur la secte des Ahl-e Haqq", RMM 40-41 : 19-97.
- MINORSKY, V. (1921), "Notes sur la secte des Ahl-e Haqq. II", RMM 44-45 : 205-302.
- MINORSKY, V. (1928), "Etudes sur les Ahl-i Haqq. I. 'Toumari' = 'Ahl-i Haqq' ", RHR 97 : 90-105.
- MINORSKY, V. (1940), "Les origines des Kurdes", Actes du XX^e congrès international des orientalistes, Louvain : 143-152.
- MINORSKY, V. (1943), "The Gūrān", BSOAS XI/1 : 75-103.
- MINORSKY, V. (1945), "The tribes of Western Iran", JRAI 75 : 73-80.
- MOLÉ, M. (1959), "Autour du Daré Mansour: l'apprentissage mystique de Bahā' al-Dīn Naqshband", REI 27 : 35-66.
- MOLYNEUX-SEEL, L. (1914), "A journey in Dersim", GJ 44/1: 49-68.
- MONTAGNE, R. (1932), "Quelques aspects du peuplement de la Haute-Djeziré", Bull. d'Etudes Orientales de l'Institut Français de Damas II : 53-66.
- NAVAL INTELLIGENCE DIVISION (1942/3), Turkey. 2 vols. London.
- NAVAL INTELLIGENCE DIVISION (1944), Iraq and the Persian Gulf. London.
- NAVAL INTELLIGENCE DIVISION (1945), Persia. London.
- NEBEZ, Jemal (1970), Der kurdische Fürst Mīr Muhammad-ī Rawandizī genannt Mīr-ī Kōra im Spiegel der morgenländischen und abendländischen Zeugnissen. Hamburg (diss.).
- NEBEZ, Jemal (1972), Kurdistan und seine Revolution. Berlin: NUKSE.
- NICHOLSON, R.A. (1914), The mystics of Islam. (references are to the 1963 reprint, Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- NIKITINE, B. (1922), "Les Valis d'Ardalan", RMM 49 : 70-104.
- NIKITINE, B. (1925a), "Les Kurdes racontés par eux-mêmes", L'Asie française No 231 (May 1925) : 148-157.
- NIKITINE, B. (1925b), "La féodalité kurde", RMM 60 : 1-26.
- NIKITINE, B. (1956), Les Kurdes. Etude sociologique et historique. Paris: Imprimerie nationale.
- NIKITINE, B. & SOANE, E.B. (1923), "The tale of Suto and Tato. Kurdish text with translation and notes", BSOS III/1 : 69-106.
- O'BALLANCE, E. (1973), The Kurdish revolt 1961-1970. London: Faber & Faber.

- PARMAKSIZOĞLU, İ. (1973), "Kuzey Irak'ta Osmanlı hâkimiyetinin kuruluşu ve Memun Bey'in hatıraları" ("The establishment of Ottoman sovereignty in northern Iraq and Memun Beg's memoirs"), *Bellekten* 37, no 146 (April 1973): 191-230.
- PERRY, J.R. (1975), "Forced migrations in Iran during the 17th and 18th centuries", *Iranian Studies* 8/4 : 199-215.
- PITCHER, D.E. (1972), *An historical geography of the Ottoman Empire*. Leiden : Brill.
- PORTER, R.Ker (1822), *Travels in Georgia, Persia, Armenia, Ancient Babylonia, etc.* London.
- POWELL, J.D. (1970), "Peasant society and clientelist politics", *American Political Science Review* 64 (June 2, 1970): 411-425.
- RABINO, H.L. (1920), "Kermanschah", *RMM* 38 : 1-40.
- RAMBOUT, L. (1947), *Les Kurdes et le droit*. Paris: Le Cerf.
- RAWLINSON, Col.A. (1923), *Adventures in the Near East 1918-1922*. London: Cape.
- RICH, C.J. (1836), *Narrative of a residence in Koordistan*. 2 vols. London: James Duncan.
- RONDOT, P. (1937), "Les tribus montagnardes de l'Asie antérieure. Quelques aspects sociaux des populations kurdes et assyriennes", *Bulletin d'études orientales de l'institut français de Damas*, VI : 1-50.
- RÖHRBORN, K.-M. (1966), *Provinzen und Zentralgewalt Persiens im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*. Berlin: W.de Gruyter.
- RÖHRBORN, K.-M. (1973), *Untersuchungen zur osmanischen Verwaltungsgeschichte*. Berlin: W.de Gruyter.
- RUDOLPH, W. (1959), "Einige hypothetische Ausführungen zur Kultur der Kurden", *Sociologus* 9 : 150-162.
- RUDOLPH, W. (1967), "Grundzüge sozialer Organisation bei den westiranischen Kurden", *Sociologus* 17/1 : 19-39.
- SAFRASTIAN, A. (1948), *Kurds and Kurdistan*. London: the Harvill Press.
- ŞAHİNER, N. (1974), *Bediüzzaman Said Nursî*. Istanbul: Yeni Asya.
- SAHLINS, M. (1966), *Tribesmen*. Prentice-Hall.
- SAKISIAN, A. (1937), "Abdal Khan, seigneur Kurde de Bitlis au XVII^e siècle, et ses trésors", *JA* 229 : 253-270.
- SANDRECKZI, C. (1857), *Reise nach Mosul und durch Kurdistan nach Urumia, unternommen im Auftrage der Church Missionary Society in London, 1850*. 3vols. Stuttgart.
- SARWAR, Gh. (1939), *History of Shāh Ismā'īl Şafawī*. Aligarh : Muslim University (reprint New York 1975).
- SCHER, A. (1910), "Episodes de l'histoire du Kurdistan", *JA* 10^{ème} série, tôme XV : 119-139.
- SCHIMMEL, A. (1975), *Mystical dimensions of Islam*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- SCHMIDT, D.A. (1964), *Journey among brave men*. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.
- SCHMIDT-DUMONT, M. (1970), *Türkmenische Herrscher des 15. Jahrhunderts in Persien und Mesopotamien nach dem Tārīḫ al-Giyāṭī*. Freiburg im Breisgau: K.Schwarz Verlag.

