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THE KURDISH TRIBES IN THE OTTOMAN-IRANIAN RELATIONS (1876-1914)

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ABSTRACT

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Throughout history, tribes and border disputes have played pivotal roles in shaping the relations between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. It is important to highlight that the Kurdish tribes have consistently been at the forefront of the struggle for influence and border issues between these neighbouring Islamic states. The challenges stemming from Kurdish tribes within Ottoman-Iranian relations started to escalate in the mid-19th century. The sectarian policies pursued by both states significantly contributed to exacerbating these problems and intensifying the power struggle. Meanwhile, the involvement of England and Russia, deeply invested in the region, further internationalized the border and tribal disputes between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. From the late 19th century, as efforts to define the border between the Ottoman Empire and Iran intensified, the Kurdish tribes started playing an increasing role in the border disputes between the two powers. With the accession of Sultan Abdulhamid II, a new phase in Kurdish society began in which the Tariqa sheikhs gained a tremendous political position. The most prominent of them was Sheikh Ubeidullah Nehri, who managed to unite many Kurdish tribes under a common political goal after the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878. He revolted first around Amedi against the Ottoman local authorities and then, with the help of Iranian Kurdish tribes, briefly took control of most of the Kurdish regions of the Azerbaijan province and parts of the Kurdistan province of Iran. The rebellion of Sheikh Ubeidullah Nehri resulted in massive casualties and led to a political and diplomatic crisis between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. While the Iranians held the Ottoman Empire responsible for the Kurdish tribes' attacks on Iran, the Sublime Porte blamed the Iranian treatment of the Kurds for the uprising. However, eventually, both countries cooperated to end the rebellion and Sheikh Ubeidullah was exiled to Madinah by the Ottoman Empire.

Along with the uprising of Sheikh Ubeidullah, the nomadic Kurdish tribes in the regions of Sulaymaniyah-Sinna and Khanaqin-Kermanshah, due to their seasonal migration, refuge, and ambivalent allegiance, became the source of many political and security problems between the two states. The most important of these tribes were the Jaf, Hamawand, and Sanjabi tribes. The Jaf, while being an Ottoman tribe, were migrating each year for their summering pastures in Iranian territories, which caused protests from Iranian officials. Although Ottoman authorities constantly tried to resettle the tribe, they continued to move between the two states until the years following World War I. Meanwhile, the Hamawand tribe, which is known as a rebel tribe, was a threat to trade convoys in Kermanshah, Sulaymaniyah, and Kirkuk. Eventually, with the help of both states, their tribal chiefs were killed or imprisoned, and tribal members were exiled. After the expulsion of the Hamawands from the border areas between Kermanshah and Khanaqin, the Sanjabi tribe, which was an Iranian subject, became very dominant until they were made governors of Qasr-i Shirin by Iran. The appointment of the Sanjabi tribe as border guards in Qasr-i Shirin coincided with the discovery of oil in the area, whose ownership had not yet been decided between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. Later, during the border demarcation, this tribe, along with other tribes in Kermanshah, helped with Iran's ownership over their region.

The prolonged tribal conflict, the unclear borderline, the Ottoman's pan-Islamism policy, and political instability inside Iran between 1905 and 1912 led to the occupation of most of the Kurdish regions of Azerbaijan province and several parts of Kurdistan province by the Ottomans. In conducting this task, the Ottoman Empire relied on the Hamidiye Cavalry regiments, Sheikh Sadiq, the son of Sheikh Ubeidullah Nehri, and the Kurdish tribes who were dissatisfied with the Iranian ruling manner in the Kurdish regions of Azerbaijan and Kurdistan provinces. During their seven-year stay in these areas, the Ottomans were able to attract the support of most Kurdish tribes. In addition to that, after consolidating their power in the Kurdish regions of Iran, the Ottomans claimed that all Sunni Kurdish areas of Iran were historically part of the Ottoman Empire. However, in 1912-1913, Ottomans finally withdrew from what became later Iranian territories and the two states agreed to define the borderline and resolve the border disputes between them.

Keywords: Ottoman Empire, Iran, Kurdish Tribes, Sheikh Ubeidullah, Border Demarcation.

ÖZ

OSMANLI-İRAN İLİŞKİLERİNDE KÜRT AŞİRETLERİ (1876-1914)

SAMAN FATAH

Tarih boyunca Osmanlı-İran ilişkilerinde aşiretler ve sınır tartışmaları belirleyici bir unsur olmuştur. İki komşu İslam devleti arasındaki nüfuz mücadelesi ve sınır sorunlarında Kürt aşiretlerin daima birincil gündem olması ise dikkati çekmektedir. Osmanlı-İran ilişkilerinde Kürt aşiretlerinden kaynaklı sorunlar 19. yüzyılın ortalarından itibaren yoğunlaşmaya başlamıştır. Bu sorunların derinleşmesinde ve mücadelenin şiddetlenmesinde her iki devletin mezhep politikaları da etkili olmuştur. Osmanlı ile İran arasındaki sınır ve aşiret sorunları, bölge ile yakından ilgilenen İngiltere ve Rusya'nın da denkleme dahil olmasıyla uluslararası bir mahiyet kazanmıştır. Kürt aşiretleri ve sınır sorunları Osmanlı tahtına Sultan II. Abdülhamid'in çıkması ve ardından 1877-1878 Osmanlı-Rus Harbi'nde Osmanlı'nın ağır bir yenilgi almasıyla farklı bir mecraya yönelmiştir. Savaş ardından imzalanan 1878 Berlin Antlaşması'na göre Kürt aşiretleri sorunu ile Ermeni sorunu içiçe girmiştir. Bu sürecin diğer bir önemli gelişmesi ise 1879-1880 yıllarında Osmanlı vatandaşı olan Şeyh Ubeydullah'ın ilk kez birçok Kürt aşiretini ortak bir siyasi amaç altında birleştirme çalışmalarıdır. Şeyh Ubeydullah önce günümüzde Irak sınırlarında olan İmadiye (Amedi) şehri civarında Osmanlı idaresine isyan etmeye kalkıştıysa da başarılı olamamıştır. Ardından İran, Kürt aşiretlerinin yardımıyla kısa sürede Azerbaycan'ın Kürt bölgelerinin çoğunu kontrolü altına almıştır.

Şeyh Ubeydullah ayaklanması Osmanlı ile İran arasında siyasi ve diplomatik bir krize sebep olmuştur. İranlı Devlet adamları, Kürt aşiretlerinin İran'a yönelik saldırılarından Osmanlı'yı mesul tutarken, Osmanlılar da Şeyh Ubeydullah'ın ayaklanmasından İranlıların Kürtlere yönelik muamelesini sorumlu tutmuştur. Bâbıali, başlangıçta isyana karşı sert bir tavır almasa da İran'ın Rusya ve İngiltere'nin arabuluculuk desteği ile Osmanlı üzerindeki baskıları artırması üzerine

durum değişmiştir. Nitekim II. Abdülhamid, Şeyh Ubeydullah'ı Medine'ye sürgüne göndermiştir. Şeyh Ubeydullah'ın sürgün edilmesinden sonra Bâbıali, Sünni Kürtlere karşı daha yumuşak bir politika izlemeye başlamıştır.

Şeyh Ubeydullah'ın isyanı sırasında ve sonraki yıllarda Kürt aşiretlerden kaynaklı Osmanlı-İran mücadelesi farklı alanlara yayılmıştır. Şöyleki Süleymaniye-Sine (Senendec), Hanekin-Kirmanşah bölgeleri arasında, yaylak kışlak, sığınma ve hakimiyetin belirsizliği nedeniyle, Caf, Hemevend ve Sencabi gibi göçebe Kürt aşiretleri, iki devlet arasında birçok siyasi anlaşmazlığa sebep olmaya başlamıştır. Bu süreçte Osmanlı'ya bağlı Kürt aşiretlerinden olan Caf, Osmanlı-İran sınırında geniş bir bölgeye yayılmıştı. Bu aşiretin her yıl kış aylarını Osmanlı topraklarında geçirmesi ve yazın İran yaylalarına taşınması, İranlı yetkililerin protestolarına neden olmaktaydı. İranlılar, Osmanlılardan Caf kabilesinin kendi sınırlarına geçişinin engellemelerini talep ederken, bir yandan da kabileyi daimi olarak kendilerine çekmeye çalışmaktaydılar. Osmanlı yetkilileri ise bu büyük aşireti iskân etmeye çalışmış iseler de sorun I. Dünya Savaşı yıllarına kadar devam etmiştir.

Osmanlı-İran sınır sorunlarında Hemevend aşireti hem İran hem de Osmanlı tarafı için zarar oluşturuyordu. Bu aşiret Kirmanşah, Süleymaniye ve Kerkük'teki Osmanlı ve İran ticaret konvoylarına tehdit oluşturmuştu. Hemevend aşiretini kontrol altına alabilmek için iki ülke birlikte tedbir almıştır. Sonunda Osmanlı-İran ortaklığı ile aşiret reisleri öldürülmüş, hapsedilmiş veya sürgüne gönderilmiştir. Hemevendlerin Kirmanşah ve Hanekin arasındaki sınır bölgelerine sürgün edilmesinden sonra, İran destekli Sencabi aşireti Kasr-ı Şirin bölgesinde büyük nüfuz kazanmıştır. Hatta İran tarafından Kasr-ı Şirin sınır bölgesinin koruyucusu olarak atanmışlardır. Senjabi aşiretinin Kasr-i Şirin sınırında etkili olması, İran ile Osmanlı arasında mülkiyeti henüz kararlaştırılmamış olan bölgede İngilizler tarafından petrolün bulunmasıyla aynı zamana denk gelmiştir. Dolayısıyla bölgenin önemi artmış ve çatışmalar şiddetlenmiştir. Şii mezhepine yakınlığı bulanan Senjabi aşireti, daha sonraki yıllardaki sınır belirleme sürecinde İran'a destek olmuştur. Bu aşiret, mezhepleri Şiilere yakın oldukları için Kirmanşah'daki diğer aşiretlerle birlikte, Zahab bölgesinin İran mülkiyetine geçmesine yardımcı olmuştur.

Osmanlı-İran sınır boylarındaki uzun süreli Kürt aşiretleri çatışmaları, belirsiz sınır hatları, Osmanlı Devletinin Sultan II. Abdülhamid döneminde öne çıkardığı

İslam Birliği politikası ve 1905-1912 yılları arasında İran'daki iç siyasi istikrarsızlık, hem Azerbaycan Eyaletindeki Kürt bölgelerinin çoğunun, hem de İran'daki Kürdistan Eyaletinin birkaç bölgesinin Osmanlı tarafından ilhakını kolaylaştırmıştır. Osmanlıların bu bölgeleri ele geçirmesini kolaylaştıran etkenlerden arasında; Kürt Şikak aşireti reisi Cafer Ağa'nın Azerbaycan idarecisi tarafından öldürülmesi, Kürt Bağzade aşiretinin bir Amerikan misyonerinin öldürülmesi olayı nedeniyle İran makamları tarafından cezalandırılması, İran'ın hâlâ tartışmalı bölgelerde gümrük kapıları açması ve Mengor aşiret reisi Hamza Ağa'nın Osmanlı Devletine sığınması gibi etkenleri de saymak gerekir.

Osmanlı Devleti, günümüzde İran sınırlarında yer alan ele geçirdiği bu Kürt bölgelerini yönetebilmek ve elinde tutabilmek için Sultan II. Abdülhamnid döneminde kurulan Hamidiye Alaylarına, Şeyh Ubeydullah oğlu Şeyh Sadık'a ve İran yönetiminden memnun olmayan bölgedeki digger Kürt aşiretlerine bel bağlamıştı. Şurasını belirtmek gerekir ki Osmanlılar, Kürt bölgesinde kaldıkları yedi yıl boyunca çoğu Kürt aşiretinin desteğini almakta başarılı olmuşlardır.

Osmanlı'nın Kürt aşiretlerine yönelik uyguladığı bu ılımlı siyaset, hakimiyeti dışında kalan diğer bazı aşiretlerin de Osmanlı himayesine girme taleplerine yol açmıştır. Osmanlı Hükümeti, İran'ın Kürt bölgelerinde gücünü pekiştirdikten sonra bölgeye yönelik politikalarında değişikliğe gitmiştir. Babıali, iki ülke arasındaki tarihi anlaşmalara dayanarak, İran'ın bütün Sünni Kürt bölgelerinin Osmanlı'nın bir parçası olduğunu iddia etmeye başlamıştır. Fakat bu politkalarda kalıcı başarı sağlanamamıştır. Zira, Sultan II. Abdülhamid'in tahttan indirilmesi sonrası yaşanan iç karışıklıklar, ardından 1911 Tablusgarp ve 1912 Balkan Savaşları ile gündem tamamen değişmiştir. Hatta Osmanlı, İran'ın isteği üzerine 1912'de Rusya ve İngiltere'nin baskısıyla, 1905 öncesi sınırlara çekilmek zorunda kalmıştır. Azerbaycan Eyaleti'ndeki Kürt bölgelerinin Osmanlılar tarafından boşaltılmasından sonra, buradaki aşiretler tekrar İran'a bağlanmıştır. Ancak Azerbaycan'da Rus etkisinin artmasıyla İran'ın hakimiyeti zayıflamış ve bölgedeki Kürt milliyetçi hareketleri güçlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Osmanlı Devleti, İran, Kürt Aşiretleri, Sınır Sorunları, Şeyh Ubeydulla.

PREFACE

Kurdish regions spanned nearly two-thirds of the area that separated the Ottoman Empire from successive Iranian powers over four centuries. The border, which stretches from Ararat to Mandali, was the settlement and migration route of dozens of Kurdish tribes that played a significant role in shaping relations between the two states. This study attempts to understand the role and influence of the Kurdish tribes on the relation between the two states and the consequences of the border demarcation process between them on the one hand and the political conflict between the two states over the Kurdish tribes and their territories on the other hand in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The importance of this study lies in examining the events involved in creating and demarcating the borders that later separated the modern states of Turkey, Iran, and Iraq. During the period covered by this study, both states were finally trying to agree on a border that had remained unclear and unstable for centuries. However, since different parties, such as Iran, the Ottoman Empire, Kurds, and international players participated in creating and directing the events related to border disputes, studying this issue from only one perspective does not give us an accurate picture. Therefore, we have tried to view the position of the Kurdish tribes in the relations between the Ottoman Empire and Iran from different perspectives. In this regard, we examined archival sources, newspapers, memoirs, and historical sources of the Ottoman Empire, Iran, Kurds, and international parties such as Russia and Britain.

The current study consists of an introduction and five chapters. The introduction is a review of the historical events that help understand the nature of the conflict between the Ottoman Empire and Iran and the position of the Kurds in that conflict. The first chapter of the study discusses the most critical factors that were responsible for determining border divisions and political belongingness between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, including geographical, sectarian, and linguistic divisions . The most prominent Kurdish tribes along the border are also classified. Furthermore, the frontier and its effects on creating a specific lifestyle and consciousness among the Nomadic Kurdish tribes are discussed in this chapter. The second chapter is

devoted to the rebellion of Sheikh Ubeidullah Nehri, its causes, and its effects on Ottoman-Iranian relations. The third chapter is dedicated to investigating the role and influence of the tribes located in the areas between Sulaymaniyah, Sinna, Khanaqin, and Kermanshah. The fourth chapter deals with the political instability that occurred in the Kurdish regions of Azerbaijan in the early 20th century, which led the Ottoman Empire to occupy parts of these territories with the help of the Kurdish tribes between 1905 and 1912. Finally, the fifth chapter deals with the attempts of the Ottoman Empire to annex the Kurdish regions of Iran to the Ottoman Empire. This chapter assesses the Ottoman policy in the Kurdish areas of Iran and some issues, such as the petition for intervention ("*Dehalet*" in Turkish or "*Dakhalat*" in Persian) and citizenship between the two states. Moreover, the final agreement on the demarcation of the borders and the withdrawal of the Ottomans from the areas they had previously occupied was discussed.

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Saman Fatah

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ABBREVIATIONS

BOA.	:	Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi Başkanlığı
AE.SMHD.II.D.	:	Ali Emirî Tasnifi Belgeleri-Mahmud II
BEO.AYN.D.	:	Bab-ı Âlî Evrâk Odası Ayniyât Defterleri
BEO.	:	Bab-ı Âlî Evrâk Odası
İ.MMS.	:	İrade-i Meclis-i Mahsus
DH.MKT.	:	Dahiliye Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi
DH. ŞFR.	:	Dahiliye Şifre Kalemi
DH.TMIK.M.	:	Dahiliye Tesri-i Muamelat ve Islahat Komisyonu Muamelat Kısmı Belgeleri
HR.MKT.	:	Hariciye Mektubi Kalemi
HR.SYS.	:	Hariciye Nezareti Siyasi Kısım
HR.SFR.	:	Hariciye Şifre Kalemi
HR.TO.	:	Hariciye Tercüme Odası
HRT.H.	:	Haritalar
I.MVL.	:	İrade Meclis-i Vala
I.DH.	:	İrade-i Dahiliye
I.MMS.	:	İrade-i Meclis-i Mahsus
MVL.	:	Meclis-i Vala Riyaseti Belgeleri
MV.	:	Meclis-i Vükela Mazbataları
A.}MKT.UM.	:	Sadaret Mektubi KalemiUmum Vilayet
Y. EE.	:	Yıldız Esası Evrakı
Y.PRK.HR.	:	Yıldız Perakende Hariciye Nezareti Maruzatı
Y.PRK.PT.	:	Yıldız Perakende Posta ve Telgraf Nezareti Maruzatı
Y.PRK.TKM.	:	Yıldız Perakende Tahrirat-ı Ecnebiye ve Mabeyn Mütercimliği
Y.A.RES.	:	Yıldız Sadaret Resmi Maruzat Evrakı.
Y.A.HUS.	:	Yıldız Sarayı Arşivi Sadaret Hususi Maruzat Evrakı
Y.PRK.AZJ.	:	Yıldız Tasnifi Perakende Arzuhaller ve Jurnaller
Y.PRK.ASK.	:	Yıldız Tasnifi Perakende Evrakı Askeri Maruzat
Y.PRK.BŞK.	:	Yıldız Tasnifi Perakende Evrakı Başkitabeti

Y. PRK. BŞK.	:	Yıldız Tasnifi Perakende Evrakı Başkitabeti
Y.PRK.EŞA.	:	Yıldız Tasnifi Perakende Evrakı Elçilik ve Şehbenderlik Tahriratı
Y.PRK.MYD.	:	Yıldız Tasnifi Perakende Evrakı Yaveran ve Maiyyet-i Seniyye Erkan-ı Harbiye Dairesi
HCPP.	:	House of Commons Parliamentary Papers
BL.	:	British Library
w.date	:	Without date
w.place	:	Without place
p./pp.	:	Page/ pages
Ibid.	:	In the same place
op. cit.	:	The work cited
Passim.	:	Throughout
Infra.	:	Below
et al.,	:	And others
Ed. By	:	Edited by
Trans. By	:	Translated by

INTRODUCTION

From the outset of the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and successive Iranian powers, Kurdish tribes played a significant role in both provoking conflicts and facilitating peace between them. The Kurds play a crucial role between the two sides primarily because of their geographical distribution. They were divided across two-thirds of the border, separating Iran from the Ottoman Empire. This division turned the Kurds and their regions into a significant human and geographical barrier (and bridge) between the two states. To gain a deeper understanding, we need to examine the early history of the relationship between these neighboring states.