- ŞEREF XAN (1597), *Tārīkh-i mofassal-i Kordestān* (Detailed history of Kurdistan), or *Sharafname*.
Persian edition by M.Abbasi, Tehran, n.d.
French translation, see Charmoy (1868-1875).
Turkish translation by M.E.Bozarslan: *Şerefname, Kürt tarihi*. Istanbul: Ant, 1971.
- SEVGEN, N. (1968/70), "Kürtler" ("The Kurds"), *BTTD*, vol I nr 5 - vol V, nr 30 (continuing series).
- SEVGEN, N. (1971), "Kürt beylikleri" ("Kurdish emirates"), *BTTD* VII, nr 37 : 42-44.
- Sharafname , see: ŞEREF XAN.
- SHAW, S.J. (1975), "Ottoman archival materials for the 19th and early 20th centuries: the archives of Istanbul", *IJMES* 6 : 94-114.
- SHAW, S.J. (1976), *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey: Vol I. Empire of the Gazis: The rise and decline of the Ottoman Empire 1280-1808*. Cambridge University Press.
- SHAW, S.J. & SHAW, E.K. (1977), *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey: Vol II. The rise of modern Turkey 1808-1975*. Cambridge University Press.
- ŞİLOPİ, Z. (1969), *Doza Kürdüstan. Kürt milletinin 60 senedenberi esaretten kurtuluş savaşı hatıratı* (The trail of Kurdistan. Memoirs from 60 years' struggle of the Kurdish nation for liberation from slavery). Beyrouth.
- ŞIVAN, Dr. (1975), *Irak Kürt halk hareketi ve baas ırkçılığı* (The popular movement of the Kurds of Iraq and the racism of the Baath). Ankara: Komal.
- SLUGLETT, P. (1976), *Britain in Iraq 1914-1932*. London: Ithaca Press.
- SNOUCK HURGRONJE, C. (1901), "Le Khalifat du Sultan de Constantinople", *Verspreide Geschriften*, vol III : 207-216.
- SNOUCK HURGRONJE, C. (1923), "De betekenis van het chalifaat" ("The meaning of the caliphate"), *Verspreide Geschriften*, vol III : 363-375.
- SOANE, E.B. (1912, 1926), *To Mesopotamia and Kurdistan in disguise*. London. (references are to the 2nd impression, 1926)
- SOANE, E.B. (1921), "A short anthology of Gurani poetry", *JRAS*, Jan. 1921 : 57-81.
- SOHRWEIDE, H. (1965), "Der Sieg der Safawiden in Persien und seine Rückwirkungen auf die Schiiten Anatoliens im 16. Jahrhundert", *Der Islam* 41 : 95-223.
- SOUTHGATE, Rev. H. (1840), *Narrative of a tour through Armenia, Kurdistan, Persia, and Mesopotamia, ... 2 vols*. London: Tilt & Bogue / New York: Appleton & Co.
- SUBHAN, J.A. (1970), *Sufism. Its saints and shrines*. New York: S.Weiser. (reprint after the original 1938 edition).
- SÜMER, F. (1976), *Safevi devletinin kuruluşu ve gelişmesinde Anadolu Türklerin rolü* (The role of the Anatolian Turks in the establishment and development of the Safavid state). Ankara: Selçuklu Tarih ve Medeniyeti Enstitüsü Yayınları.
- SYKES, M. (1908), "The Kurdish tribes of the Ottoman Empire", *Journal of the Anthropological Institute* 38 : 451-486.

- TAPPER, R. (1974), "Shāhsevan in Šafavid Persia", BSOAS 37 : 321-354.
- TAVERNIER, J.-B. (1679), Les six voyages de J.-B. Tavernier, écuyer baron d'Aubonne, en Turquie, en Perse et aux Indes. Première partie. Paris 1679.
- TAYLOR, J.G. (1865), "Travels in Kurdistan, with notices of the sources of the eastern and western Tigris, and ancient ruins in their neighbourhood", JRGS 35 : 21-58.
- TOYNBEE, A.J. (1927), Survey of International Affairs 1925. Vol I : The Islamic world since the peace settlement. Oxford University Press.
- TRIMMINGHAM, J.S. (1971), The Sufi orders in Islam. Oxford University Press.
- TROWBRIDGE, S. van Rensselaer (1909), "The Alevis, or deifiers of Ali", Harvard Theological Review 1909, II : 340-353.
- TURAN, O. (1973), Doğu Anadolu Türk devletleri tarihi (History of the Turkish states of eastern Anatolia). Istanbul.
- VANLI, I.Ch. (1970), Le Kurdistan irakien: entité nationale. Etude de la révolution de 1961. Neuchâtel: Editions de la Baconnière.
- VANLY, I.Ch. (n.d.), Survey of the national question of Turkish Kurdistan with historical background. (Published by Hevra, organization of revolutionary Kurds of Turkey in Europe, Zürich).
- VAN ROOY, S. & TAMBOER, K. (1968), I.S.K.'s Kurdish bibliography nr 1. 2 vols. Amsterdam.
- VON HAMMER, J. (1815), Des osmanischen Reiches Staatsverfassung und Staatsverwaltung. 2 vols. Wien.
- VON HAMMER, J. (1827-1835), Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches, grossenteils aus bisher unbenützten Handschriften und Archiven. 10 vols. Pesth.
- VON MOLTKE, H. (1882), Briefe über Zustände und Begebenheiten in der Türkei aus den Jahren 1835 bis 1839. Berlin. (references are to this, the 4th, edition)
- VON TISCHENDORF, P.A. (1872), Das Lehnswesen in den moslemischen Staaten, insbesondere im osmanischen Reiche. Leipzig.
- WAHBY, Col. T. (1964), "The origins of the Kurds and their language", lecture presented to KSSE- UK branch, Dec. 22, 1964, and published in: Kurdistan, nrs IX and X.
- WERTHEIM, W.F. (1971), Evolutie en revolutie. De golfslag der emancipatie (Evolution and revolution. The undulation of emancipation). Amsterdam : Van Genneep.
- WILSON, A.T. (1931), Mesopotamia 1917-1920. A clash of loyalties. Oxford University Press.
- WOLF, E.R. (1966), Peasants. Prentice-Hall.
- WOLF, E.R. (1969a), "On peasant rebellions", International Social Science Journal 21. Reprinted in: T. Shanin (ed), Peasants and peasant societies. Penguin Books, 1971.
- WOLF, E.R. (1969b), Peasant wars of the twentieth century. New York: Harper & Row.

YASEMI, R. (n.d.), Kord wa paywastegî-yi nezhādî wa târîkhî-yi ò
(The Kurd and his racial and historical connections).
Tehran.

YOHANNAN, A. (1916), The death of a nation, or the ever persecuted
Nestorians or Assyrian christians. New York & London:
G.P. Putnam's Sons.

ZEHRA, M. Ebu (1970), İslamda siyasi ve itikadi mezhepler tarihi
(History of the schools of political and confessional
thought). Istanbul: Yağmur yayinevi.