Following the Aq Qoyunlu's defeat by the Ottomans in 1473 in Anatolia, their rule was completely ended in 1501, by the founder of the Safavid state, Shah Ismail, who later established a state in Tabriz and made Shi'ism the official religious belief of his state.[1] Adopting Shi'ism by Shah Ismail brought about religious and sectarian excuses for the conflicts that occurred within the next four centuries between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, which led to 24 major wars. The appearance of Shah Ismail also caused significant changes in the Islamic world. He was able to take power over the whole of Iran in a short time and impose the Shiite sect of the twelve Imams on the areas under his rule. Although Kurds were not part of the wars that the Safavid state had with its internal enemies from the beginning of its emergence, the strategic location of the Kurdish regions as a bridge between Shah Ismail and his supporters in Anatolia made them a target for Safavids.[2] Apart from that, the Kurdish regions were of strategic and geographical importance, as they were the route of Shah Ismail to the Black and Mediterranean Seas. To achieve these goals, Shah Ismail had to subjugate the Kurdish tribes and emirates, which made confrontation with the Ottoman Empire inevitable.

During the reign of Bayezid II (1481-1512), there were several clashes with the Safavids, especially in the last year of his reign. In a short time, Shah Ismail was

[1] Abdolvahid Soofizadeh, **Kaçar Hanadanlığı Döneminde Osmanlı-İran Siyasi İlişkileri (1795-1925)**, Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2020, p. 15.
[2] Bahzad Mafakhiri, "Naqsh-e Kurdha der Nabard-e Chaldiran-u Payamadhay-e An", **Journal for the History of Islamic Civilization**, Vol. LII, No. 2, Autumn & Winter 2019/2020 p. 292.

able to conquer Diyarbakır and Kharput (Harput) and bring all the Kurdish tribes and emirates, the Turkmen tribes of the Little Taurus Mountain, and the Armenian Christian tribes under his rule. Thus he became a real threat to the Ottoman Empire.[3] After the conquest of these areas, most of the Kurdish emirates were forced to surrender to Shah Ismail.[4] Unlike the Ottoman Empire, which allowed the emirates to be run by the local people, the Safavids relied more on Shiite Persian and Turkmen rulers, [5] because Shah Ismail did not trust the Kurds for religious and ethnic reasons.[6] He even killed some chiefs who had gone to express their submission to him and replaced them with other emirs. [7] The only emirate that remained semi-independent within the Safavid and later Qajar states was the emirate of Ardalan (Sinna was its capital city), which is often called the Kurdistan government (Hükumet-i Kurdistan) in the Iranian sources.[8]

In response to the harsh policies of Shah Ismail, Kurdish and Arab scholars, and notables sent delegations and letters to the Ottoman Empire to confront Safavids.[9] A major change in the policy of the Ottoman Empire occurred when Sultan I. Selim came to power. He agreed with most of the divided emirates and tribes of Anatolia, including 21 Kurdish emirs, to confront the Safavids. After these political preparations, in April 1514, the Ottoman army led by Sultan Selim headed east and encountered the Safavid army in Chalderan (Çaldıran), a plain between Van and Maku, which ended in a major defeat for the Safavids. In the Battle of Chaldiran, most of the Kurdish tribes that Sultan Selim had previously been able to make agreements with through Idris-i Bitlisi, fought alongside Ottomans. This battle marked the beginning of a long-running conflict between the two states that lasted

[3] Najati Abdullah, **Kurdistan-u Kêşey Snur-i Iran-i-Osmani (1639-1847)**, Mukiriyan, Erbil, 2015, p. 28.
[4] Sharaf Kah bin Shams al-Din Bitlisi, **Sharafnama: Tarikh-e Mufassal-e Kurdistan**, Ed. by Vladimir Vladimirovich Zernov, Asatir, Tehran, 1377, p. 299.
[5] David McDowall, **A Modern History of the Kurds**, I.B.Tauris, London & New York, 2007, p. 27.
[6] Abd al-Rahman Qasimlu, **Kurdıstan û Kurd; Lêkolineweyeki Siyasi û Aburi**, Trans. by Abdullah Hasanzadah, Erbil 2006, p. 49.
[7] Amin Zeki Beg, **Xulaseyeki Tarixi Kurd û Kurdistan**, Mahabad 2018, p. 164.
[8] P. Oberling, "Bani Ardalan", **Encyclopaedia Iranica**, Vol. III, Fasc. 7, pp. 693-694. Also available at https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bani-ardalan-a-kurdish-tribe-of-northwestern-iran-now-dispersed-in-sanandaj-senna-and-surrounding-villages, (Accessesd; in 22 April 2021).
[9] Sa'adi Osman Haruti, **Kurdistan wa al-Empratoriyet al-Usmaniya**, **Diraset fi Tatawr Siyasat al-Haymanat al-Osmaniya fi Kurdistan (1514-1847)**, Duhok, 2008, p. 38.

from the 16th century to the 20th century. As an expected outcome after the battle, the largest part of the Kurdish regions fell under Ottoman rule. However, Sultan Selim won the support of the Kurdish emirs and recognized their legitimacy.[10] In return, the Kurdish tribes had to pay annual taxes and send soldiers during the war. This agreement between the Ottoman Empire and the Kurdish emirates formalized the political existence of the Kurdish emirates.[11]

Two years later, the Battle of Koçhisar between the Ottomans and the Safavids took place in Mardin province. Again, the Kurdish tribes, led by Idris-i Bitlisi, played a major role alongside the Ottoman army. After defeating Safavids, the Ottoman commander Bıyıklı Mehmed Pasha wrote in a letter to Sultan Selim about his victory: "*In general, with all the notables of Kurdistan, we were able to confront the enemy with the same heart, direction, color, and intention.*[12] The Battle of Koçhisar can be considered a complement to the Battle of Chalderan and its importance was no less than that of it. Especially concerning the establishment of Ottoman power in the Kurdish regions, as in this war, the responsibility of protecting and controlling each region was placed on its local emir or chieftain.[13]

However, the Battles of Chalderan and Koçhisar did not end the conflict between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. With the accession of Sultan Suleiman, the Magnificent, two events related to Kurdish tribes plunged the two countries into a new war. The first incident was related to the rebellion of the governor of Baghdad, Zulfiqar Khan-i Kalhur, against the Safavid state. Zulfiqar Khan, the chief of one of the clans of Kalhur, captured Baghdad and killed its previous governor, who belonged to the Safavid state.[14] He later changed his belongingness from the Safavid state to the Ottoman Empire and delivered a speech in Baghdad in the name of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent. This move was warmly welcomed by the Ottoman Empire, but, predictably, it caused a negative reaction in the Safavid state. As a

[10] **Ibid.**, pp. 47-49.
[11] Sabri Ateş, "Treaty of Zohab, 1639: Foundational Myth or Foundational Document", **Iranian Studies**, No. 52, 2019: 397-423, p. 400.
[12] Feridun Bey, **Mecmua-ı Münşeat-i Feridun Bey**. [Istanbul]: Darüttıbattil'âmire, 1265-1274 (1848-1857), Widener Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass, p. 418.
[13] Bitlisi, **op. cit.**, p. 417.
[14] Abdu al-Riza Hoshang Mahdavi, **Tarikh-e Ravabit-e Khariji-ye Iran ez Ibtida-ye Doran-e Safaviya ta Payan-e Jang-i Dovum-e Jehani**, Tehran 21st Edition, p. 28.

result, Shah Tahmasb sent an army led by Ali Khan Zangana to Baghdad, who managed to kill Zulfiqar Khan and recapture the city.[15] The second event was Mir Sharaf Bitlis's rebellion against the Ottoman Empire and his refuge to Shah Tahmasb.[16] As a result, Sultan Suleiman sent an army to Bitlis, and in a confrontation between the Ottoman army and Mir Sharaf's forces, the latter was defeated and Mir Sharaf was killed. However, the Ottoman Empire appointed his son Shams al-Din as the head of the tribe and governor of Bitlis.[17]

On the sidelines of these changes, Sultan Suleiman, who had just returned from the European War and established the western borders of his Empire, declared war against Safavids and launched an army led by Pargalı Ibrahim Pasha eastward.[18] Ibrahim Pasha was able to capture Tabriz (Tebriz) easily in 1534. The following year, after capturing Baghdad, Sultan Suleiman went to Tabriz and after a short stay returned to Istanbul. In historical sources, this event is referred to as the Campaign of Two Iraqs (Irakeyn Seferi) because Ottomans were able to conquer both Persian Iraq (which included northwestern Iran) and Arabic Iraq (which included Baghdad and its surroundings)[19]. In this campaign, most of the Kurdish tribes and emirates entered the scope of the Ottoman Empire and even the emir of Ardalan showed his submission to Ottoman rule.[20]

After the end of the two Iraq's campaigns, Sultan Suleiman described the Kurdish regions as the buffer zone region between the Ottoman Empire and Iran as follows:

> Just as God, be He praised and exalted, vouchsafed to Alexander "the two-horned" to build the wall of Gog, so God made Kurdistan act in the protection of my imperial kingdoms like a strong barrier and an iron fortress against the sedition of the demon Gog of Persia. A thousand thanks and praises to the presence of the Almighty, creator of the races of mankind. It is hoped that, through neglect and carelessness, our descendants will never let slip the rope of obedience (binding) the

[15] Nasrullah Poor Mohammadi Amlashi & Brumand Surani, "Barrasi-e Naqsh-e Qabaiyl-e Kurd der Dora-ye Shah Tahmasib-i Avval", **Peyam-i Baharistan**, 4th year, No. 16, p. 452.
[16] Bitlisi, **op. cit.**, pp. 418-23.
[17] **Ibid.**, 438.
[18] **Ibid.**, 439.
[19] Feridun Emecen, "İbrâhim Paşa, Makbul", **TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi**, Vol. 19, p. 116. Also available online at Https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/ibrahim-pasa-makbul (Accessed 23.03.2021).
[20] Haruti, **op. cit.**, p. 64.

Kurdish commanders [to the Ottoman Empire] and never be lacking in their attention to this group.[21]

After the border disputes and the occupation of Tabriz by the Ottoman Empire several times, at the request of Iran after the exchange of several letters between the Ottoman Empire and Iran in May 1555, a new peace agreement was signed between both powers, which in history is recognized as the Treaty of Amasya. This treaty was the first peace treaty between the Ottoman Empire and Iran to establish the border.[22] According to the treaty, Azerbaijan, eastern Armenia, and eastern Georgia were left to Iran while the Ottoman Empire secured Baghdad, Shahrazur, and western Georgia.[23] In this division, the regions of Shahrazur, Karadagh, and Sharbazher, which were located within the territory of the Baban Emirate were left to the Ottoman Empire, and the regions of Hawraman, Marivan, Bana, Saqiz, and Sinna which were the regions of the Ardalan Emirate were left to Iran.[24] The Treaty of Amasya established peace between the Ottoman Empire and Iran for nearly 20 years until Shah Ismail II's attempt to recapture Baghdad.[25]

However, again border clashes between Kurdish tribes from both the Ottoman and Iranian sides led to further tensions between the two states.[26] Consequently, Sultan Murad III sent an army led by Lala Mustafa Pasha, who defeated the Safavid army in Childir (Çıldır), a place in the northeastern Anatolia. [27] This battle marked the beginning of a series of conflicts that lasted more than a decade until the Ottoman commander Farhad Pasha vanquished a large Iranian army of 15,000 men near Baghdad in 1587.[28] The great defeat of the Safavids was followed by the Treaty of Farhad Pasha (March 21, 1590), in which Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and western Iran, including Tabriz, fell under Ottoman rule,

[21] Azîz Efendi, **Kanûn-Nâme-i Sultânî li Aziz Efendi**, Ed. and Trans. by Rhoads Murphey, Printed at Harvard University Office of the University Publisher 1985. For Turkish Transcription, see p. 35, for English translation, see p. 14.
[22] İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, **Osmanlı Tarihi**, Ankara: TTK 1998, vol. I, p. 342.
[23] Alexander Mikaberidze, **Conflict and Conquest in the Islamic World: A Historical Encyclopedia**, ABC-CLIO, 2011, vol. 1, p. 698.
[24] Nawshirwan Mustafa Amin, **Mirayeti Baban le Nêwan Berdaşi Rom û Ecemda**, Sulaymaniyah 1998, p. 39.
[25] Mahdavi, **op. cit.**, p. 43.
[26] Najati Abdullah, **op. cit.**, p. 40.
[27] Mahdavi, **op. cit.**, p. 46.
[28] Najati Abdullah, **op. cit.**, p. 41.

and Iran was obliged to protect the rights of Sunnis. [29] The treaty of Farhad Pasha ensured peace between the two states for nearly 13 years, but after Shah Abbas rebuilt his army and overcame the country's internal problems, tensions between the Ottoman Empire and Iran rose again.

Shah Abbas took advantage of the Ottoman Empire's European preoccupations and reconquered Georgia and Azerbaijan. However, after a series of clashes, the Treaty of Nasuh Pasha was signed between Ira and the Ottoman Empire in 1613. In this treaty, they agreed that the border shall be the line defined in the Treaty of Amasya. The Ottoman Empire also gained the right to regain the areas seized by Halo Khan, the governor of Ardalan, in Shahrazur.[30]

In 1623, Shah Abbas conquered Baghdad again, and the city remained as a part of Iran until 1638, when Sultan Murad IV led a large army and sieged the city for 40 days, before entering it on December 24. [31] After the capture of Baghdad by the Ottoman Empire and the great defeat of the Safavids, Shah Safi repeatedly asked the Ottoman Empire for peace. Finally, peace talks between the Ottoman Grand Vizier Kara Mustafa Pasha and Saro Khan, the representative of Shah Safi, began in an area between Zahab and Qasr-i Shirin (Kasr-ı Şirin), which resulted in an agreement later called the Treaty of Zahab or Qasr-i Shirin.[32]

One of the most important objectives of the treaty was determining a more precise borderline and eliminating the border disputes between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. The Treaty of Zahab was one of the most essential border agreements between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, which lasted effectively for 80 years.[33] Though there were no identical versions of the treaty that both states agreed on, as will be discussed in Chapter V, until the early 20th century, the border demarcation commissioners from both states returned to its content occasionally.

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[29] Halil Kürşad Aslan, "Ottoman-Persian Treaties", **The Encyclopedia of Diplomacy**, 2018; 1-10, p. 3.
[30] Abas Ismail Sabagh, **Tarikh al-Alaqat al-Osmaniyah al-Iraniyah**, Beirut, 1999, p. 190.
[31] Najati Abdullah, **op. cit.**, p. 46.
[32] Rhoads Murphey, "Kasrişîrin Antlaşmasi", **TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi**. Avilable at Https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/kasrisirin-antlasmasi (Accessed; 23.03.2021). vol, p. 575.
[33] Sabagh, **op. cit.**, p. 197.