I N D E X

- ahl-e haqq religion 32, 53/4, 129, 130, 133, 250, 427/8, 430, 431, 432
- alevi sect 32, 131, 359, 374/5, 384, 399, 432
- Aqqoyunlu, Turkish dynasty 161ff., 165, 173, 176, 186
- Ararat rebellion 116, 354, 382, 393/4, 406
- Armenians 26, 33/4, 119, 138, 139, 157, 193, 197, 202, 207/8, 225, 234f., 238f., 360, 362/3, 366, 371, 376, 439
- Armenian massacres 238f., 362/3
- Assyrians (see also Nestorians) 33, 138, 174, 225
- Atatürk 333, 365ff., 375/6, 379, 390
- Axlat 196, 201
- Azadi, Kurdish nationalist organization 239, 376ff., 394, 446/7
- Baban emirate 118, 125, 208ff
- Badinan (Behdinan), emirate 71, 292
- Balik, tr. 48, 82, 89-91
- Bamerni, shaikhs of 260, 293, 335/7, 413
- Barzan, shaikhs of 260, 292/3, 311, 312, 314, 315, 330/1, 346/7, 439
- Barzani, Mela Mistefa 2f., 19, 35ff., 75, 249, 251, 347/8, 420, 426, 443
- Bedirxan family 256, 369, 371, 380, 447
- Bedr Xan Beg 222ff., 291, 437/8
- beglerbegi 182
- Bekiran, tr. 44
- Berzenof shaikhs 270f., 277ff., 281, 293, 341/3
- Bilbasi, tribal confederation 199, 200ff., 436
- Bitlis, emirate 162, 191, 195ff.
- Botan, emirate (see also Cezîre) 222ff.
- Bradost, tribe/emirate 315
- Caf, tr. 49f., 136, 211, 279, 426, 432, 441
- Cemil Paşa, family of 370, 381, 400
- Cezîre, northern 84ff., 102ff.
- Cezîre, town and emirate (see also Botan) 167f., 173
- Cibran, tr. 121, 384, 397/8, 399
- Çekni, tr. 216f.
- Çemişkezek, tr./emirate 149, 165, 179-180, 215-219, 397, 435
- Çoxsor, confederation of tribes 223f., 236
- Dailamites, Iranian people 126ff., 131, 156
- Dajjal ("Antichrist") 253/4, 332
- Dersim, district 131, 394, 431
- Diyar Bekr, province 165, 169, 177, 189, 192
- Dizeyf, tr. 99-101, 118, 142, 232
- Dumbili, tr. 176
- Dûrikan, tr. 103ff., 115
- Ehsan Nûri (Paşa) 382, 393, 395
- Elîkê Bettê 112/4
- Erdelan, emirate 122, 126, 431
- Evliya Chelebi 12/3, 191f., 195f.
- Gıravf, tr. 46, 118, 141, 426
- ghawth 251, 439
- Goyan, tr. 48, 60
- Gûran, ethnic group, confederation of tribes 122ff., 431
- Gûrani language 30, 123, 131f., 430
- gypsy-like groups 140f.
- Hacı Beyran, confederation of tribes 223f.
- Hacı Mûsa Beg 381, 382, 445
- Haco 112ff., 409, 410
- Hamidiye 233-239, 377
- Hekari emirate 73/4, 162, 174-178, 200, 225
- Hemewend, tr. 97/8, 118, 261, 432
- Heqqe sect 312, 314, 327, 341, 440
- Hêvêrkan, confederation of tribes 103, 107, 110ff.
- Hewraman, district, tribal group 125ff., 130, 432
- Hêvî, Kurdish students' union 370, 374
- Hîskeyf, emirate 162, 172ff., 195
- hûkumet (Kûrd hûkumeti, autonomous emirate) 190ff.
- Ibrahîm Paşa, chieftain of Milan tr. 50f., 237/8, 439
- İdrîs Bitlîf, historian and diplomat 169f., 189, 193
- iltizam (tax-farming system) 188/9
- Iraqi Kurdistan, nationalist movement in 2f., 10f., 34f., 93, 100, 125, 336/7, 426
- Jacobites see: Sûriyanî
- Janissaries 189, 205
- jîziye 180, 186, 188, 203, 435, 437
- Kakaf sect 32, 132
- Kemal, Mustafa see: Atatürk
- keramet 267
- Keywanlû, tr. 215, 219
- khalifa 266, 313/4
- kharaç 186, 203, 437
- khatma 305ff.
- kîxa (çûxa) 91, 92
- Kor Huseyn Paşa (chieftain of Heyderan tr.) 380, 381
- Kripçîne, shaikhs of 296, 315, 343
- Kurmançî dialect 31, 215
- Kûrdistan Taalî Cemiyeti, nationalist organization 373, 446
- Kûrd Taalî Cemiyeti (Diyarbakir) 373, 375/6, 400
- Kûrd Terakîî ve Teavûn Cemiyeti, nationalist organization 369-370
- land registration (tapu) 99, 134, 109, 229-233
- Mahdi ("Messiah") 253/4, 327/5, 439/40

Mameş, tr. 45, 47, 48, 96, 429
 Mehmedî, tr. 176, 178
 Mengür, tr. 45, 47, 92/4, 429
 Merwanid dynasty 156-160, 433
 Mewlana Khalid 282ff., 290, 441/2
 Milan, tr. 50/1, 237/8, 381
 militias 193/4, 215/9, 233/9
 miskên 97f., 100, 118ff., 261
 Milan, tr. 50.
 Miran, tr. 55, 224, 227, 235/6, 240, 429, 437, 438
 Mirî Kor (Mihemed Paşa of Riwandiz) 71, 221, 157, 291, 442
 Modkan / Modkî, tr. and district 63, 65, 199, 393
 Mosul question 279, 366, 368/9
 Muks, district 225
 Mûkrî, tr. 72f.
 Mûş, town and district 196, 201
 müftî 182, 205/6, 257
 mültezim (tax-farmer) 188
 Naqshbandî order 258, 259ff., 281ff., 305-313, 401-404
 nation 134f., 358-360
 nationalism Ch V, passim
 nationalist war in Iraqi Kurdistan 2f., 10f., 34f., 93, 100, 125, 336/7, 426
 nestorians (see also Assyrians) 33/4, 119, 174f., 226f., 291
 nestorian massacres 227, 291
 nurou, nurouluk 313, 325, 338-340, 444
 Nûrşîn, shaikhs of 351/2, 402
 ojaqliq 190ff.
 Omeryan, tr. 41, 47, 48, 75, 81
 Pazûkî, tr. 201/2
 peasant movements 77, 93, 96, 100, 319, 336/7, 429
 Pijder, tr. 94/7, 210, 429
 qadî 181, 205/6, 257
 Qadiri order 255, 258ff., 269-305
 Qaraqoyunlu, Turkish dynasty 161ff., 176
 Qassem government 93, 96, 261, 319, 336
 Qewalîsf, confederation of tribes 199, 200/1, 436
 Qizilbash 164ff., 174, 179, 180, 216
 qul ("slave") 185, 189
 rabite şex 306, 309ff.
 Reşkotan, tr. 44, 398
 retainers, retinue 92, 94, 207, 212, 225
 reyet 118ff., 151, 185, 435
 Rifa'i order 273/4, 440/1
 Riwandiz see: Mirî Kor
 Rojekî, confederation of tribes 197ff.
 Sadatê Nehri 270, 283, 292, 314, 345ff.
 sanjaqbegî 182

Seidî Kurdî 338-340, 369, 444
 seyids 254/5
 Seyyid Ebdulqadir 345, 369ff., 373, 381, 446/7
 Sharafname 12, 192, 195f.
 silsila 265, 266, 270f.
 sipahi 142, 151, 132ff., 182
 Soranî dialect 30
 Sûriyanî (jacobite christians) 33, 107/8, 139, 158, 168, 172, 202, 325
 Şadlû, tr. 55, 215, 219f.
 Şehrîzor, district 123, 130, 192, 212
 Şerîf Paşa, Mihemed 369, 372/3
 Şex Baba Seid (see also: Xewsabad) 296, 343
 Şex Ebdullah (of Melekan) 385, 388, 398, 403
 Şex Mehmed Berzencî 76, 95, 278/9, 294, 441
 Şex Osman (of Durû) 305f., 313, 319ff., 349, 412
 Şex Saîda 324/7, 350
 Şex Seid 114, 259, 284, 332, 349; Chapter V, passim
 Şex Şerîf (of Gokdere) 385, 389, 399, 403/4
 Şex Ubeydullah 234, 284, 292, 294, 328/9, 345, 347, 353/4, 358
 Şillet, confederation of tribes 223f., 236
 Şirnex, town and district 140, 141, 224, 227, 381, 415/8
 Talebanî, Celal 36/7, 249, 270, 426, 443
 Talebanî shaikhs 270, 280/1, 285
 Teşkilat-i İqtima'iyye, Kurdish nationalist organization 374, 446
 Teyyan, tr. 44f., 437, 438
 tithe 89, 185
 timar 183, 191, 204
 Tiyarî district 226
 tobê 317, 383
 vaqf 184, 203/4
 Xalid Beg (Cibran) 371, 378, 381, 388
 Xalid Beg (Hesenan) 380, 381
 Xizan, shaikhs of 318, 338, 350, 402, 439, 444
 Xormek, tr. 121, 139f., 384, 390, 399
 Xoybûn, Kurdish nationalist organization 116, 335, 393/4
 Xewsabad, shaikhs of 296, 315, 342/3
 yezidis, yezidism 32/3, 132/3, 194, 359, 426
 Young Turks 238, 338, 361/3
 Yusuf Ziya Beg 377, 382, 388
 Zaza language 30, 32, 123, 131f., 141, 397, 426, 431
 zeamet 183, 191, 204
 Ze'firanlû, tr. 55, 215, 219
 zekat 89, 187, 429, 436
 Zibari, tr. 292/3, 348