Another important event in the early 18th century was the invasion of Iran by the Afghans. In 1721, Mir Mahmoud, the chief of one of the largest tribes in Afghanistan, who was leading his and several other Afghan tribes, invaded Iran. In March 1722, they besieged and then invaded Isfahan, the capital. The Afghan occupation of Iran created political instability that opened the door for Russia to take over some important areas, such as the port of Anzali, Gelan, and Baku, in 1723.[34]

After several battles, the Ottoman Empire also took over Hamadan, Kermanshah, Kurdistan Province[35], and Luristan.[36] However, the Afghan rule in Iran did not last long, and the emergence of Nader Shah on the Iranian political stage reversed all the events. Nader Shah, who initially identified himself as a commander of the Safavid Shah Tahmasb, expelled the Afghan army from Iran in 1729 after three consecutive battles in Khorasan, Isfahan, and then Shiraz.[37] Following the Afghan war, he was committed to fighting against the Ottoman Empire, and within a few months, he recaptured Brujard, Nahavand, Hamadan, Kermanshah, and Sinna. In the process of recapturing Sinna, he expelled the Babans, who had been made governors of Kurdistan province during the Ottoman invasion and returned the governance of the provınce to Subhanverdi Khan, the son of one of the former Ardalan emirs.[38]

Then, after two campaigns for invading Baghdad, the first of which laid siege to the city for seven months, he was forced to return to Iran to quell the rebellions in the Fars province and agreed with Ahmad Pasha, governor of Baghdad. According to the agreement, the border between Iran and the Ottoman Empıre returned to the line agreed upon in the Zahab Treaty. However, after suppressing the rebellions in the Fars province, conflict broke out again between the two states, and Nader Shah marched to Tbilisi and Yerevan and was besieged. The Ottoman army that confronted him was defeated. Having political tensions with Russia from another side, the Ottoman Empire was compelled to agree with Nader Shah. As a result, a

[34] Mhdavi, **op. cit.**, p. 147.
[35] Kurdistan province is a province located west Iran between Azerbaijan and Kermanshah provinces.
[36] Stephen Hemsley Longrigg, **Four Centuries of Modern Iraq**, Clarendon Press, 1925, p. 249.
[37] **Ibid.**, 136.
[38] Mirza Shukrullah Sanandaji, **Tuhfa-ye Nasri der Tarikh-û Jografiya-e Kurdistan**, Tehran, p. 134.

new treaty was signed between the two sides, known as the Treaty of Istanbul. According to this treaty, it was decided to return to the Treaty of Zahab concerning the border between Iran and the Ottoman Empıre. In a ceremony, Nader Shah crowned the Shah of Iran and ended the Safavid rule.[39]

Seven years after the Treaty of Istanbul, tensions between the Ottoman Empire and Iran resumed. In 1743, Nader Shah sent an army of 70,000 men to besiege Baghdad and isolate it from Mosul, Kirkuk, and other places. While in Shahrazur, Khalid Pasha, the emir of Baban, confronted Shah's army with a force but was soon defeated and fled to Mosul with his forces. During Nader Shah's invasion, most Kurdish and Baban chiefs sided with the Ottoman Empire.[40] At this point, the Ottoman Empire officially recognized Safi Mirza, son of Shah Hussein II, as the Shah of Iran and ordered the commander of Kars to accompany him to Isfahan. In response, Nader Shah moved to Kars and was unable to enter the city after 72 days of siege. While Iran was going through internal problems, Nader Shah asked the Ottoman Empire for peace to put an end to the chaos inside Iran. In the negotiations, Nader Shah demanded the ownership of Sulaymaniyah, Van, and Baghdad, but his request was declined by the Ottomans. As a result, in a new treaty called Kerdan near Sauj Bulak (present-day Mahabad), the two sides again agreed to return the border to the line agreed on in the Treaty of Zahab.[41]

As will be discussed below, the tradition of Iranian interference in the affairs of the Baban Emirate and the appointment of its emirs continued until the 1820s to such an extent that the Baban emirs and officials were appointed by the governor of Baghdad with the consent of the Qajar authorities. The Baban Emirate, because of its important location, became the center of conflict between the Baghdad governors and Iran. From the late 18th century onwards, the Baban dynasty took advantage of the conflict between the Ottoman Empire and Iran to establish a semi-independent rule. The Iranian authorities have been supportive of the Baban emirs against the governors of Baghdad, and when necessary, they provided them with weapons and

[39] Mahdavi, **op. cit.**, pp. 160-161.
[40] Nawshirwan Mustafa, **op. cit.**, pp.72-73.
[41] Nawshirwan Mustafa, **op. cit.**, p. 77.

logistical assistance. Both the Ottoman Empire and Iran tried to maintain good relations with the Babans, and not push them toward the opposite side. This mainly was due to the strategic location of the Baban Emirate, which connected Sinna (present-day Sanandaj) regions to Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk, and Mosul in the north, and from the south, it connected Hamadan and Kermanshah with Khanaqin and Baghdad through Qasr-i Shirin. These geopolitics of Baban, while giving the emirate a special status, made it a route for military campaigns between the Ottoman Empire and Iran and an unsettled and chaotic place. In addition to being officially part of the Ottoman Empire, Baban emirs sometimes were bound to pay taxes to the governor of Baghdad and the Iranian authorities. The governors of Sulaymaniyah (Baban emirs) often sent their relatives as hostages at the court of the Shah of Iran and the governor of Baghdad.[42]

In the early 19th century, Ali Pasha, the governor of Baghdad, ordered the removal of Abdurrahman Pasha Baban and the appointment of his cousin Khalid Beg in his place. To complete this task Ali Pasha, send an army and after several clashes in Bazian, west of Sulaymaniyah, Abdurrahman Pasha was defeated and 300 of his forces were killed. Then he fled to Iran and took refuge with Amanullah Khan, the governor of Ardalan.[43]

There he went to Fath Ali Shah Qajar with Amanullah Khan and asked him for help.[44] After this meeting, Fath Ali Shah sent his representative with a letter to Ali Pasha, the governor of Baghdad asking him to restore Abdurrahman Pasha to his post. However, for the governor of Baghdad refused Shah's request, the Shah decided to reinstate Abdurrahman Pasha. In response, Ali Pasha organized an army to attack Iran. However, since fighting Iran required approval from the Sultan, Ali Pasha sent a request for permission to invade Iran. While Ali Pasha awaited Sultan's approval, part of his army entered Iran. However, contrary to the governor's expectations, the Sublime Porte (Babıâli) announced that they had an agreement with

[42] Sabri Ateş, **Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands: Making a Boundary**, **1843–1914**, Cambridge University Press, 2013, p. 43.
[43] Nawshirwan Mustafa, **op. cit.**, p. 118.
[44] Mastora-ye Kurdistani (Mah Sharaf), **Tarikh-i Ardalan**, Ed. Nasir Azarpoor, Kermanshah, 1332, p. 155.

Iran and did not want to go to war. Albeit the governor immediately ordered the withdrawal of his army, some of those who were ahead had gone as far as Kermanshah.[45] In reaction, Fath Ali Shah sent his son Mohammad Ali Mirza, who was in charge of Luristan, Kermanshah, and Ahwaz, with an army to guard the border while Amanullah Khan, the governor of Ardalan, accompanied by Abdurrahman Pasha Baban, marched toward Marivan[46] where the Ottoman Army (Baghdad and Baban) led by Sulaiman Kahiye the nephew of Ali Pasha confronted them. After a heavy battle, the Ottoman army suffered a major defeat in which Suleiman Kehiye was captured by the army of the governor of Ardalan and Abdurrahman Pasha and was sent to Tehran.[47] Following this incident, Ali Pasha agreed on returning Abdurrahman Pasha to his post and Fath Ali Shah freed Suleiman Kahiye and his captured companions.[48]

In 1807, Governor Ali Pasha was assassinated by one of his servants after five years of ruling Baghdad. Following this event, the Porte appointed Yusuf Ziya as the new governor, but the Mamluks refused and instead appointed Ali Pasha's nephew Suleiman Kehiye, who later became known as Suleiman Pasha the Younger.[49] During Suleiman Pasha's governance, Istanbul received many complaints regarding his "mismanagement". So, the Sublime Porte sent Halet Effendi from Istanbul to Baghdad with full authority to investigate the situation in Baghdad and, if necessary, to remove Suleiman Pasha.[50] After a thorough investigation, Halet Effendi took measures to overthrow Suleiman Pasha and then headed to Mosul asking Abdurrahman Pasha Baban for help. Abdurrahman Pasha, who was awaiting such an opportunity, came to Kirkuk with 12,000 infantry and 80,000 cavalries with the former treasurer of Baghdad, Abdullah Agha (later Abdullah Pasha), whom

[45] Rasul Havi al-Karkukli, **Dawhat al-Wizara' fi Tarikh Waqai' Baghdad al-Zawra**, Trans. by Musa Kazim Nawras, Baghdad & Bairut, w.date, p. 336.
[46] Mah Sharaf, **op. cit.**, p. 155.
[47] Nawshirwan Mustafa, **op. cit.**, p. 71.
[48] Mah Sharaf, **op. cit.**, p. 157.
[49] Nawshirwan Mustafa, **op. cit.**, pp. 121-122.
[50] Ahmed Cevdet (Paşa), **Târîh-i Cevdet**, Dersaadet (Istanbul), 1309, vol. IX, p. 211.

Suleiman Pasha had exiled to Basra. Finally, the two forces joined and headed to Baghdad.[51]

After a long battle, the army of Halet Effendi and Abdurrahman Pasha suffered huge casualties and retreated. Nonetheless, Abdurrahman Pasha managed to reorganize his army, conducted a night raid against the governor's army again, and defeated them. Though Suleiman Pasha fled with some of his men to Diyala, he was killed by an Arab tribe east of Baghdad then his head was sent to Abdurrahman Pasha.[52]

Abdurrahman Pasha, who had played a major role in defeating the governor and the Mamluk forces, considered himself worthy to be appointed the governor of Baghdad. For this reason, he sent a letter to the Porte promising that if he was appointed the governor, he would send 5,000 piasters to Istanbul instead of 1,000 and he will suppress all the insurgencies in the province and regulate the affairs of the tribes.[53]

The Sublime Porte consulted Halet Effendi for this purpose but he reminded the Porte that though the promises of Abdurrahman Pasha were very important, his appointment as the governor of Baghdad might have negative consequences for the Ottoman Empire for the Baban rulers have ambivalent allegiances between the Ottoman Empire and Iran.[54]

As it was evident from Halet Effendi's comment, during their rule in Sulaymaniyah, Abdurrahman Pasha and the Baban emirs had adopted a policy that neither the Ottoman Empire nor Iran could trust them. In fact, the appointment of Abdurrahman Pasha as governor of Baghdad could have posed a threat to the Ottomans in two ways. Firstly, appointing him as the governor could have made the entire province fall under Iran's influence. Secondly, Abdurrahman Pasha could have used his power as governor of Baghdad to secure his position in such a way that

[51] Amin Zeki Beg, **Tarikh-i Sulaymaniyah**, Trans. by Mullah Jamil Rozhbayani, Baghdad, 1951, p. 130.
[52] Karkukli, **op. cit.**, p. 250.
[53] **Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi Başkanlığı** (**BOA.**), **AE.SMHD.II.**, **D.** No. 121/10038.
[54] Ahmed Cevdet, **op. cit.**, vol. IX, p. 217.

Istanbul could no longer remove him. Therefore, this request of Abdurrahman Pasha was rejected. Although Abdurrahman Pasha himself was not made governor of Baghdad, he agreed with Halat Effendi to appoint Abdullah Agha, the former treasurer who previously had strong ties with Abdurrahman Pasha.[55]

While Abdurrahman Pasha was in Baghdad, controlled most of the affairs, as a de facto power. He made changes in the Baban and Baghdad regions and even changed officials of some Kurdish regions within the Iranian territory, which did not please Prince Mohammad Ali Mirza, who called for the reinstatement of Abdul Fattah Pasha, the governor of Darna and Bajalan, who had been removed by Abdurrahman Pasha without consulting anyone. The new governor of Baghdad, Abdullah Pasha (1810-1813), asked Abdurrahman Pasha to grant the request of Muhammad Ali Mirza, but Abdurrahman Pasha insisted on his decision and ignored the requests of Prince Muhammad Mirza and Abdullah Pasha.[56]

Therefore, Abdullah Pasha and Mohammad Ali Mirza agreed to remove Abdurrahman Pasha and appoint his cousin Khalid Pasha as the governor of Sulaymaniyah.[57] To fulfill the plan the governor of Ardalan and Prince Mohammad Ali Mirza set out from Iran for Sulaymaniyah with a force of 60,000 men via Zahab meanwhile Khalid Pasha, who was the candidate for governor of Baghdad, went to meet the Iranian army and Abdurrahman Pasha retreated to Koya and conceded between the governor's forces and the Iranian army. However, soon Abdullah Pasha realized that if Abdurrahman Pasha was removed, Iran would be able to take over Kirkuk and Shahrazur. So, he appointed Abdurrahman the governor of Sulaymaniyah for the fifth time after being dismissed for a while.[58]

After this incident, Abdurrahman Pasha again resumed contact with the Iranian prince. Then he occupied Erbil and moved to Kirkuk. In response, the governor of Baghdad sent an army to fight him. The two forces confronted in Kifri where Abdurrahman Pasha was defeated and for the second time, he took refuge with

[55] Karkukli, **op. cit.**, p. 251.
[56] Zeki Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 135.
[57] Karkukli, **op. cit.**, pp. 234-35.
[58] Cevdet Paşa, **op. cit.**, vol. IX, p. 223.

the Prince of Iran who sent him back to Sulaymaniyah with 7000 men and asked the governor of Baghdad to reinstate him in his position and the latter agreed.[59]

Thus, Abdurrahman Pasha became the governor of Sulaymaniyah for the sixth time until he died in 1813. Then his son Mahmud Pasha succeeded him. Like his father, he continued his rule between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. After Abdullah Pasha, the governor of Baghdad, Said Pasha (1813-1817), an inexperienced young man, replaced him. While he was governor, his son-in-law Daud Pasha, plotted against him and informed the Sublime Porte that Mahmud Pasha Baban made a promise to cut all ties with Iran if the Porte appoints a good man as the governor of Baghdad. Upon Mahmud Pasha's words, the Porte agreed to replace Said Pasha and appoint Daud Pasha as governor. After a long period of conflict with Said Pasha and his supporters, Daud Pasha (1817-1831), with the help of Mahmud Pasha and several other Kurdish emirs, became the governor of Baghdad.[60] Nevertheless, the relationship between Daud and Mahmud Pashas did not last long like the previous times as Iran would not accept the Ottoman Empire and the governor of Baghdad having complete control over the Shahrazur and Baban regions.[61]

The Iranian authorities always had some members of the Baban family with them whom they could bring to Sulaymaniyah as their candidates. This created a negative environment within the Baban family so they all looked at each other with suspicion so that Mahmud Pasha, his two brothers Sulaiman and Osman with his uncle Abdullah Pasha went to the house of the leader of the Naqshbandi Tariqa, Mawlana Khalid Naqshbandi, where together they swore by the Holy Qur'an if any one of them received a letter from the Iranian or Ottoman authorities, would open it in the presence of all of them at Mawlana Khalid's house. After a while, however, Muhammad Ali Mirza sent a secret letter to Abdullah Pasha promising him Iran's

[59] Zeki Beg, **op. cit.**, pp. 42-43.
[60] Cevdet Paşa, **op. cit.**, vol. X, pp. 222-27.
[61] Nawshirwan Mustafa, **op. cit.**, p. 141.

support against Mahmud Pasha, but Abdullah Pasha hid the letter in violation of the oath until Mahmud Pasha found out through his men.[62]

Aware of Muhammad Ali Mirza's intention, Mahmud Pasha resumed contact with him and even decided to send his brother Hassan Bey, who was then in charge of the Qara Dagh district, as a hostage. [63] Mahmud Pasha's tactic served the future of his power. When Daud Pasha in 1818, gave an order to remove Mahmud Pasha and sent a force to carry out the task.[64] Mahmud Pasha immediately asked Mohammad Ali Mirza for help, who sent a force of 10,000 men to defend Mahmud Pasha, and another Iranian armed force moved south to Mandali. After a brief confrontation, both sides agreed to reinstate Mahmud Pasha as the governor of Sulaymaniyah.[65]

However, two years later, while the Ottoman Empire was busy with the Greek rebellion (1821), with the encouragement and support of some members of the Baban family who were dissatisfied with the measures of the governor of Baghdad, both Princes Muhammad Ali Mirza and Abbas Mirza invaded Ottoman territory from two sides in 1820 and 1821. Muhammad Ali Mirza attacked Baghdad, and Abbas Mirza attacked Kars and Ardahan.[66]

Mohammad Ali Mirza first entered Sulaymaniyah and appointed Abdullah Pasha the ruler. After spending ten days of the Muharram month, he went to Kirkuk but could not enter the city because of the resistance of its inhabitants.[67] Along with the dispute over the Baban family, there was another contention between the Ottoman Empire and Iran over two other Kurdish tribes in the north. These included the migration of the Sipki tribe to Van and the Haideran tribe to Mush and Malazgird.[68] After Iran lost hope for the Kurdish tribes to return by their will, they considered forcing them back into Iran. In a letter to Fath Ali Shah, Abbas Mirza

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[62] Claudius James Rich, **Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan**, **and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh; With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis**, London, 1836. vol. 1, p. 149.
[63] Cevdet Paşa, **op. cit.**, vol. X, pp. 227-28.
[64] Najati Abdullah, **op. cit.**, p. 98.
[65] Zeki Beg, **op. cit.**, pp. 154-55.
[66] Karkukli, **op. cit.**, pp. 296-97.
[67] Zeki Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 160.
[68] Erdal Çiftçi, **Fragile Alliances in the Ottoman East: The Heyderan Tribe and the Empire**, **1820-1929.** Diss. Bilkent University, 2018, pp. 105-106.

asked him not to wait for peace talks with the Ottoman authorities and to attack Mush and its surroundings. In part of that letter, he encouraged the Shah before it was too late:

> Let us hurry up while there is still snow in wintering quarters that halts Kurds from reaching the cold areas. Let us enter the enemy's territory before the Ottoman forces gather. The Kurds are the source of chaos and evil and have become the cause of all wars and misdeeds. By the divine grace and blessing of the Shah, we will destroy them and will reach Mush.[69]

Accordingly, an Iranian force came from Khuy and Yerevan and surrounded Mush. Another military force, along with some Kurdish tribes, attacked Kars.[70] After failing to return the Haideran tribe, Iranian forces withdrew. However, following the Iranian invasions, the Jalali tribe, one of the Kurdish tribes living on the Iranian side, looted several properties in the Ottoman territory. Husrev Pasha, the governor of Erzurum, exchanged several letters with Abbas Mirza demanding the return of looted property brought by the Iranians but in late 1821, Abbas Mirza launched another attack on the Ottoman territory and conquered Mush, Batlis, Arjish, and Bayazit (present-day Doğubayazıt).[71] In May 1822, the Ottoman army led by Commander Mohammad Amin Rauf Pasha attempted to recapture these cities and faced the army of Abbas Mirza.

While Ottomans were not able to push back Iranian forces, due to the spread of cholera, Iranian forces decided to withdraw from both the north and south. Before the withdrawal, Mohammad Ali Mirza demanded the governor of Baghdad to appoint Iran's candidates Abdullah Pasha as the ruler of Sulaymaniyah and Mohammed Pasha as ruler of Koya, both of whom were Baban emirs. Mohammad Ali Mirza contracted the endemic while retreating to Iran and died in Qzilrabat.[72] After two years of conflict, several battles, and a series of clashes that killed thousands of people, eventually the two states met in Erzurum in July 1823.[73]

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[69] **Ibid.**
[70] Cevdet Paşa, **op. cit.**, vol. XII, p. 5.
[71] Soofizadeh, **op. cit.**, p. 70.
[72] Karkukli, **op. cit.**, p. 146.
[73] Soofizadeh, **op. cit.**, p. 72.