BEKNOPTE SAMENVATTING
(Short summary in Dutch)

De Koerden zijn een islamitisch volk van overwegend boeren. Met hun aantal van ca. 14 miljoen zijn zij een van de grootste volkeren van het Midden Oosten. Koerdistan, hun woongebied, is verdeeld over Turkije, Iran, Iraq en Syrië, met enkele uitlopers in de Sovjet Unie. In al deze landen voelen de Koerden zich als volk gediscrimineerd, achtergesteld en onderdrukt. Een aanzienlijk deel van de Koerden, kleine boeren en landloze arbeiders, wordt bovendien economisch uitgebuit door grootgrondbezitters, woekeraars en handelaren. Mechanisering van de landbouw en opnemingen in het wereldhandelssysteem hebben de tegenstellingen tussen bezitters en bezitslozen verscherpt. Gedurende de laatste eeuw heeft een groot aantal opstanden met een nationalistisch karakter plaats gehad in Koerdistan, en in de laatste halve eeuw zijn (arme) boeren ook enkele malen tegen de grootgrondbezitters opgestaan, soms zelfs met geweld. Beide soorten emancipatiebewegingen werden en worden echter voortdurend doorkruist doordat de loyaliteit van veel Koerden jegens een stamhoofd of een religieus leider in crisissituaties sterker blijkt dan de gevoelens van solidariteit gebaseerd op abstractere begrippen als natie of klasse. Dat soort oer-loyaliteiten leidt een taai leven: wel veranderen zij onder invloed van uitwendige factoren, maar verdwijnen doen zij niet geheel. Op hun beurt beïnvloeden zij ook weer de aard van nationalisme en klassebewustzijn. Dit boek gaat voornamelijk over deze oer-loyaliteiten, of liever, over de groepen en typen leiders die in het brandpunt ervan staan.

Allereerst zijn daar de stam en het stamhoofd. Niet alle Koerden zijn in stammen georganiseerd. In bepaalde gebieden leven tribale (tot stammen behorende) en niet-tribale Koerden als gescheiden kasten naast elkaar. De tribale Koerden vormen de (sociale) bovenlaag, de niet-tribale verkeren vaak in een positie van horigheid aan een stamhoofd of stamleden. Vroeger, toen veel meer stammen dan nu nog nomadisch of half-nomadisch waren, was het verschil tussen beide groepen duidelijker. De vaak geopperde veronderstelling dat de tribale Koerden de "echte" Koerden zouden zijn, die als nomadische stammen een reeds aanwezige boerenbevolking onderworpen en verkoerdicht hebben, is in haar algemeenheid zeker niet juist. In de loop van de tijd zijn veel niet-tribale Koerden tribaal geworden en omgekeerd; oude stammen verdwenen, terwijl nieuwe als uit het niet ontstonden. In theorie bestaat een stam uit de nakomelingen van één, of een beperkt aantal, gemeenschappelijke voorouders; in de praktijk klopt daar vaak niet veel van. Iedere stam bevat ook mensen van "vreemde" oorsprong die zich daar later bij gevoegd hebben - vaak als aanhangers van een of ander groot leider van die stam. Toch voelen zij zich als door een soort verwantschap met de stam verbonden. Het tot de zelfde stam behoren geeft de leden een onderlinge solidariteit en zet hen apart van andere stammen en van de niet-tribale Koerden. Die solidariteit geldt overigens niet alle stamgenoten in dezelfde