As a result of the talks, the two sides reached a new agreement known in historical sources as the Treaty of Erzurum I. The Treaty consisted of seven articles. In general, articles 1, 3, and 4 are related to the issue of Kurdish tribes. Other articles dealt with the organization and resolution of problems of trade caravans and pilgrims to Mecca, Medina, and Shiite holy places.[74] According to the third article of the treaty, Iran should not interfere in the affairs of the Kurdish regions. However, the Iranians were dissatisfied with this restriction and never complied with it. Initially, they tried to maintain their hegemony over the Baban Emirate and the Kurdish regions of Sulaymaniyah. Especially the Ottoman Empire's preoccupation with its war with Russia between 1826 and 1828 paved the way for further Iranian intervention. Also, internal conflicts within the Baban family easily opened the door for Iranian intervention. Mahmud Pasha and his brother Suleiman were the regional players in these conflicts. Within four years, Sulaymaniyah was occupied six times by Iran and the governor of Baghdad. Mahmud Pasha, with the help of Iran, and Suleiman Pasha, with the help of the governor of Baghdad, took control of the city respectively.[75]

The weakening of the Baban Emirate due to constant Iranian interference and internal conflicts between Mahmud Pasha and his brothers, uncles, and cousins coincided with the strengthening of the Soran Emirate in Rawanduz, which was previously under Baban rule.[76] The strengthening of the Soran Emirate between 1826 and 1837 exacerbated conflicts among the Kurdish emirates, between the Kurds and Iran, and also between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. Although this emirate lasted much shorter than the Baban, it was able to conquer a large area of Kurdish cities and regions. The ruler of this emirate Mir Mohammad Kora (1828-1834), built a powerful army of 10,000 cavalries and 20,000 infantries during his rule. He also made about 200 cannons, some of which are still in the museums of Rawanduz and

[74] **Muâhedât Mecmuası**, vol. III, Ceride-i Askerîye Matbaası, Dersaadet 1297 (1880), pp. 1-8.
[75] Nawshirwan Mustafa, **op. cit.**, p. 181.
[76] Abas al-Azzawi, **Mausu'at Tarikh al-Iraq Bayin al-Ihtilalayin**, Baghdad 2004, p. 40.

Baghdad, and took advantage of the weakness of the Baban Emirate and captured Erbil, Altun Kopri, Koya, and Ranya, which the Baban family previously ruled.[77]

Mir Mohammad's advances in Ottoman territory gave him more courage to move to the Kurdish regions of Iran and put the cities of Shino and Sardasht under his control. By October 1835, he had conquered most of the Kurdish regions of Iran. This step was a serious threat to the hegemony of the Qajars over these areas. So, Iranians repeatedly asked the Ottoman officials to allow them to confront Mir Mohammed and attack his stronghold Rawanduz, but the Ottoman Empire officials regarded the Soran Emirate as their subject and refused Iran's proposal. Mohammad Khan Amir Nizam, then commander of the Azerbaijan army in Iran, sent a letter to Rashid Pasha, the governor of Baghdad, recommending that both countries take action against Mohammed Pasha for the damage he had caused to Iran and to end his rule. He demanded that: if the Ottoman Empire did not agree to the participation of Iranian forces, then based on the friendship between the two states, reassure Iran to take the following steps: First, completely remove him from power. Second, the Ottomans should protect the borders so that similar incidents will not happen again. Third, Ottomans should send 40,000 Iranian Rials in compensation. Fourth, the release of those who were imprisoned in Rawanduz.[78] Similarly, in a letter written to his Ottoman counterpart, the Iranian foreign minister, despite insisting on some of the above demands, indicated that the Ottoman Empire should allow Iran to end the rule of Mir Mohammed or to do so by themselves.[79] Thus, the s growing influence of Mir Mohammad concerned the Porte. Therefore, after ending his engagement with the army of Mohammad Ali Pasha, Mustafa Rashid Pasha, with the help of Ali Riza Pasha, the governor of Baghdad, and Mahmud Pasha, the governor of Mosul, attacked Mir Muhammad who withdrew to Rawanduz and prepared for confrontation. Capturing the difficult areas of Rawanduz and its surroundings was a challenging task for Rashid Pasha's army and his colleagues, so at first, they were forced to retreat. Rashid Pasha then assured Mir Mohammad by exchanging letters.

[77] Najati Abdullah, **op. cit.**, p. 111.
[78] Mohammad Riza Nasiri, **Asnad-u Makatib-e Tarikh-e Iran**, Tehran 1367, vol. II, p. 129.
[79] Vazarat-e Umur-e Kharija: **Guzda-ye Esnad-e Siysi-ye Iran-u Osmani der Dora-ye Qajar (GESIO**), vol. I, No. 65.

On this basis, Mir Mohammad surrendered to Rashid Pasha and was taken to Istanbul. He was pardoned but, on his way back to Rawanduz, was assassinated by the order of Ali Reza Pasha, as Zeki Beg indicates. [80] After the end of Mir Mohammed's rule, the rule of three other Kurdish emirates ended: the Badinan, Botan, and Hakkari emirates.

After the dissolution of the Soran Emirate, Ali Reza Pasha moved to Amedi in 1839 and ended the rule of the Badinan dynasty. Later, Emir Ismail II was able to become the ruler of Amedi for a while, but in 1843, the Grand Vizier Mustafa Rashid Pasha besieged Amedi, arrested Mir Ismail, and sent him to Baghdad, where he died.[81]

Botan was another emirate whose rule ended by the Porte. This emirate reached its peak of growth during the reign of Mir Badir Khan (1821-1847). During 1843-1847, Badir Khan took advantage of the internal problems of the Ottoman Empire and managed to gather the surrounding Kurdish tribes under his leadership and expand his power from Van to the west of Urmia, especially after forming a tripartite alliance with Nurullah Beg, Emir of Hakkari, and Khan Ahmad, Emir of Mukus near Van.[82]

After the declaration of Tanzimat in the Ottoman Empire, the Assyrians increased their power and political activity by taking advantage of the reforms and the support of Britain and other European missionaries, especially in the Hakkari region, which was ruled by Nurullah Beg.[83] The political activities of the Nestorians in the Hakkari region and their rebellion against its ruler led to clashes between the Kurds and the Nestorians. When the Nestorian, led by Mar Shimun, refused to pay the annual taxes to the Emir of Hakkari, Nurullah Beg asked Mir Badr Khan for help,[84] who marched to Hakkari with a force of 26,000 men to confront the Nestorians that resulted in a mass killing between them, especially among the Nestorians. Then Britain asked the governor of Mosul, Mohammed Pasha, to protect

[80] Zeki Beg, **Xulaseyeki Tarixi**, p. 551.
[81] Zeki Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 546.
[82] Abdulaziz Sulaiman Nawar, **Tarikh al-Iraq al-Hadith**, Cairo, 1968, p. 112.
[83] **Ibid.**
[84] Martin Van Bruinessen, **Agha û Şéx û Dewlet**, trans. by Kurdo, Sulaymaniyah 1999, p. 69.

the Nestorians and urged Tehran not to allow the Kurds on the Iranian side to help Badir Khan. However, Badir Khan seized Mar Shimun's fort compiling him to flee and take refuge with the British consul in Mosul.[85]

The attack of Mir Badir Khan and Nurullah Beg caused great disturbance to the Porte. American and British missionaries reported that Kurds had looted, kidnapped girls and children, and destroyed Nestorian churches and farms.[86] These had a significant impact on the concerns of Western public opinion, who through their representatives in Istanbul, asked the Sublime Porte to take measures to end the attacks and massacres of the Assyrians.[87] In June 1844, Kamil Pasha, Sultan Abdul Majid's envoy to Botan, notified Mir Badir Khan that the ongoing conflict between the Kurds and the Nestorians would be an excuse for Western interference in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire.[88] As expected, the British and French embassies pressured the Ottoman Empire to punish the Emir and not allow him to fight the Nestorians again.[89] Accordingly, after Mir Badir Khan launched another attack on the Nestorians, the Porte decided to end his rule completely and ordered the governors of Anatolia, Sivas, Diyarbakir, and Mosul to form an army against him. To avoid the state's punishment, Mir Badir Khan promised to allow the Nestorians to return to their homes, restore their property, and connect Cizre to Mosul as the governor of Mosul had demanded. [90]However, these promises did not prevent the war. After several clashes, Mir Badir Khan surrendered and was forced to resign in 1847. He and all his relatives were arrested and sent to Istanbul, and no one from his family was allowed to succeed him.[91]

After the removal of Mir Badr Khan, rumors spread that Nurullah Beg, the Emir of Hakkari, would join Iran, and the areas around Hakkari would be annexed to Iran. The Ottomans were suspicious of Nurullah Beg since he was a co-brother of Muhammad Shah Qajar, as their wives were daughters of Yahya Khan Chehriq. So,

[85] Osman Ali, **al-Harakat al-Kurdiyae al-Mua'sira**, Erbil, 2013, p. 43.
[86] **British Documents on Foreign Affairs**, **Ottoman Empire 1880-1960**, p. 271, vice Consul Rassam July 29, 1843; Sir Cnningtin. No. 108 August 26.1843, as cited in Osman Ali, **op. cit.**, p. 43.
[87] **Ibid.**
[88] Osman Ali, **op. cit.**, p. 44.
[89] Bruinessen, **op. cit.**, p. 69.
[90] Ateş, **op. cit.**, p. 77.
[91] Bruinessen, **op. cit.**, p. 70.

the Porte asked Tehran not to allow Nurullah Bey to enter Iran. In December 1848, the Ottomans entered Hakkari with a large army and Nurullah Begi fled to Bardarash Fort and his forces surrendered in Hakkari. Meanwhile, from the Iranian side, the governor of Bardesur, Ali Ashraf Khan arrived with a force of several hundred men to help Nurullah Beg and gave him refuge .When the Ottoman Empire asked Iran to hand over Nurullah Beg, the Iranian authorities and the governor of Urmia declared that Ali Ashraf Khan himself had rebelled and had twice defeated the force sent to surrender him. Finally, as pressures from Iran, Britain, and Russia increased, Nurullah Beg asked for pardon from the Porte through Sheikh Taha of Hakkari, a prominent Naqshbandi scholar and father of Sheikh Ubeidullah Nehri.[92]

After the dissolution of the emirates of Botan and Hakkari, Baban was the only remaining emirate. After Sulaiman Pasha Baban died, his son Ahmed Pasha came to power. While he was in charge of the Baban emirate, his uncle Mahmud Pasha tried to restore power with the help of the army of Sinna from the Iranian side, but they were severely defeated.[93]

During the rule of Ahmed Pasha, the Baban Emirate was able to revive its political hegemony in the region. Imitating Sultan Mahmud II and the governor of Baghdad, Ahmed Pasha was able to reorganize his forces in a modern European manner.[94]

Because the inhabitants of Hawraman had given refuge to some fugitives, Ahmed Pasha attacked them with a force of several thousand men destroying their fields and gardens, which compelled the tribes of Hawraman to take refuge in the Iranian government. In response, the governor of Kurdistan marched to Sulaymaniyah with an army, but he was defeated by the Baban army. The Iranian government then conveyed its protest to Najib Pasha, the governor of Baghdad. Accordingly, the governor of Baghdad attacked Sulaymaniyah and in 1847, defeated the Baban force in a battle near Koya and ended its rule. Then Abdullah Pasha,

[92] Ateş, **op. cit.**, p. 80.
[93] Nawshirwan Mustafa, **op. cit.**, p. 183.
[94] Ateş, **op. cit.**, p. 71.

brother of Ahmed Pasha, was made governor of Sulaymaniyah for a short time, but he too was dismissed and replaced by a Turkish ruler.[95]

During their rule, the Babans' internal competition over power created an annoying situation that was seen as a source of chaos by the Ottoman Empire and Iran. In a letter written in 1822 to the British ambassador in Istanbul, Abbas Mirza described the poor role of the Kurds in Ottoman-Iranian relations as follows;

> the tension that occurred between the Ottoman Empire and Iran in the past two years, which led to the creation of unrest and chaos. You are aware that the cause of this war and chaos is that the officials of these two states want to compromise and want to avoid war and conflict. Whenever we have wished for peace and agreement, evil and chaos have risen again by Kurds.[96]

The impact of the Baban Emirate's behavior on relations between the Ottoman Empire and Iran was one of the main reasons for both Treaties of Erzurum. Nevertheless, during their rule, they were able to fill the power vacuum in the region. Instead of the central government, they were able to subdue the tribes and clans that existed in the region. After the fall of the Baban Emirate, the Ottoman Empire had to deal with each tribe one by one, as we will discuss in this study. All these tensions on the Ottoman-Iranian border, which were mostly sourced by the Kurdish tribes and emirs almost dragged the two states into another war. Meanwhile, Russia and Britain, both seeking to strengthen their positions in the region, proposed the establishment of a joint commission between the two neighboring countries to demarcate a clear borderline.[97] The Ottoman Empire, which had just ended the rebellion of Muhammad Ali Pasha of Egypt, immediately accepted the offer. Thus, the representatives of Russia, Britain, Iran, and the Ottoman Empire met for the first time in Erzurum in 1843. In the meeting, Mirza Taqi Efendi, Anwar Efendi, Fenwick Williams, and Daines, respectively, represented Iran, the Ottoman Empire, Britain, and Russia.[98]

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[95] Zeki Beg, **Tarikh-i Sulaymaniyah**, p. 177.

[96] Nawshirwan Mustafa, **op. cit.**, p. 124.

[97] Fehminaz Çabuk, **Abdülhamit Dönemi Osmanli – İran İlişkilerinde Kürt Aşiretleri Meselesi** Unpublished Master Dissertation, Erciyes University, 2013, p. 29.

[98] Abdolvahid Soofizadeh, "I. ve II. Erzurum Antlaşmalarının Siyasi Açıdan Değerlendirilmesi", **Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi**, 32/54 (2013): 183-194. p. 184; Edmonds, **op. cit.**, p. 186.

Between 1843 and 1847, representatives of the four states met several times to resolve their differences. During this period, several incidents and clashes occurred in the border areas that almost ended the negotiations. At the same time, the plundering of the Kurdish tribes who were crossing the border, contrary to the treaties signed, became a source of protest and denial between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. The Jaf and Bilbas tribes continued migration between the two states for pastures, and the Hamawands raided the border from Kirkuk to Hamadan while looting, and plundering.[99] Despite these difficulties, in 1847, representatives of both sides reached an agreement consisting of nine articles. Articles 2 and 8, which we will discuss in the first chapter were directly related to the problem of the Kurdish tribes and their regions.

The Second Treaty of Erzurum ended the local power of the Kurdish emirs for good, and all the areas that had been semi-independently administered by the Kurds for centuries were directly connected to Istanbul. According to the third article of the treaty, both sides decided to appoint a committee of officials and engineers to determine the borderline between the Ottoman Empire and Iran.[100] However, the work of the commission was challenged by problems from the very first session. There were disputes by both Iranians and Ottomans over the ownership of most of the areas that fell on the border between the two states. In addition to that, the Crimean War (1853-1856) and the Iran-British War (1856-1857) led to the dissolution of the commission. In 1857, Russian and British representatives presented a new map to both the Ottoman Empire and Iran, and the Ottoman Empire accepted the map conditionally.[101] After the adoption of this new plan, boundary demarcation activities continued between1857-1865. During this time, they drew a new map from Mount Ararat to the Gulf.[102] Finally, in 1869, British and Russian teams presented the final map (Carte Identique) of the border between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. Although the map was not initially accepted as obligatory, it was the first time that the border between the Ottoman Empire and Iran had been drawn

[99] Longrig, **op. cit.**, p. 278.
[100] **Muahadat Mecmuası**, vol. III, p. 6.
[101] Edmonds, **op. cit.**, p. 174.
[102] Mahdavi, **op. cit.**, p. 284.

so clearly on paper.[103] At the same year the Ottoman Empire and Iran reached to a new agreement to preserve the status quo until the final agreement is reached. This new agreement was signed, in July 1869, by the Ottoman Foreign Minister, Muhammad Amin Ghali Pasha and Hussein Muhammad Khan, Iranian Ambassador in Istanbul, (See Chapter I).[104] On 24 July 1871, the status quo was once again confirmed through the exchange of a document between the Ottoman Empire and Persia.[105] After these developments, negotiations continued and several other demarcation commissions were established, although none of them could end the issue of demarcation until the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 ended all diplomatic negotiations.[106]

While the Ottoman Empire had removed the Kurdish Emirates, the Ardalan Emirate, was still ruling the Kurdistan province in Iran. Ardalan Emirate ran a large area for a long time dating back to before the arrival of the Safavids. However, their rule ended in 1867 after the death of the last emir of the emirate (Amanullah Khan II). Since then, the ruler of Kurdistan province was appointed directly by Tehran.[107]

The Ardalan family, despite the fact they had a decentralized and semi-independent power at home, at the same time served Iran throughout the Safavid rule until the end of their rule. The governors of Ardalan, for their territory's connection to Sulaymaniyah and Shahrazur, took a serious part in the foreign policy of the Safavids and Qajars. Since the Qajars intervened mostly through the Baban Emirate, which was a neighbor of the Ardalan Emirate, the survival of the Ardalan Emirate was in the interest of the Qajars. However, the Treaty of Erzurum II and the end of the rule of the Kurdish emirates on the Ottoman side, especially the Baban Emirate, put an end to Iranian interference in the affairs of Sulaymaniyah and the Ottoman

[103] Ateş, **Ottoman-Iranian borderlands**, p. 186. The map was accepted by Tehran, but Istanbul only accepted the map in 1875. Hasan Majid al-Dujeyli, **Iran we al-Iraq Khilal Khamsat Qurun**, Beirut, 1999, p. 188.
[104] al-Dujeyli, **op. cit.**, p. 188.
[105] Burcu Kurt, "Contesting Foreign Policy: Disagreement between the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of War on the Shatt al-Arab Dispute with Iran, 1912–13." **Iranian Studies** 47.6 (2014): 967-985.
[106] **Ibid.**
[107] Sanandaji, **op. cit.**, p. 272.

Empire. Concerning Iran, the removal of the Baban Emirate (made the presence of the Ardalan Emirate out of necessity; therefore, its rule was ended [108]

Methodology

This study attempts to examine the position of the Kurds in Ottoman-Iranian relations. As the title of the study suggests, three parties are involved in answering this historical question. Therefore, to understand this subject, we have tried to return to the primary sources left behind by these parties. In this regard, firstly, we have observed the Ottoman documents in the Ottoman Prime Ministry Archive (*Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi*). As for Iran, we have examined the Published Documents by the Iranian Foreign Ministry regarding the Ottoman-Iranian political relations in the Qajar era in addition to several other documentary books. Since the events that contributed to the shaping of the Ottoman-Iranian relations in the historical period covered by this study mostly happened in the Iranian territories, we searched in and observed the memories and writings of Iranian statesmen and local witnesses who were closely aware of the events. We have also returned to the writings of the Kurdish tribal chiefs and Kurdish characters who were part of the border conflicts between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. In addition to the above sources, we have made use of British archival documents, historical sources, and researches that have been written so far on the topics related to this study. Last but not least, we have searched in and used Kurdish, Ottoman, Iranian, American, and British newspapers.