mate. Iedere stam bestaat uit een aantal deelstammen, die elk op hun beurt weer uit een aantal kleinere eenheden bestaan, enz. Op hoe lager niveau men komt, d.w.z. hoe kleiner de groepen zijn, des te sterker deze geledingen van de stam op "zuivere" afstammingsgroepen gelijken; de geleding is langs lijnen van bloedverwantschap. Op "hoger" niveau (dat van deelstammen, of van de ordening van stammen in confederaties) spelen politieke factoren, vooral het volgen van een bepaald leider, een belangrijker rol. De gelede structuur van de stam is een van zijn belangrijkste kenmerken (voor een meer volledige opsomming van kenmerken die in hoofdstuk II aan de orde kwamen, zie pag. 145 e.v.). Deze structuur komt vooral tot uiting in conflicten. Als belangrijkste voorbeeld van zulke conflicten is de bloedvete uitvoerig behandeld (pag. 59-69). Typerend is dat het bij zulke conflicten nooit gaat tussen individuen, maar tussen groepen. Bij een conflict binnen de stam komen dus steeds twee deelgroepen (van hetzelfde niveau van geleding) tegenover elkaar te staan. Zulke conflicten kunnen alleen worden bijgelegd wanneer er tussen beide partijen bemiddeld wordt. Daartoe is iemand nodig wiens gezag door beide erkend wordt; hij kan uiteraard niet zelf tot een van beide behoren. Om deze reden is het begrijpelijk dat zoveel stammen, vooral de grotere, stamhoofden hebben die van andere herkomst zijn dan de gewone leden (zoals vele Europese vorstenhuizen ook van vreemde herkomst waren). Sinds de macht van de werkelijk grote stamhoofden door de staat beknut is (en daarmee ook de grote stammen in feite uiteenvielen), zijn het veelal sjechs, religieuze leiders, buiten de stamstructuur staand, die in conflicten een bemiddelende rol spelen. Sommige van deze sjechs genoten of genieten een bijna afgodische verering van de kant van de eenvoudige religieus denkende Koerden, wat hen in staat stelde belangrijke politieke rollen te spelen in de geschiedenis van Koerdistan vanaf het midden van de vorige eeuw.

In verband met de machtspositie van stamhoofden en sjechs is het verleidelijk te spreken van "traditioneel" gezag, als tegenhanger van het "moderne" gezag dat door de staat (of de nationalistische beweging) uitgeoefend wordt. Die term is echter misleidend. Zoals op zoveel andere plaatsen werden stamhoofden in Koerdistan machtiger doordat (omringende) staten macht aan hen delegerden. Evenzo is de politieke machtspositie die sjechs bekleedden en bekleden een gevolg van sociale en politieke ontwikkelingen in de 19^e eeuw. Zo traditioneel zijn die machtsposities dus niet. In hoofdstuk III laat ik zien dat ook de stam zelf niet zomaar een geleidelijk afstervend overblijfsel uit het verleden is, maar dat de stammen zoals die nu bestaan hun huidige karakter hebben gekregen als gevolg van een eeuwenlang contact met omringende staten. Rond 1500 waren stammen niet de belangrijkste sociale eenheden, maar waren ze verenigd in Koerdische vorstendommen (emiraten), onder heersershuizen die prat gingen op soms eeuwenlange voorgeschiedenis. In het begin van de 16^e eeuw onderwierpen de meeste van deze Koerdische emiraten zich aan het toen machtige en snel groeiende Osmaanse ("Turkse") Rijk (dat overigens zelf was voortgekomen uit een soortgelijk, Turks, emiraat). In ruil voor betaling van belasting en deelname van gewapende Koerden aan de veldtochten van de sultans verkregen de Koerdische

heersers (mîrs) erkenning van hun positie, wat deze consolideerde. Het geval van Bitlîs (in detail beschreven op pag. 195-208) maakt duidelijk hoe groot de onafhankelijkheid ten opzichte van het Osmaanse Rijk bleef. De emiraten waren eigenlijk meer vazalstaten dan provincies van het Rijk. Pas in de 19^e eeuw kwam daar een eind aan, toen de sultans - op aandrang vanuit Europa - een beleid van centralisering begonnen uit te voeren. De mîrs werden afgezet en verbannen; de emiraten vielen spoedig uiteen in elkaar bevechtende stammen en stammetjes, aangevoerd door stamhoofden en aspirant-stamhoofden die allemaal probeerden zoveel mogelijk van het ontstane machtsvacuum op te vullen. De ambtelijke hiërarchie van het Osmaanse Rijk werd geleidelijk uitgebreid, ook in Koerdistan. Steeds meer macht werd direct door ambtelijke gouverneurs uitgeoefend, steeds minder werd gedelegeerd aan Koerdische leiders. Bovendien waren het leiders van steeds lager niveau die in contact kwamen met overheidsvertegenwoordigers (en daar plaatselijke macht aan konden ontlenuen). Het gevolg was dat stammen niet verdwenen, maar veranderden. Grote stammen treden nooit meer als een eenheid op, en de leiders die het sterkst kunnen rekenen op steun van hun stamgenoten zijn die van kleine stammen of van deelstammen (de typische Koerdische autoriteit van nu is de dorps-*agha*). In de laatste 4 eeuwen zijn de Koerdische stammen aldus onder invloed van contact met het Osmaanse Rijk (en zijn opvolgers Turkije, Iraq en Syrie) voortdurend kleiner en minder gecompliceerd geworden; ze hebben a.h.w. de evolutionaire ladder in omgekeerde volgorde doorlopen.

Een ander gevolg van het verval van de emiraten was de snelle opkomst van sjechs als politieke leiders. Er waren altijd wel sjechs geweest, gerespecteerde vrome mannen met een reputatie van heiligheid, die met één been in de mystiek stonden en vaak met het andere in kwakzalverij. Pas toen de mîrs verdwenen waren echter, traden sjechs ook als politieke leiders op de voorgrond: ze waren toen de enige autoriteiten wier gezag door meer dan één stam erkend werd. In het geleidelijk ontwakende Koerdisch nationalisme hebben sjechs daardoor een belangrijke rol gespeeld. Van belang is dat de sjechs leidende posities innemen in de derwisj- of soefi-ordes. In hoofdstuk IV worden de geschiedenis en de rituelen van de twee in Koerdistan aanwezige ordes (Qadiri en Naqsjbandi) behandeld. Regeringen hebben - het meest radicaal in Turkije onder Atatürk - geprobeerd het gezag van deze sjechs te breken, maar die pogingen zijn tot dusver maar zeer ten dele succesvol geweest. Vooral in de economisch minst ontwikkelde delen van Koerdistan, waar bovendien stamconflicten nog veel voorkomen, is hun greep op de bevolking nog zeer stevig. Vanuit diverse Koerdische kiesdistricten werden sjechs in het parlement van Turkije gekozen.

Hoofdstuk V behandelt een van de eerste grote nationalistische opstanden, die in 1925 in Turks Koerdistan plaats vond en geleid (of beter: gecoördineerd) werd door Sjech Sa'id (Şêx Seîd). De motivatie van de meeste deelnemers (allen uit een betrekkelijk beperkt gebied ten noordoosten van Diyarbekir) was een mengsel van religieuze verontwaardiging over de seculariseringsmaatregelen die Atatürk in Turkije invoerde, protest tegen meer regeringsinmenging in zaken op

plaatselijk niveau, een bijna blinde gehoorzaamheid aan de eigen stamhoofden, en tenslotte werkelijk nationalistische gevoelens. De laatste waren in belangrijke mate ontstaan als reactie op de reeds begonen discriminatie tegen de Koerden. In deze opstand traden de Koerden op in stam-eenheden (als stammen of deelstammen), onder de eigen stamleiders. Grotere acties, waaraan meer dan een stam deelnam, werden gecoördineerd door een van de sjechs (er was een tiental sjechs, allen uit hetzelfde gebied, bij de opstand betrokken). De algehele coördinatie en leiding van de opstand was in handen van Sjech Sa'id, geassisteerd door een comité van enkele stamhoofden. Het was de deelname van sjechs die een gezamenlijk optreden van de vele kleine stammen van dit gebied mogelijk maakte.

In hoofdstuk VI tenslotte tast ik voorzichtig naar antwoorden op de vraag onder welke omstandigheden de oer-loyaliteiten jegens stamhoofden of sjechs worden doorbroken en plaats maken voor een minder particularistische opstelling (nationalistisch of op basis van klasse). Verscherping van de economische uitbuiting door het stamhoofd of de sjech blijkt op zich niet voldoende voor de uitgebuite volgelingen om een eind aan die loyaliteit te maken; wel lijkt het een noodzakelijke voorwaarde. In de behandelde gevallen waar nationalisme of klasse-saamhorigheid sterker bleken dan de loyaliteit jegens de "traditionele" autoriteiten, waren steeds externe factoren aan te wijzen als (mede-)bepalend.

Curriculum vitae

Martin van Bruinessen was born at Schoonhoven on July 10, 1946. Secondary education (gymnasium) at the Christelijk Lyceum, Gouda. In 1964 he enrolled at the State University of Utrecht, where he studied mathematics and physics, since 1966 also social anthropology. In 1971 he took his master's degree ("doctoraalexamen") in theoretical physics, cum laude. Previously, in 1970, he had taken a "candidaats" degree in anthropology. From 1971 to 1973 he taught mathematics at a secondary school in Utrecht, then travelled a little. The research for this thesis was carried out from mid-1974 to mid-1976, as a research fellow of the Netherlands Organization for the Advancement of Pure Research (Z.W.O.).

Vertical line of text on the right edge of the page, possibly a page number or margin indicator.