Considering the above sources, we have tried to find the most important events that can help answer the research question and discuss them in five chapters. In the writing format and citations, we used the method of the Social Sciences Institute of Istanbul University.

[108] Ibn Rostam al-Babani, **Siyar al-Akrad der Tarikh-u Joghrafiya-ye Kurdistan**, Tehran 1998, p. 55.

CHAPTER 1

THE KURDISH TRIBES AND BORDER DISPUTES BETWEEN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND IRAN

During the period covered by this study (1880-1914), the Kurds' stance on the political agenda of both the Ottoman Empire and Iran was linked to border conflicts between the two states. In which the land, border, and tribal issues were intertwined. Often as regional characters, the tribes have become the cause and decisive of the territory and border issues; at other times the territory and border issues generated tribal issues. Geographical, cultural, religious, political, and economic factors determined the tribes' allegiance to either state. Without understanding these factors and the nature of border issues between the two states, it is not easy to understand those events that occurred during the period covered by this study. On this basis, in this chapter, I have tried to introduce three topics that played fundamental roles in understanding the subsequent events: First, the role of religious and cultural divisions in bringing different groups within the Kurdish community closer to either Ottoman or Iranian states. Second, introducing the most significant tribes on the border between the two states that played a major role in forming, directing, and resolving political events, taking into consideration the cultural, political, and religious affiliations and identity of those tribes. In the third section, the border, frontier, and border disputes between the Ottoman Empire and Iran are discussed.

1.1. TRAPPED BETWEEN CONTRADICTED AFFILIATIONS: MAJOR GEOGRAPHICAL AND CULTURAL DIVISIONS AMONG KURDS

Geographical barriers, linguistic variations, and religious differences were the main reasons for dividing Kurdish society into various cultural and political identities. These differences created and shaped regional political events over the

past few centuries and directed Kurdish political affiliation toward regional independence or approaching one of the Ottomans, Iranian, or sometimes Russian states. The Kurds are linguistically divided into two main groups: Kurmanji and Zazaki-Gorani. Moreover, each of these two groups is divided into several other subgroups. In terms of religion, about three-quarters of the Kurds are Sunni Muslims and a quarter of them are from different religious groups such as Yarsan (Aliullahi), Alawite, Shiite, Yazidi, Zoroastrian, Christian, and Jewish. While Sunni Kurds were closer to the Ottoman Empire because of their mutual religious doctrine, the Kurds who belonged to Shiites and its sub-groups were closer to Iran. Besides the religious doctrine affiliation that was the most influential, two other factors brought the Kurds closer to Iran in some areas: the first was the linguistic similarity between Kurdish and Persian. Until the end of World War I and the emergence of Kurdish journalism, Persian and sometimes Arabic was used as the written language and in exchanging letters. In the early 20th century, Soane noted that from Sulaymaniyah to Karadagh and Ranya to the northeast, the only written language in the region was Persian, and all business affairs were carried out using this language.[109] The second factor was the geographical location of some tribes that were located in territories under direct Iranian control. As will be explained in the following sections, these factors have created a dichotomy of affiliation for Kurds, bringing some closer to Iran and others to the Ottoman Empire. Below we will discuss each of the divisions responsible for deciding political affiliation among the Kurdish tribes along the frontier.

1.1.1. Linguistic Divisions

Kurdish belongs to the Indo-Iranian language group, which is a subset of the larger Indo-European language family.[110] It is beyond the scope of this study to elaborate on this subject and an extensive literature is available on this matter.

[109] Soane explains that because of Sulaymaniyah's neighborhood with Arabs, a lot of people speak Arabic, and few people, especially those who work with the government, speak Turkish. However, Persian was taught in religious schools and classrooms and was regarded as the language of writing. See Ely Bannister Soane, **Raportêk leser Slêmani**, **Nawçeyek le Kurdistan**, Trans. by Mine, Melbendi Kurdoloci, Sulaymaniyah, 2007, pp. 40-41.

[110] Givi Tavadze, **Spreading of the Kurdish Language Dialects and Writing Systems Used in the Middle East**, Bull. Georg. Natl. Acad. Sci. vol. XIII, No. 1 2019, p. 171; for further details see: Izady, **op. cit.**, pp. 167-175; Marif Xeznedar, **Mejui Edebi Kurdi**, Dezgay Aras, Erbil, 2010, vol. I, p. 38.

Nonetheless, it is important to present some information about the Kurdish dialects and their geographical distribution, which helps understand the nature of border conflicts in different regions. In general, those who have studied the Kurdish language divide it into several different dialects. The first who made this division seems to have been the Kurdish historian Sharaf Khan Bitlisi. He divided Kurdish dialects into Kurmanji, Luri, Kalhur, and Goran. Kurdish historians such as Amin Zeki Beg, Sheikh Mohammed Merdox,[111] and Kurdish linguist Marif Xeznedar have adopted this approach and considered all the above parts as different branches of the Kurdish language. [112] Contrary to the above view, some voyagers and orientalists who wrote about Kurdish in the 19th and 20th centuries have separated some of these dialects from the Kurdish language. The English merchant and explorer James Rich (1787-1821) argued that Goran (mostly the settled class) was a different race from the Kurds.[113] After Rich, travelers and other orientalists such as Soane, [114]Minorsky,[115] And later Van Bruinessen made this division and distinguished Lurish, Gorani, and Zazaki from Kurmanji Kurdish.[116] To simplify the discussion, we will rely on the classification of the Kurdish language by Izady and Xeznedar (ignoring that Xeznedar includes Luri as part of Kurdishm, for not being part of the border conflicts, which are discussed in this study).[117] Accordingly, Kurdish is divided into Kurmanji and Zazaki-Gorani. Each of these two groups is divided into two other branches: Northern Kurmanji (Badini) and Southern Kurmanji (Sorani). Zazaki-Gorani, on the other hand, is divided into Gorani and Zazaki. Each of these branches too, is divided into other sub-dialects. Some of these sub-dialects, such as

[111] Zeki Beg, **Xulaseyeki Tarixi**, pp. 47-48.
[112] Xeznedar, **op. cit.**, vol. I, p. 38.
[113] Claudius Jamep Rich, **Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan**, **and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh; With Journal of a Voyage Down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepoli**, Vol. 1. James Duncan, Paternoster Row, 1836 p. 88. However, in other places in his book, Rich refers to them as Kurds and uses the Kurdish Goran dialect. See **Ibid.**, p. 201.
[114] Ely Bannister Soane, **To Mesopotamia and Kurdistan in Disguise: with Historical Notices of the Kurdish Tribes and the Chaldeans of Kurdistan.** (First Publish London: J. Murray, 1912.) Weşanxaneya Azad, London, 2013, pp. 457-458.
[115] Vladimir Minorsky, "The Gūrān", **Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies**, University of London, 1943; 75–103 p. 75.
[116] Bruinessen, **op. cit.**, p. 270.
[117] Xeznedar, **op. cit.**, p. 50.

Hawrami and Laki (two branches of the Gorani dialect), have written literature that dates back thousands of years.[118]

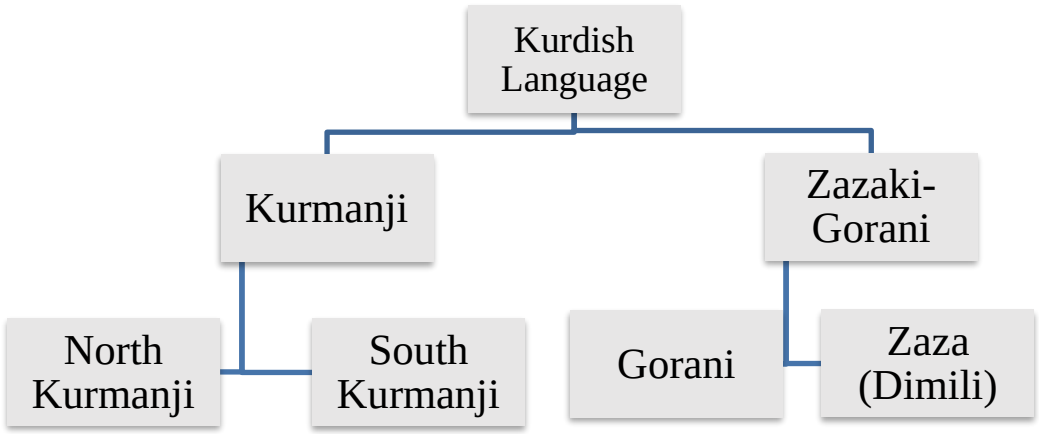


Table 1. Kurdish language and its dialects

1.1.2. Religious and Sectarian Divisions

Kurdish community is divided into various religions and sects as much as its language is divided into different dialects. Although there are no exact statistics on the percentage of Kurds who are Muslims, it is clear that Islam is the religion of the majority of the Kurds and has played a major role in shaping Kurdish political, cultural, and social identity. There are several other religions and beliefs in the Kurdish society besides Islam, some of them have emerged from within or existed

[118] Instead of Zazaki-Gorani, Izady uses the word Pahlavani for each of them and considers Zazaki and Gorani to be subdivisions of Pahlavani. See Mehrdad Izady, **Kurds: A Concise Handbook**, Taylor & Francis, London and New York, 2015, p. 167; McDowell believes that Kurds are racially different within themselves and are not a unified entity. Instead, he believes that most of these people were the remnants of the Indo-European tribes that may have migrated west from Iran in the second millennium BC. David McDowall, **A Modern History of the Kurds**. Bloomsbury Academic, 2004, p. 8. Another subject that is worthy of note is that in the division of Kurdish language or Kurdish dialects, those who speak Kurmanji are neighbors, but the two dialects of Goran and Dmili (Zaza) fall into two separate geographies despite their resemblance.

before Islam and later became heavily loaded with Islamic perspectives and worldviews.

Most Muslim Kurds belong to the Sunni-Shafi'i school. According to McDaoul, this figure represents 75% of the Kurdish population.[119] Along with the Sunni majority, Shiite Kurds make up around 5-7%.[120] Shiites are divided into smaller groups, such as the Twelve Imams, Alawites, and Shabaks. In addition to Sunni and Shiite Islam, there are other religious groups among Kurds, such as Yazidis, Yarsan (Ahl al-Haq), Qizilbash, Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians. Of these religious groups, two doctrines, Sunni and Shiite (along with groups close to the Shiites), had a major influence on dividing Kurdish political affiliation between the Ottoman Empires and Iran. Both doctrines and their affiliated groups among the Kurds along with the role of these divisions in shaping Kurdish political affiliation are discussed below.

1.1.2.1. Sunni Doctrine and its Sufi Tariqas

About three-quarters of Kurds, most of whom belong to the Kurmanji-speaking group (northern and southern), theologically defined as Sunni and Shafi'i in jurisprudence. This characteristic has both distinguished these two Kurdish groups from other Kurds and given them a unique identity among their eastern Shiite Persians and Azeris, the Hanafi Turks, and the Hanafi Arabs from the west and south. Among Sunni Kurds, Sufi tariqas have gained a large base of followers over the past few centuries. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as Edmonds states: "*the Sufi system became the religion of the masses*" among the Kurds.[121] Among various tariqas of Sufism, two tariqas, Qadiri and Naqshbandi, managed to gather the most followers.

1.1.2.1.1. The Qadiri Sufi Tariqa Among the Kurds

Until the early 19th century, the most common Sufi tariqa among the Kurds was the Qadiri. The most prominent families that led this tariqa were the Sadat of

[119] McDaoul, **op. cit.**, p. 10.
[120] Izady, **op. cit.**, p. 135.
[121] Edmonds, **op. cit.**, p. 62.

Nehri in Shamdinan, the Sadat of Barzanji in Sulaymaniyah, and the Sheikhs of Talabani in Kirkuk. The first two families were both Sadat and more famous. The Nehri and Barzinja families were the religious essence of both the Botan and Baban emirates, respectively. Each of the two families inherited the political affiliation and was able to create two important political powers on the ruins of the Kurdish emirates. The word "Sadat" which is the plural form of "Sayyid" allegedly means that each of the two families was descendants of the Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him).[122] Thus, they had a higher religious, social, and political status than the people they led. This culture was not limited to religious leaders; even most Kurdish ruling families traced their ancestry to the Arab rulers.[123] They linked themselves to others outside the social network they ruled, giving them more ranks and higher status and also making them be in the same distance to all the tribes they governed.[124]

1.1.2.1.2. Naqshbandi Sufi Tariqa

The Naqshbandi tariqa spread among the Kurds before the 19th century.[125] However, its sudden and extreme strength dates back to the early 19th century via Mawlana Khalid Naqshbandi (1779-1827). He was a member of the Mikaili clan of the Jaf tribe who was born in Qaradagh near Sulaymaniyah; hometown of Barzinja Qadiri sheikhs). The Mikaili clan led a nomadic life, while spending winters in Qaradagh, they were summering in their cooler pastures in Iran.[126] While in Iran

[122] Sheikh Ubeidullah himself states in a poem that he is a descendant of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and is not racially Kurd. See Sheikh Ubeidullah Nehri, **Tuhfetü'l-Ahbab: Mesnev-e Sheikh Ubeidullah-i Nehri**, Ed. Seyid İslam Duagu, İntişarat-i Huseyni, Urumia, p. 122.
[123] Mark Sykes, "The Kurdish Tribes of the Ottoman Empire", **The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland (1908)**; 451-486, p. 453.
[124] McDowell noted that the old Kurdish chiefs were able to act as mediators because they rarely had any relationship with other members of their tribe except their own closest members. Although this arbitration has not always been based on impartiality, it has had its effect, and after them, the sheiks played the same role. See McDowall, **op. cit.**, p. 50.
[125] Izady, **op. cit.**, p. 135.
[126] Abdulkarim Muderris, **Yadi Merdan**, vol. I, Bagdad, 1979, p. 7. According to Rich, Mawlana Khalid was very respected among the Kurds and had 12, 000 murids in different parts of the Ottoman Empire and the Arab regions. See Rich, **op. cit.**, Vol. 1 p. 141. Mawlana Khalid went to Sanandaj and many murids and followers on the Iranian side gathered around him. Edmonds, **op. cit.**, p. 76. Then he headed from Iran to Baghdad and after a few months he returned to Sulaymaniyah, where he lived for nine years. In The years 1811-1820 his tariqa spread in Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk and Shahrazur. While living in Sulaymaniyah, a large number of people followed him, despite constant opposition from

Mawlana was granted the *Ijaza* (certificate) in Islamic jurisprudence in Sinna from Sheikh Qasim Merdoxi.[127] Later he went to India and was taught in Naqshbandi Sufi tariqa. After returning to Sulaymaniyah, he gained great religious popularity and became the sheikh of the Naqshbandi tariqa in the region. People from Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish regions visited him and became his Murids. Muderris listed the names of 67 caliphs of Mawlana Khalid, half of whom were Kurds and the others were Turks, Arabs, Afghans, and Indians[128]. Among these caliphs: Sheikh Osman Siraj al-Din in Tawela near Halabja and Sheikh Taha Nehri in Hakkari became prominent figures and their descendants inherited their religious position. With Sheikh Taha's adjoining Naqshbandi, one of the two greatest Qadiri sheiks became Naqshbandi.[129]

1.1.2.1.3. Sufi Tariqa Sheiks as Political Leaders

As mentioned above, when the Kurdish emirs (as tribal superior authorities) were removed by both Ottoman and Iranian states in the mid-19th century, sheiks were the only alternative that could cross tribal boundaries. This position gradually made them powerful religious, spiritual, and later political actors. In the Ottoman Empire, with the accession of Sultan Abdulhamid II, the state adopted a new policy known as "*itihad-i Islam"* or Pan-Islamism, which increased the status of the sheiks. This new policy coincided with the increased activities of Christian missionaries in areas populated by the Kurds and the Christians. Therefore, sheikhs played a significant role in political and social conflicts between Kurdish Muslims and their Christian neighbors. The religious nature of these conflicts further pushed the Kurds

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followers of Qadiri tariqa. Mawlana Khalida's status increased constantly such that he was consulted by Baban emirs in political affairs. However, the rise of Mawlana Khalid's popularity had upset followers of Qadiri which led to a sectarian conflict in Baban territory. So, he migrated and left Sulaymaniyah in 1820 and finally died in Damascus in 1826, Edmonds, **op. cit.**, p. 76.

[127] Muderris, **op. cit.**, p. 11.

[128] Muderris, **op. cit.**, pp. 83-86.

[129] Bruinessen clarifies that Mawlana Khalid had visited Nehri before traveling to India and had received the Qadiri tariqa from Sheikh Abdullah Nehri. However, after returning from India and preaching the Naqshbandi tariqa, his teacher became his murid and joined his tariqa. See Bruinessen, **op. cit.**, p. 224.

toward holding on to their Islamic identity, which was in favor of the dominance of the sheikhs.[130]

1.1.2.1.4. The Hegemony of the Ottoman Sheikhs in Iran

The political and social atmosphere of the Kurdish regions inside the Ottoman territory contributed to the development and spread of Sufi tariqas. Especially during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II, religious schools (madrasa), takiyas, and khanqahs were rebuilt and supported financially and the Naqshbandi and Qadiri sheikhs were respected as religious figures. For example, the two villages of Tawela and Biara, which were residences of the Naqshbandi sheiks in the Gulanbar district, were often called Tewela-i Mubaraka (blessed) and Biara-i Sharifa (holy) from Istanbul, and special salaries were paid to takiya and madrassas of Sheikh Omar Naqshbandini (1840-1900) [131] son of Osman Siraj al-Din, who built a large religious school in Biara. This school received students from all Kurdish parts of the Ottoman Empire and Iran, who became mullahs upon finishing studying and returning to their places.[132] In addition to having murids and followers in most Iranian cities, Sheikh Omar had relations with the rulers and state officials in Iran. In some of his letters to the Iranian authorities, he asked them to be good to people and refrain from the policy of sectarianism.[133] After Sheikh Omar, his nephew Sheikh Ali Husam al-Din (1861-1939) lived in Tawela (see chapter III) became the most prominent figure of the family and some of his murids and followers were from Iran.[134]

Minorsky and Edmonds emphasize that people beyond Kurdish regions even from Central Asia and the Caucasus were visiting Sheikh Ali Husam al-Din.[135]

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[130] Bruinessen, **op. cit.**, p. 162.
[131] **BOA. Y.PRK.ASK**., No. 248/6; Muderris, **op. cit.**, vol. II, p. 263. Also, see, Mehmet Mert Sunar. "Doğu Anadolu ve Kuzey Irak'ta Osmanlı Devleti ve Aşiretler: II. Abdülhamid'den II. Meşrutiyet'e." **Kebikeç İnsan Bilimleri İçin Kaynak Araştırmaları Dergisi** 10, 2000, : 115-130, p. 121.
[78] Basil Nikitine, **al-Kurd**, **Diraset al-Sosiyolociye we al-Tarikhiye**, Trans. by Dr. Nuri Talabani, Dar Aras, Erbil, 2003, p. 206.
[132] The school is still open and students from Kurdish regions of Iran and Iraq attend it.
[133] For example, Sheikh Omer Zia' al-Din's letter to Hisam al-Mulk, who was known along his father to oppose Sunni sect.
[134] Nikitine, **op. cit.**, p. 206.
[135] Minorsky, **Kurd**, p. 109; Edmonds, **op. cit.**, p. 213

Edmonds was surprised to meet a prominent horseman of the Great Khan of Talsh[136] among Sheikh Ali Husam al-Din's men who came to meet him in Halabja. He adds on: '*The arrival of this sowar in this area signified the extent of the authority of the sheiks because crossing four hundred miles to kiss the sheik's hand was not an easy task'*.[137] Merdox (1880-1975) who was a religious scholar and one of the significant leading religious figures in Sinna counted murids of Sheikh Husam al-Din in thousands in Iran.[138] In the Hakkari region too, Sheikh Ubeidullah (1826-1883), who succeeded his, father Sheikh Taha, had a large number of murids on the Iranian side, especially in the areas around Lake Urmia and later on, his descendants inherited his hegemony (see Chapter II).

As for the Qadiri tariqa, it had less dominance on the Iranian side, perhaps because it was one of the orders that had a strong view on Shi'a. According to Qanbari and Khasravizadeh, the root cause of the strained relationship between the Qadiri sheikhs and Shi'a can be traced back to the Safavid era.[139] Therefore, the spread of the Qadiri in Iran dates back to a later period when some of the murids and companions of Sayyid Ismail Wiliani began to guide and propagate Qadiri in Kurdish areas such as Sinna, Bokan, Bana, Kermanshah, Jawanrud, Salas-i Babajani, and Zahab. Later, the Sola sheikhs, who were from the well-known Qadiri sheiks, migrated to Kermanshah. Sheikh Hassan, the father of Sheikh Rasul II, went to Kermanshah and settled among the Hamawand tribe. After the death of Sheikh Hassan, Sheikh Rasul returned to Sola in Karadagh again. Since then, the Sheikhs of Qadiri lived in the Ottoman territories. They returned to Iran only for guidance until

[136] Talsh is an Iranian region on the Russian border west of the Caspian Sea.
[137] Edmonds, **op. cit.**, p. 213.
[138] Şeikh Muhammad Merdox-i Kurdistani, **Tarix-i Kurd û Kurdistan û Tewabie**, Ed. Kerim Pirzade, 1351, vol. I, p. 483.
[139] According to Qanbari and Khasravizadeh, when Shah Abbas took over Baghdad, destroyed the shrine of Sheikh Abdul Qadir and his library. Sabah Kenberi ve Sabah Husrevi Zade, "Berresi Mukaiseyiye Siyaset-i Devlet-i Iran-u Osmani Nisbet be Tarikati. Kadriye", **Ma'lim-e Tarih-e Islam**, No. 30, 1395, p. 173. Another confrontation of the Qadiri tariqa with Iran dates back to the time of Nader Shah when he invaded Iraq. When Nader Shah took Sulaymaniyah, he sent a letter to Sheikh Hassan Glezarde (1677-1762), the dominant Barzanji sheikh, asking him to accompany him in the war against the Ottomans. In response, the Sheikh rejected Nader Shah's request and warned him to retreat, because according to the prophecy of *ahl-e erfan*, the Ottoman Empire would last until the Day of Judgment. These historical events were responsible for delaying the spread of the tariqa in Iran. For Nader Shah's letter and Sheikh Hassan's reply, see Muhammad Ra'uf Tavakuli, **Tarih-e Tesevuf der Kurdistan**, Tehran, 1376, pp. 137-138.

Sheikh Rasul III returned to Kermanshah in the early 19th century and gradually increased the status of the Qadiri sheikhs.[140] Despite lacking a major Qadiri center in Iran, the Barzinji sheikhs in Sulaymaniyah had great influence among Iranian Kurds and were respected by local Iranian officials. Kak Ahmadi Sheikh visited Iran at the invitation of the governor of Bana.[141] Later, Sheikh Saeed, grandson of Kak Ahmad, played a major role in propagating for the Ottomans among the Kurds of Iran and paving the way for their invasion of Kurdish territories of Iran during the reign of Abdulhamid II, (see Chapter IV).

1.1.2.2. Shiism and its Branches among Kurds

The Kurdish tribes in the southern regions neighboring the Shiite regions of the Ottoman Empire and Iran belong to the Shiite sect and several other religious beliefs close to the Shiites. On the Iranian side, they are located in the cities of Kermanshah, Kangavar, Hamadan, Maraghah, Tabriz, and Bijar. On the Ottoman side, some of them are located in the south of Khanaqin and Badra. Those parts located near Khanaqin are known as the Faili Kurds and have strong linguistic and religious (sectarian) ties with the Kurds of Ilam and Kermanshah in Iran as they all speak the Gorani dialect.[142] Along with the Failis, the Kalhur tribe, which was a large Kurdish tribe, all except a small percentage of them were Shiites.[143] Regarding Sufism, at least two Shiite Sufi tariqas are prevalent among the Kurds of Kermanshah, Ni'matullahi, and Khaksari. However, these two tariqas are within the framework of religious and sectarian nature and did not have the same political and social dominance as the Sunni Sufi tariqas.[144]

1.1.2.3. Yarsanism (Ahl-i Haqq)

Although this group is referred to as a religious minority, it is the second largest and most widespread religious group among the Kurds after Sunnisim.

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[140] Muhammad Ali Sultani, **Tarikh-e Tessevuf der Kermanshah**, Tehran, 1374, p. 257.
[141] Tavakuli, p. 139.
[142] Kiyumers-i Azimi & Muhammad Ali Chlunger, "Perakendegiye Firek u Mezahibi Teşşeiy'u der Kurdistan", **Feslname-ye İlmiy-e Shiye Shunasi**, 1391; 81-100, p. 84.
[143] Ali Akbar khan-e Sanjabi, **il-i Sanjabi-u Mujahadat-e Milli-ye Iran**, Tehran 1393, p. 4.
[144] Izady, **op. cit.**, p. 33.

According to Izady, they make up about 10%-15% of Kurdish society.[145] They are located in the regions of Kermanshah, especially Qasr-i Shirin, Sarpol-e Zahab, Karand, Sahneh, Mahidasht, Halwan, and even some of them are present in Kirkuk, Sulaymaniyah, and Khanaqin. The most prominent tribes belonging to this religious group are the Goran, Sanjabi, part of Kalhur, Zangana, Kandula, and Jalalwand tribes.[146] Part of them also is located in the mountainous areas of eastern Halabja. The most important religious center for the group is the shrine of Baba Yadgar, located deep in the Goran region in the city of Gahwara [147], 40 miles east of Kermanshah.[148] As Hurshid Pasha mentions, according to the beliefs of the Gorans, the grave is sacred because it is the grave of Hussein ibn Ali.[149] They have a special respect for Ali ibn Abu Talib and regard him as one of their religious figures.[150]

1.1.2.4. Alawites

Alawites are another religious sect that is prevalent among the Kurds. As the name suggests, this group is close to the Shiites and most of the Zaza Kurds of Anatolia and some of the neighboring Kurmanji Kurds belong to this religious sect. Alawites in the region are not unique to the Kurds, some of their neighboring Turkmen tribes and Syrian Arabs are also Alawites. Previously, the word Qizilbash has been used in a negative context for Turkmen and Alawite Kurds, who themselves reject the term.[151] Minorsky states there is a close relationship between this sect and the Yarsan, who view the Alawites as part of themselves.[152]

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[145] **Ibid.**

[146] Najati Abdullah, **Kurdistan we Niza' al-Hudud al-Turkey al_Irani 1843-1932: Al-Impratoryat al-Hudud**, **we al-Qabail al-Kurdiye**, Trans. by Suad Muhammad Khidir, Dezgay Zhin, Sulaymaniyah, 2020, p. 119.

[147] According to Sanjabi, until the early 20th century, Gahwara, had about four hundred houses of the Goran, it was an important center of agriculture, grain, tobacco and horticulture, and was the residence of the Goran tribe. See Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 12.

[148] Izady, **op. cit.**, p. 33; Minorsky, **Kurd**, p. 124-125.

[149] Hurshid Pasha, **op. cit.**, p. 116.

[150] Hurshed Pasha points out that the greatest oath of this religious group was the oath of the sword of Ali bin Abu Talib, which indicates their proximity to Shiite. See Hurshid Pasha, **op. cit.**, p. 117

[151] Minorsky demonstrates that in Iran they used the word 'Qizilbash' as an insult https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/alevi 17.05.2022; Minorsky, **Kurd**, p. 123.

[152] **Ibid.**, 122.

1.1.2.5. Yazidism

Yazidi followers make up about 5% of the total Kurdish population.[153] According to Zeki Beg in the early 20th century, Yazidis generally inhabited Aleppo, Van, Erzurum and most of them in Mosul, Shangar, and Sheikhan districts, and were around 300,000 in number.[154] In general, the Yazidis have been viewed negatively by other Kurdish Muslim tribes and have faced persecution and displacement. As Dervish and Hurshid Pashas state the area of Abagha, located between Maku and Bayazit, was previously mostly inhabited by the Yazidis but they abandoned it because of the nomad Kurdish tribes, who constantly looted them.[155] Yazidis have two holy books, the Jilwah, written by Sheikh Adi, and Mashafa Rash, written in the 14th century.[156]

1.1.2. Geographical Distribution of Linguistic and Religious Differences

Apart from some exceptions, the Sunni sect is predominant in both southern and northern Kurmanji parts, and other religious groups close to the Shiite sect are spread among the Kurds who speak different branches of Zazaki-Gorani. More precisely, the Kurmanji Kurds (excluding Yazidis) are all Sunnis. Zazaki-Gorani (although some are Sunni) are mostly divided into other religious groups such as Yarsanism, Shiite, and Alawite. Geographically (if only frontier regions are considered) from Bayazit to the north of Zahab are Sunnis while Shiite and Yarsan groups are located between Zahab and Khanaqin.

Naturally, these religious divisions have deepened the social and political divisions between each of these linguistic groups and created further detachments. This means that different groups such as Kurmanji and Zaza-Goran are not only different in terms of their speaking dialect but also in terms of religious beliefs. This had a major impact on the division and dispersion of political affiliation among the Kurds and the creation of further cultural gaps. As a result, the belongingness of the

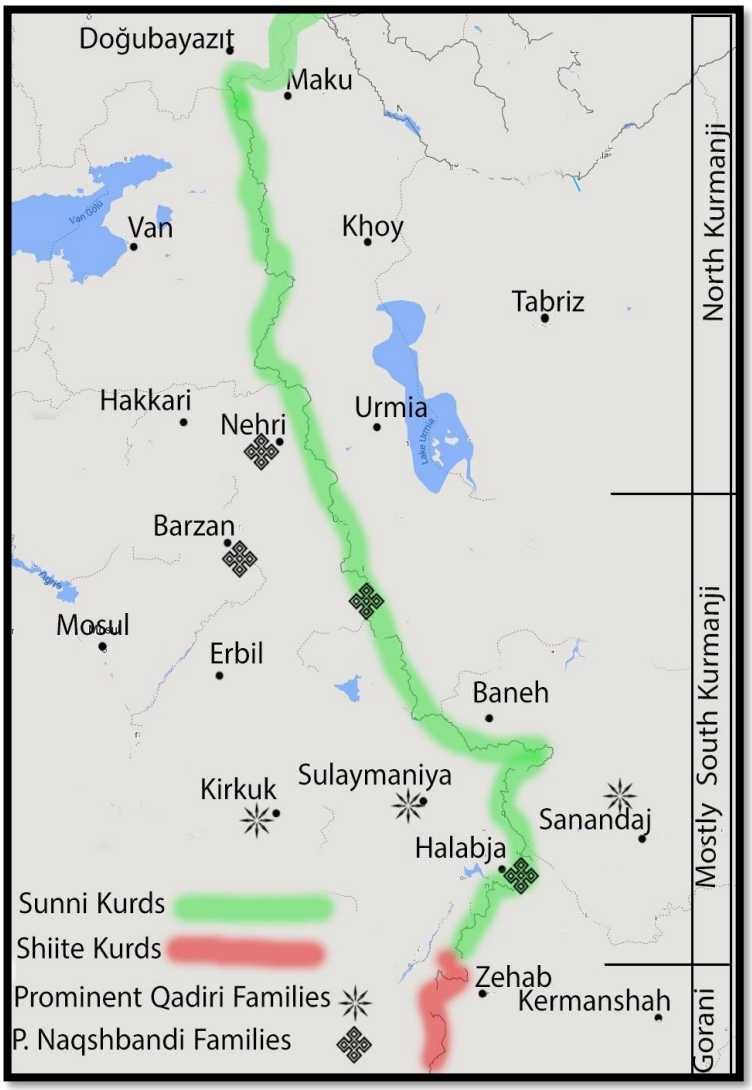
[153] Izady, **op. cit.**, p. 350.
[154] Zeki Beg, **Xulaseyeki Tarixi**, p. 222.
[155] Dervish Pasha, **op. cit.**, p. 137; Hurshid Pasha, **op. cit.**, p. 342.
[156] Hurshid Pasha, **op. cit.**, pp. 224-225.

Kurdish tribes was divided between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. In general, the Shiite tribes such as Kalhur and Sanjabi have played an important role in Strengthening Iran's position in the Zahab and Qasr-i Shirin regions. Just as the Sunni tribes in the north had more allegiance to the Ottoman Empire, even those who were geographically in Iran, according to Hurshid Pasha, were supporters of the Ottoman Empire and used to deliver Friday prayer speeches in the name of the Ottoman Sultan.[157] Harris describes the affiliation of the Kurds in Iran with the Ottoman Empire in the late 19th century as follows:

> The Kurds of Persia, on account of their being Sunnis, would join the Turks, for even in Persian Kurdistan they recognize the Sultan Abdul-Hamid as their Caliph.[158]

[157] Hurshid Pasha states that during his trip he attended Friday prayer in Sardasht among the Bilbas tribe and realized that they deliver Friday Khutba on the name of Sultan. See Hurşit Paşa, **op. cit.**, p. 286.

[158] Walter Harris, **From Batum to Baghdad: Viâ Tiflis**, **Tabriz**, **and Persian Kurdistan**. W. Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1896, p. 286.



Map 1. Linguistic and religious divisions and dominant Tariqa families in the frontier regions

1.2. FRONTIERSMEN: HOW FRONTIERS SHAPED THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE KURDISH TRIBES

As Hall indicates: Almost any border or boundary zone, when viewed from a sufficient distance, appears as a sharp line, when viewed up close, however, it becomes a zone having some width and often having blurry edges. The above expression is more accurate for the Ottoman-Iranian frontiers, where even regional frontier officials were sometimes unsure of the actual boundaries of their respective

states.[159] In most of the peace treaties between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, instead of determining a precise borderline, names of the cities and regions that would be the last points of the frontier were mentioned to separate their political territory. As a result, between the furthest edge of one state and the furthest edge of another, there remains an area used by tribes on both sides. The "right to use" as a relationship between people to land rather than the "ownership" is part of the characteristics of the pre-demarcation period. Accordingly, these tribes did not need to own a vast pasture to be able to use them. Instead, sometimes, two groups used the same land or water resources in two different seasons. These were responsible for the creation and consolidation of tribal relations but later complicated the understanding of who the real owners of the lands were.

What helped create these intermingled relations was that most of the tribes were not only culturally similar or close to each other but sometimes the same tribe was divided between the two countries. Therefore, an interconnected tribal network, intertwined with strong ties of friendship and conflict, spread along the border and to a depth of dozens of kilometers in both states. Some of these tribes, such as Jaf, which was considered an Ottoman tribe, entered Iran at a depth of 160 kilometers in the summer and reached Saqiz.[160] Other tribes such as Bilbas, Haideran, Jalali, Harki, etc., had part of their subtribes in Iran and part in Ottoman territory, all of which summered and wintered in a large area between the Ottoman Empire and Iran.

However, as Harris noted, the Kurdish tribes were not leaving the Kurdish areas on either the Ottoman or Iranian side. He attributes this to cultural and racial differences, but the main reason was that the frontiers had given them a fertile ground for nomadic life. Being nomadic, the tribes had the opportunity to evade material obligations and legal accountability. All the travelers and writers who observed the behavior of the Kurdish tribes at that time noted that tribes always tried to take advantage of the openness of the border. The tribes generally operated outside the radar of the state and their territories were relatively neglected with little state

[159] For example, the governor of Azerbaijan in a letter to Tehran stated that he could not send troops to some areas because he was not sure whether these areas belong to Iran or the Ottoman Empire. **GESIO.**, vol. IV, p. 125. 20 Muharram 1314.
[160] Harries, **op. cit.**, p. 185.

oversight. Even until the early 20th century, based on an agreement between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, none of them were allowed to send military forces to the frontier eras.[161] Therefore, these territories became a paradise for groups that rebelled against the government.[162] Additionally, another factor that made it easy for them to move around was that some of these tribes were citizens of both countries. The most obvious example of this was the tribe of Bilbas, who spent their summers in Iran and winters in the Ottoman territories. As Curzon had noted:

> This mixed nationality of one family and the still unsettled state of the frontier cause interminable disputes between the governments of Persia and Turkey. The Kurds, being equally at home in one country as in the other, cross the border whenever they feel inclined or it suits their purpose, either for business or to evade proper punishment due to crimes committed in one or the other country. All attempts to levy taxes, enforce conscription, and arrest offenders are thwarted by a hasty migration to Persia or Turkey, as the case may be.[163]

The granting of citizenship by both states was because they needed tribes' support as much as tribes required the state's support. Especially as both sides sought to assert ownership of the disputed areas, which were located in the pastures of nomadic tribes. The subordination of each of these tribes to the Ottoman Empire or Iran was equivalent to the ownership of one of the two states over their pastures. Even in an important area such as Qutur, which was the most significant disputed area and before the treaty of Berlin 1878 belonged to the Ottoman Empire, some of its villages were sold by Musa Bey to Iranian authorities. He was one of the tribe chiefs of Mahmudi district which was a subordinate of the Ottoman Empire. Consequently, these areas became Iranian properties.[164] This incident explains how regional characters have played roles in border issues.

What was mentioned above contributed to the creation of a specific lifestyle in which the frontiersmen were able to enjoy semi-independence while preserving

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[161] Soane, **Raportêk leser Slêmani**, p. 101. For further details see the third section of this chapter .

[162] Perhaps the most prominent example of this, is the rebellion of Salman Agha, brother of Mohammad Agha the chief of the Mamash clan, when he rebelled in Iran in 1896 and moved to the status quo area and Iran did not go after him in the region to avoid making tension with the Ottomans. Ten years later, however, when the Iranian forces went to the region for another purpose, it became an excuse for the Ottomans to take over Lahijan and its surroundings. This is discussed in more details in Chapter IV.

[163] Curzon, **op. cit.**, vol. I, p. 555.

[164] Hurshid Pasha, **op. cit.**, p. 344.

their distinct religious and linguistic identities. At the same time, however, the unstable and marginalized life of the frontier left the Kurdish society as an underdeveloped society. Many journalistic reports and historical sources regarding the events in the Kurdish regions in the late 19th and early 20th centuries portray the Kurds as illiterate, disorderly, bloodthirsty, hard-hearted, and lawless. Above that, an unstable and marginalized frontier was an obstacle to the development of cities and urban features in the Kurdish regions. The frontier, as a semi-open area, has always been seen as a source of instability and threat until the pre-modern state era and its inhabitants have often been described as a source of headaches. This view is generally reflected in sources that viewed the frontier from the metropoles. The frontier that passed through the Kurdish tribes was human and physical barriers in the eyes of the metropolitans, but a wide area of traffic in the eyes of its inhabitants, an area that is both separated and intertwined at the same time.

1.2.1. Tribes in the Kurdish Society

Tribe, like any other political and social concept, carries more than one definition and has always appeared in different forms. Therefore, despite the various research on tribes, it is not easy to agree on a comprehensive and specific definition of the term, especially when it comes to the Kurdish tribes. This is because the structure of tribes varied from one region to another. In addition, the nature and size of tribes and tribal confederations were dynamically changing and were always under the influence of intertribal and external political events.[165] In order to gain a better understanding of tribes within Kurdish society, we will be presenting Bruinessen's definition of Kurdish tribes for a more comprehensive explanation. Bruinessen defines Kurdish tribes as:

[165] Bruinessen has observed the example of the Jaf and Milan tribes, whose number of clans gathered around them increased, when they were strong, and decreased when they were weak. See Bruinessen, **op. cit.**, p. 55.

The Kurdish tribe is a socio-political and generally also a territorial (and therefore economic) unit based on descent and kinship, genuine or putative, with a characteristic internal structure.[166]

Until the formation of political organizations in the early 20th century, Kurdish society was mainly a tribal society, and most political and military movements took place within the tribal framework. Of course, during the Kurdish emirates, the tribes were to some extent gathered around several ruling families, but, in the mid-19th century, after the end of the Kurdish emirates by the Ottoman Empire and later the end of the ruling dynasties of Ardalan and Mukri by Iran, the Kurdish tribes gained more influence and became important political players, especially in the frontiers.

1.2.2. Political and Social Structures of the Kurdish Tribes

In the tribal structure, the tribe is the largest social and political unit which is divided into several subtribes, and subtribes are divided into smaller units such as clans, lineages, and households. In Kurdish society, the names of *Hoz, Tira, Xel, Bnamala, and Khezan* are used sequentially for each of the above units. [167] Household is the smallest social unit and the cornerstone in the tribe. Some families with a common ancestor form a lineage, some lineages form a clan, and some clans form a tribe.[168] However, this was not always the case. Among the Kurds, as Nikitine observed in the early 20th century, tribes consisted of two main elements, the fixed and the variable. The fixed elements were those who were naturally connected to the chief through kinship and blood. The variable elements are other social groups that have joined the tribe because of a particular political or social situation and may be joining another tribe in the future.[169]

The size of each tribe depended on the number of families. In the life of the nomadic tribes, each family lived in a tent, and accordingly, the size of each tribe

[166] Bruinessen, **op. cit.**, p. 46.
[167] These Kurdish usages vary from place to place and because of the diversity of dialects of the Kurdish language, there are dozens of names and expressions for social and political groups related to tribe.
[168] For further details, see Bruinessen, **op. cit.**, p. 51.
[169] Nikitine, **op. cit.**, pp. 149-150.

was determined by the number of its tents. In terms of security, the chief's tent (*Diwekhan*), which was the place for meetings, problem-solving, and administration, was larger than everyone else's tent and was usually in the middle or best location.[170] Chieftains had great power, and the war and peace of the tribes they headed depended on their will. Even among the powerful tribes, no clan has been able to easily reconcile with state authority against the will of the chief.[171] As Hurshid Pasha noted, if one clan disobeyed and protested the orders of the chief, he with the help of other clans, began to kill them and took all their properties without anyone being able to prevent him.[172] Among the tribes, the ruling family of one clan also headed the entire tribe. Naturally, leadership among the different clans of a tribe and the clan itself that ruled the tribe was in succession. In some rare cases, When the power of one clan and its leader became strong (or the power of one of the members of the ruling group), he challenged the authority of the tribal chief and headed or split the tribe. These occurred especially when the state, both on the Ottoman and Iranian sides, to weaken the power of a tribal chief, backed one of the rival chiefs and officially declared them as the chief of the tribe (Chapters III, IV).

The gathering of sub-tribes within a unified tribe is often referred to as a tribal confederation. According to Bruinessen, these confederations were created by the state in the past.[173] This view is true in that the state has always been able to give legitimacy to one of the clans within a tribe, giving it more power and domination over other sub-tribes, and creating a center of strength and communication among the divided sub-tribes. On the Iranian side, the state had been able to link the subtribes to Tehran by granting some chieftains the rank of Ilkhan. The Ilkhan of each tribe was the state-recognized chief of the tribe and was responsible for collecting taxes. Some

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[170] **Ibid.**, 149-150.

[171] For example, when one of the clans of the Jaf decided to settle as part of the Ottoman administrative reforms, against the wishes of the tribal chief Mohammed Pasha, the latter captured its chief until died in prison. See Ely Banister Soane, **Notes on the Tribes of Southern Kurdistan**, Government Press, 1918, p. 15.

[172] Hurshid Pasha, **op. cit.**, p. 281.
In early 20th century, Soane expressed his surprise at the Kurds' blind submission to their leaders. He states that when he once encountered a group of ten individuals who had come back from fighting and inquired about their reasons for fighting, they replied that they did not know the reason and that they had participated in the fighting only at the behest of their chief. Soane, **Raportêk leser Slêmani**, p. 76.

[173] Bruinessen, **op. cit.**, p. 61.

of these like Daud Khan, the chief of Kalhur became very powerful. In the early 20th century, he became the unrivaled power in Kermanshah and was able to take control of other major tribes such as Sanjabi, Goran, and Zangana through forces and friendly relations and he changed the local rulers without returning to the government.[174]

1.2.3. Lifestyle and Livelihood Sources Among the Kurdish Tribes

The Kurdish tribes are generally divided into two main categories: nomadic and sedentary. The nomadic can be divided into two categories, fully nomadic and semi-nomadic. As Zeki Beg observed in the early 20th century, the fully nomadic tribe among the Kurds had completely disappeared, and what remained was either sedentary or semi-nomadic.[175] By the mid-19th century, one-third of the Kurdish tribes were nomadic, but the number of nomads was declining.[176] This transition was partly due to the settlement policies adopted by Istanbul and Tehran.[177] The nomadic tribes that are the main subject of this study have attracted the attention of travelers and orientalists for many reasons. Because of the winter and summer locations of these tribes, some of which were on the Iranian side and some on the Ottoman side, they have always been a source of trouble between the two states.

There were various reasons why the tribes continued to lead a nomadic lifestyle, including geographical, political, economic, and social factors. The main source of livelihood of the Jaf, Hamawand, Bilbas, Haidaran, Kalhur, and Sanjabi tribes was livestock breeding and they looked for a suitable environment for their cattle in summer and winter. The highlands on the Iranian side have a favorable summer and a cold winter. In contrast, the plains of Zahab and Shahrazur have more favorable winters and harsh summers. Despite the depletion of water resources in

[174] Zeki Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 213.
[175] Ali Riza Godarzi, **İli Kelhur le Sardami Meşrutiyetda**, Trans. by Muhsin beni Weyis, Ekadimiyay Hoşiyari u Pegeyandni Kadiran, Sulaymaniyah, 2013, p. 26; Jehanbakhsh Sevakib & Pervin Rostami, "Ozaye Siyasiye Kirmanshah Muqarn-e Junbush-e Meshrutiyat (1324-1327)", **Biannual Research Journal of Iran Local Histories** (Pejeohshnamh-e Tarihi-e Mhli-e Iran), 7th Year, No. 2 Season. 14, Spring & Summer, 2019; 207-230, p. 224.
[176] Hurshid Pasha points out that 20 years befor, the Jaf tribe had no land in Sharazor, but until his time they began to plant grain and take their crops with them. Hurshid Pasha, **op. cit.**, p. 260.
[177] Abdurrahman Qasimllu, **Kurdistan û Kurd**, Trans. by Abdullah Hasan Zade, Erbil, 2007, p. 126.

these areas, the temperature rises above 45 degrees Celsius and dries the plants before summer. In such a difficult situation, the cattle breeders could not provide enough pasture for their livestock and had to move to the Iranian summer quarters.

The livelihood of the nomadic tribes generally depended on their cattle. In addition to providing them with the necessities of life, it also provided them with a kind of trade. They sold wool and dairy products, made knitting, embroidery products, rugs, and carpet, and sold them in other cities while using the remaining products for their tents and quarters.[178]

In contrast to the nomad Kurds, there were the sedentary Kurds, who were divided into two main categories: rural and urban. In the cities, some small industries, such as mining, carpentry, textile craft, and knitting flourished. In some cities, there were weapons and ammunition manufacturers. For example, there were 150 gunsmiths in Sulaymaniyah at the beginning of the 20th century.[179] Hurshid Pasha observed that the city of Van had business sectors such as carving, sewing, dyeing, embroidery, and carpentry and they had some trade with Iran.[180] The same author remarks that the people of Sulaymaniyah were very interested in trade, industry, and agriculture.[181]

The second sedentary group was rural Kurds who were mainly engaged in agriculture. These were mostly people who did not belong to the large tribes and did not have much social support. This situation has forced them to comply with the demands of the state, but at the same time, it has caused them to be oppressed by the nomadic tribes and treated differently. According to Bruinessen, in some areas, farmers who did not belong to any tribe were bought and traded with the lands and owned by the chieftains.[182] However, despite being oppressed by other Kurdish tribes, they were also subjected to forced labor by the state and landowners. The livelihood of these villagers depended on agriculture, while some of them raised a

[178] **Ibid.**, 265.
[179] Edmodns, **op. cit.**, p. 114.
[180] Hurshid Pasha, **op. cit.**, p. 338.
[181] **Ibid.**, 246.
[182] Bruinessen, **op. cit.**, p. 102.

small number of animals for private use and used their products for plowing apart the cultivation of wheat, barley, tobacco, and fruits.[183]

1.2.4. Nomadic Tribes Within Geographical, Administrative and Cultural Divisions

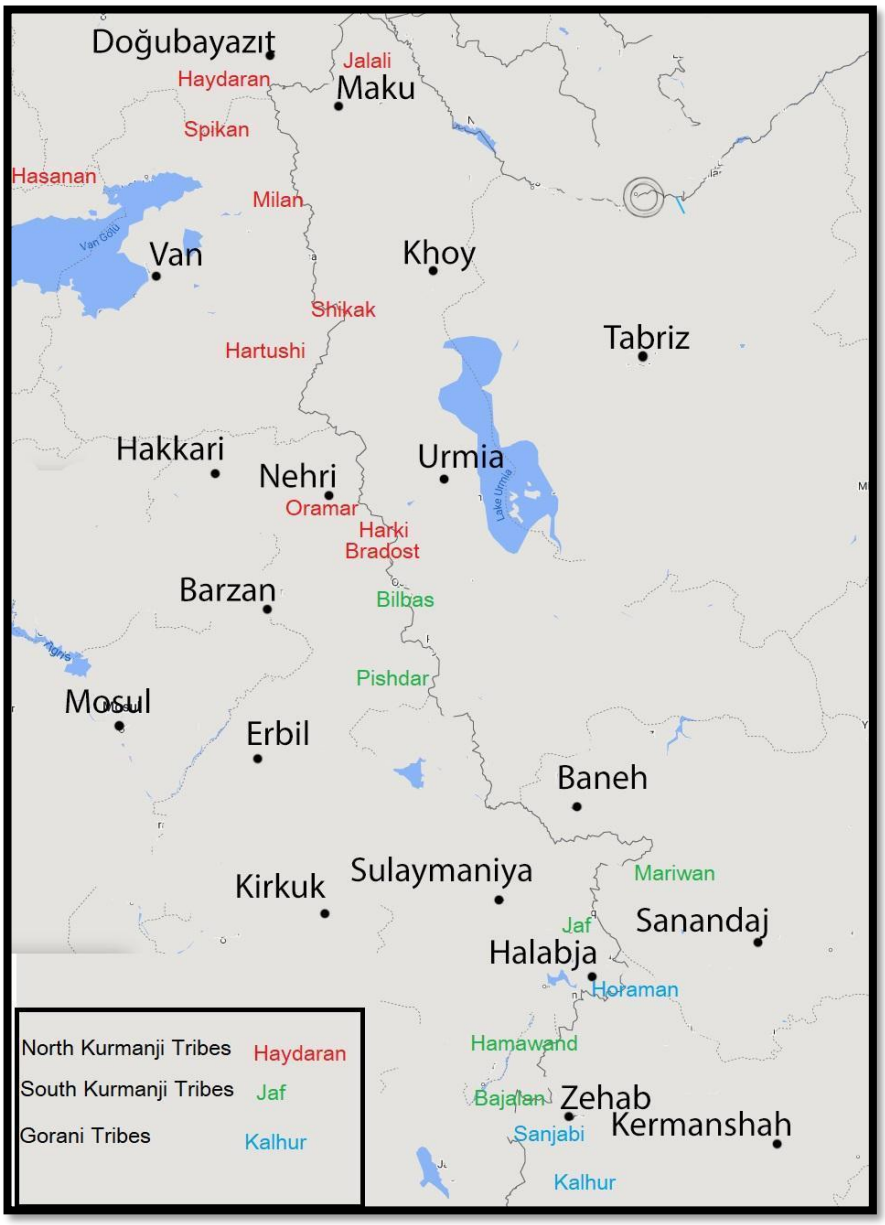
According to the religious and linguistic differences discussed in the first section, along the frontier, the Kurds were divided into three different cultural groups, each living in three different administrative regions (with some exceptions).[184] On the Ottoman side, this division separated the regions of 1- Van (Bayazit, Van, and Hakkari), 2- Sulaymaniyah, and 3- Khanaqin from three regions of Iran: 1- Azerbaijan, 2- Kurdistan (Sinna), and 3- Kermanshah provinces respectively. The difference was such that the officials on both sides discussed the formation of three different commissions to resolve the frontier issues between the two sides, so that a commission for the border between Van and Azerbaijan, a commission for the border between Sulaymaniyah and Sinna and a commission to solve the problems of Khanaqin-Kermanshah should be formed.[185] Although these three regions were administratively different from each other, at the same time the tribes and residents of each of these areas in terms of the speaking dialect and religious practices are more or less different from the residents of other regions. The first region is northern Kurmanji and Sunni, the second region is Southern Kurmanji and Sunni, and the third region is Gorani and Yarsan, Shiite, and Sunni.

1.2.5. The Prominent Tribes on the Ottoman-Iranian Frontiers in the Late 19th Century

The following discusses the tribes spread along the border between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. However, it should be noted that the location of these

[183] Kamaran Muhammad, **Kurdistan le Bazney Keşekani Rojhelatida**, Erbil, 2007, p. 34.
[184] According to the Izady's division, four of these sections are on the border. They are from the top of the north to the southern part of Lake Urmia, the eastern part of the Iranian side, which extends from Bijar and Marivan regions, the central part, which covers Sulaymaniyah, Erbil and Shahrazur, the fourth is the southern part, which includes the Goran, Laki and Yarsan regions. Izady, **op. cit.**, pp. 33-38. However, the problem with this division is the separating of the eastern and central parts, while they are similar in terms of dialect, culture and religious belief.
[185] **GESIO.**, vol. IV., p. 204, 8 Ramazan 1318.

tribes has changed over time. This replacement was sometimes related to tribal agreements or disputes and Sometimes to the agreements of the tribes with the Ottoman Empire or Iran. In addition, most of these tribes were nomadic, and some of their pastures were outside the borders of the state in which they lived. Examples of these are the Jalali, Haideran, Shikak, Bilbas, Jaf, Sanjabi, and Kalhur tribes. For this reason, they were always in motion between the two states. Below, considering the cultural differences and their geographical location, in three groups, we will discuss the most prominent tribes from the north to the south that settled on the frontier and were involved in border issues between the two states.



Map 2. The largest tribal confederations of the frontier were divided according to their linguistic groups. (The map has been created by the author).

1.2.5.1. The First Group of the Kurdish (Northern Kurmanji Speaking Tribes)

This group consisted of the tribes that generally spoke the Northern Kurmanji dialect and were spread across the frontier from Bayazit-Maku to the south of Lake Urmia in Iran and the Barzan region on the Ottoman side. These tribes are religiously

Sunni Muslims. The important issues that are mostly related to the tribes of this group were the movement of Sheikh Ubeidullah Nehri, the formation of the Hamidiye cavalry, and the Ottoman occupation of some parts of Iran during 1905-1912. Some of these tribes were major players in the conflicts between the two states along with some of the tribes of the second group during the incidents described above. The most prominent tribes of this group are Haideran, Jalali, Hasanan, Spikanli, Milan, Shikak, Hartushi, Oremar, Harki, and Bradost tribes which were mostly semi-nomadic.

1.2.5.1.1. The Haideran Tribe

The Haideran tribe is spread over a large area at the northern end of the border between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. The tribe, which numbered 20,000 families until the early 20th century, was the largest Kurdish tribe between Mush and Urmia, as Sykes observed.[186] They were also referred to by Soane as the strongest tribe on the Azerbaijan frontier. There are different opinions about the origin of this tribe. While some assert that it was originally a branch of the Zilan tribe, others believe it was part of the Hasanan tribe.[187] Both the Ottoman Empire and Iran tried to bring the tribe closer to themselves. The Iranian authorities recognized the tribe as an Iranian tribe and considered the regions of Khuy and Yerevan to be the original place of the tribe.[188] In contrast, the Ottomans considered it an Ottoman tribe. According to Cevded Pasha, the tribe originally inhabited Diyarbakir and Farqin (present-day Silvan), then moved to Mush, Malazgird, and Arjish, and they would migrate to Iran for wintering and summering.[189]

The role of this large tribe first appeared in the first half of the 19th century. Together with the Spikan tribe, they became one of the main causes of the Ottoman-Iranian war of 1821-1823, which resulted in the treaty of Erzurum 1823.[190] In

[186] Sykes, **op. cit.**, p. 478.
[187] Soane, **op. cit.**, p. 80.
[188] **GESIO.**, vol. I, p. 143-144
[189] Ahmed Cevdet, **op. cit.**, vol. II, p. 12.
[190] See the Introduction.

subsequent years, Iran has made several attempts to repatriate the tribe.[191] On the Ottoman side, the tribe made a great contribution to the Hamidiye cavalry regiments. However, the different clans of this tribe became involved in internal conflicts to gain more hegemony and power.[192] During the 1890-1896 conflict over the ownership of the Abegha region and the killing of the son of the chief of the Jalali tribe, tensions broke out between the Haidaran and the Jalali Tribes. This led to a long political and diplomatic dispute between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. In these conflicts, Iran defended the Jalali tribe and the Ottoman Empire supported the Haidaran tribe (Chapter IV).

1.2.5.1.2. The Jalali Tribe

This tribe is located across the northern border between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, although it is more concentrated around Maku and Ararat[193]. However, some of the clans of the tribe were spread over the Iranian side of Pildasht, Chaipara, Chalderan, and Khuy. This tribe is considered the largest tribe in Azerbaijan province on the Iranian side. It consists of ten clans[194]. The tribe lived a nomadic life. In winter, they moved to the Ottoman-Iranian border areas near the Sarisu and Aras rivers, and in summer to the Ararat and Avajik regions.[195] The most significant incident that happened with this tribe was their dispute with the Haideran tribe. Although the tribe was Sunni, they were largely dominated by the Iranian-backed

[191] Cehangir Mirza, **Tarih-e Nu; Şaml-e Hevadis-e Devre-ye Qacariye**, Ed. Abas Ashtiyani, Alam, 1384, pp. 206-207.
[192] After Haideran's participation, three tribal chiefs became more capable in the Hamidiye cavalry regiments. They were Hussein, Teymur and Haji Teymur Pasha, all of whom were cousins and had influence in the regions of Patnos, Arjish and Adiljevaz. However, they quarreled to dominate each other. Erdal Çiftçi, **Fragile Alliances in The Ottoman East: The Haideran Tribe and The State**, 1820-1929. Doctoral dissertation, Bilkent University (Turkey), 2018. p. 271.
[193] **GESIO.**, vol. II, p. 29. According to Hasan Jaf, their name gradually changed from Galali to Jalali. Hasan Jaf, "Tahqiqi dr Mored-I Yek Taifaya Nashinakhteye Irani", **Berresiha-ye Tarikh-e Khordad-u Tir**, 1357, No. 2, p. 290. However, this may not be correct, because all Jaf tribes speak the Southern Kurmanji dialect and the Jalal tribe speaks the Northern Kurmanji dialect. Besides the Jalal tribe itself has several clans and is larger than being a part of a clan.
[194] William Eagleton, **al-Aşair al-Kurdiye**, Trans.by Hussein Ahmed al-Jaf, Dezgay Aras, Erbil, 2007, p. 74.
[195] Fehminaz Çabuk, **Osmanlı-Rus-İran Hudut Boylarında Yaşayan Kürt Aşiretlerinin Bölgesel İlişkilere Etkisi (1850-1900)**, Erciyes University unpublished doctoral dissertation, Kayseri, 2017, p. 170.

Azari Bayat tribe, which ruled Maku. They even played a main role in the defeat of Sheikh Ubeidullah's revolution.[196]

1.2.5.1.3. The Hasanan Tribe

This tribe was a large tribe in the areas of Hins, Malazgird, and Varto, consisting of 3,300 families and owning 110 villages.[197] They participated in the Hamidiye cavalry in several regiments. According to Soane, the clans of this tribe did not enter Iran, but some of their cavalries attacked villages on the Iranian frontier.[198]

1.2.5.1.4. The Spikan Tribe

The tribe was originally a branch of Hasanan, which spread westward around Bayazit and owned some areas on the Iranian frontier. They also spread from Ararat in the north to the south of Mount Tanadorak into Iran.[199] The tribe had 3,000 families[200] and participated in the Hamidiye regiments.[201]

1.2.5.1.5. The Milan Tribe

The original place of this tribe is Khuy. They were a medium-sized, semi-nomadic tribe that moved in summer to the pastures of Zuzan near the Ottoman frontier between Chaldiran and Qutur.[202] They were originally part of the large Milli confederation[203] in northern Mesopotamia and were always in constant contact with other Milli tribe clans.[204] With the creation of the Hamidiye cavalry, the tribe's chief Ibrahim Pasha became the most powerful Kurdish tribal chief in the region. Later

[196] According to Çabuk, the tribe had a reputation for rebellion and participated heavily in killing and looting, for further details see Çabuk, **op. cit.**, pp. 170-171.
[197] Sykes, **op. cit.**, p. 476.
[198] Soane, **op. cit.**, p. 79.
[199] **Ibid.**
[200] Sykes, **op. cit.**, p. 477.
[201] İbrahim Özcoşar and Abdusselam Ertekin, "Sultan ve Aşiret: Hamidiye Alayları Aşiret Reislerinin II. Abdülhamid'i Ziyareti", **Artuklu İnsan ve Toplum Bilim Dergisi**, 2019/4 (2); 23-38, p. 36.
[202] Eagleton, **op. cit.**, p. 83.
[203] The Milli Tribal Confederation was one of the largest tribal confederations migrating between Iran and the Ottoman Empire until the early eighteenth century. For further details see, Mustafa Güler, Ortadoğu Jeopolitiğinde Aşiret Yapıları (Milli aşiretleri Konfederasyonu Örneği), Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Ma Dissertation, 2019, p. 3.4.
[204] Çabuk, **op. cit.**, p. 37.

rebelled against the Committee of Union and Progress in reaction to the ouster of Sultan Abdulhamid II.

1.2.5.1.6. The Shikak Tribe

They were spread from the south of the Milan tribe in the areas of Qutur, Salmas, Somai, and Bradost to the eastern regions of Van.[205] According to Hurshid Pasha, the tribe was divided into seven clans. They were; Abdawi, Hanare, Kardar, Shara, Bota, Kazki, and Kawana. Most of the tribe's clans were in Iran, and others were in some parts of Hakkari in the Ottoman Empire. They were a large tribe with about 6,000 families and spent about three months of the year as nomads.[206] According to Soane, until the early 20th century, the tribe was evenly distributed on both sides of the frontier. In summer, they moved to the foothills of the southwestern mountains of Salmas, and in winter, they descended to its plains. Some of them went to Bashkala in the Ottoman territory and others settled in the mountainous regions of Bradost.[207] The tribe played a major role in the border disputes between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. During Sheikh Ubeidullah's rebellion, they joined his troops (See Chapter II). Parts of this tribe also participated in the Hamidiye cavalry.[208] At the beginning of the 20th century, this tribe played a major role in the border disputes between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. Ismail Agha, known as Simko (1880s-1930), became the most prominent Kurdish political and military figure in the region from the early 20th century. His political hegemony transcended his tribe and led the Kurdish national movement in the border regions of Azerbaijan until his assassination.

1.2.5.1.7. The Artushi (Hartushi) Tribe

This was one of the tribes of Hakkari that moved between the two states.[209] The tribe consisted of 7,000 households. [210]According to Sykes, the nomadic section

[205] **GESIO.**, vol. II, p. 29.
[206] Sykes, **op. cit.**, p. 461.
[207] Soane, **op. cit.**, p. 81.
[208] Özcoşar and Ertekin, **op. cit.**, p. 30.
[209] According to Soane, Hakkari is the name of a large Kurdish tribe, despite being a border area. He also mentions Jilo, Şemzinan, Oramar and Zebari as clans of Hakkari tribe, which is not a correct division and Hakkari is the name of the region, not a tribe. It is likely that he confused it with the

of the tribe did not have a good reputation and was a source of trouble.[211] The tribe comprised of the following 12 clans: Ezdinan, Marzigi, Mamad, Alan, Baroz, Jeriki, Shidan, Mamkhor, Khawistan, Sharafan, Mamadan, Gavdan, Zadek, Zafki, Hafjan.[212]

1.2.5.1.8. The Oramar Tribe

Oramar[213] was originally the name of a village in Hakkari surrounded by other tribes. The tribe was headed by Sheikh Ubeidullah.[214]

1.2.5.1.9. The Harki Tribe

It was one of the largest tribes on the frontier. Their distribution was concentrated in the areas between Hakkari and Lake Urmia. In summer they moved to the Bil Plain on the Iranian side and in winter, they returned to Mirakhor in Rawanduz. They were neighbors of the Shikak tribe from Iran and the Surchi tribe from Rawanduz.[215] This tribe had a close relationship with Sheikh Ubeidullah and the Oramar tribe, such that Nikitine uses the term Harki-Oramar for both tribes.[216]

1.2.5.1.10. The Bradost Tribe

Bradost is the name of a region, a river, and the name of a tribe that has several branches.[217] The tribe consisted of 1,500 households.[218] The area was formerly the seat of the Bradost emirate. After the treaty of Zahab, the Qajar rule was

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name of the Harki tribe, since in some sources Oremar has mentioned as a clan of the Harki tribe. Soane, **Raportêk leser Slêmani**, p. 82.

[210] Çabuk, **op. cit.**, p. 25.

[211] Sykes, **op. cit.**, p. 462.

[212] **Ibid.**, 463.

[213] In some sources, the name of this tribe is mixed with Hawraman and the word Oraman is used instead of Oramar, even though the two are in two different locations.

[214] Soane, **op. cit.**, p. 83.

[215] Al-Azzawi, **op. cit.**, vol. IV, p. 157.

[216] Nikitine, **op. cit.**, p. 83.

[217] Soma in Bradost was a disputed area between Iran and the Ottoman Empire and was the source of some of the tensions between the two states. (See Chapter IV, V).

[218] Sykes, **op. cit.**, p. 453.

able to weaken the tribe in the region. However, as the Bradost tribe weakened, the Bilbas tribal confederation southern to Urmia increased its influence in the region.[219]

1.2.5.2. The Second Group of the Kurdish Tribes (Mostly Southern Kurmanji Speaking Tribes)

This group consists of tribes that speak the Southern Kurmanji (Sorani) dialect (except for the branch that speaks the Hawrami part of Goran, on both sides of the Hawraman Mountains. Religiously, including the Hawramis, they are Sunni Shafi'is. Their spread began in Oshnovieh on the Iranian side and in Rawanduz on the Ottoman side (the center of the Soran emirate, whose dialect is sometimes called Sorani after the name of the emirate). They spread across both sides of Qandil and extend to Zahab and Khanaqin. They are divided into two groups in connection with the border disputes that occurred in the late nineteenth and early 20th centuries. The first group included tribes such as Bilbas, Begzade, and Pishdar, which had a greater participation in border incidents due to geographical reasons. In 1880-1881 they played a major role in Sheikh Ubeidullah's rebellion and later they fell into the borderline that the Ottoman Empire occupied during 1905-1912 and participated in the Hamidiye cavalry regiments. The second sub-group, the Jaf tribe and tribes of Hamawan did not participate in the movement of Sheikh Ubeidullah or the Hamidiye cavalry and stayed away from the events that took place on the frontier between Van and Azerbaijan.

1.2.5.2.1. The Bilbas Tribe

The Bilbas tribe consisted of several main clans: Mangor, Mamash, Piran, Zudi, Sin, Gawrk, and Ramak.[220] The tribe spread on both sides of the Qandil Mountains. Some of the tribes' clans spent their winters in Koya, Pishdar, and Bitwen on the Ottoman side, and in the summer, they went to the pastures of Lahijan on the Iranian side. Both Iran and the Ottoman Empire treated the tribe as their subjects.[221] Although the tribe was Sunni in terms of religious doctrine, as both Dervish Pasha and Mushir al-Dawla had pointed out, because their pastures fell to

[219] Nawshirwan Mustafa, **op. cit.**, p. 39.
[220] Dervish Pasha, **op. cit.**, p. 299; Edmonds, **op. cit.**, p. 270; Mushir al-Dawla, **op. cit.**, p. 144.
[221] See Dervish Pasha, **op. cit.**, p. 301; Mushir al-Dawla, **op. cit.**, pp. 140-147; Ateş, **op. cit.**, p. 180.

Iran, they would choose Iran when determining the border.[222] The most prominent branch of this tribe is the Mamash clan, who settled in the western part of the Sauj Bulak Mountains and moved south in winter. Mostly they crossed the border to the lowlands of Rawanduz on the Ottoman side.[223] Another branch of the tribe is the Mangor clan, which has a long history of hostility with the Mamash. However, both clans joined Sheikh Ubeidullah 's rebellion together.

1.2.5.2.2 The Pishdar Tribe [224]

Pishdar is the name of another Kurdish tribe and a region on the Ottoman side. They lived in the mountains of northern Sardasht and went to the plains of Marga and Bana in Iran. According to Soane, they were known for their self-organization and strict authority, and their region's distance from their powerful neighbors liberated and protected them.[225] The original name of this tribe is Nuredini. However, later the name Pishdar was linked to the tribe after the name of their region. The Baban dynasty, which ruled a large part of Shahrazur and Sulaymaniyah until the mid-19th century, belonged to this tribe.[226]

1.2.5.2.3. The Jaf Tribe

Jaf is one of the largest Kurdish tribes that spread over the largest frontier area between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. The clans of this tribe have spread over the border from Penjwen, which is located east of Sulaymaniyah, to Zahab. The tribe was constantly in cyclical movement between the two states in winters and summers and was one of the sources of instability on the border between the two states. The tribe lived semi-independently and paid little taxes to the Ottoman Empire and Iran (See Chapter III).

1.2.5.2.4. The Hamawand Tribe

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[222] Dervish Pasha, **op. cit.**, p. 401; Mushir al-Dawla, **op. cit.**, p. 145.
[223] Soane, **op. cit.**, p. 84.
[224] In 1897, the name of Pishdar district was changed to Ma'muratulhamid, which is a district in the province of Sulaymaniyah and Mosul. Also see Sezen, **op. cit.**, p. 546.
[225] Soane, **op. cit.**, p. 85.
[226] Najati Abdullah, **Kurdistan we Niza' al-Hudud**, pp. 147-148.

Though Hamawand was a small tribe, they were the source of the most trouble across the frontier between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. The tribe was generally spread in the areas between Sulaymaniyah and Kirkuk, especially in both Bazian and Chamchamal districts.[227] Like Jafs, Hamawands were originally from Iran and came to the Ottoman side in the early 18th century.[228] The tribe was in constant conflict with neighboring tribes and administrative authorities in the border areas on both sides.

1.2.5.2.5. Tribes of Hawraman

Hawraman is a mountainous region that served as a natural border between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, located east of Gulanbar, the hometown of the Jaf tribal chiefs. Hawraman consisted of 35 villages that were equally divided between the two sides of the frontier. Unlike the Jafs, these villages were settled and engaged in agriculture and horticulture. These villagers mostly speak Hawrami and they are generally Sunni Shafi'is.[229] Albeit Soane refers to Hawraman as a tribe,[230]the more appropriate expression is the tribes of Hawraman. Because there are several tribes among the people of Hawraman, and there is no such thing as Hawraman tribe in Kurdish literature. The western side of the mountain, was located within the Ottoman border, was the hometown of the Naqshbandi sheikhs and had religious schools and Takiyas that are still operating as such.

1.2.5.3. The Third Group of the Kurdish Tribes (Gorani Speaking Tribes)

This group was geographically located south between Zahab and Khanaqin. The prevailing dialect spoken in the region is mostly Gorani, and they are divided religiously into Shiite, Yarsan, and Sunni. Most of the tribes of this group were politically and culturally close to Iran and rarely aligned themselves with the Ottoman Empire. In the early 20th century, especially in the context of the Ottoman-

[227] Nikitine, **op. cit.**, p. 198.
[228] Soane, **Notes on the Tribes**, p. 12.
[229] Al-Azzawi, **op. cit.**, vol. IV, p. 102.
[230] Soane, **Raportêk leser Slêmani**, p. 91.

Iranian disputes over the oil-rich areas of Zahab, they became part of the border conflicts between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, (See Chapter III). On the Ottoman side, however, there were the Bajalan, parts of Jaf, Dawda, and Talabani, who were Sunni tribes.

1.2.5.3.1. The Bajalan Tribe

This tribe was living in Zahab and spoke the Gorani dialect.[231] In the first half of the 19th century, it contained about 2,000 families.[232] The tribe consisted of several branches, not all of which may belong to the same linguistic group.[233] They were previously under the Ottoman Empire, and Sultan Murad IV granted them Zahab on condition that they would give 2,00 soldiers to the state if necessary.[234] However, when Zahab fell under Iranian rule in the early 19th century, the areas of this tribe fell under the rule of the Qajars. The tribe became more dominant in the last two decades of the 19th century, especially under the leadership of Aziz Khan Shuja'ul Mulk. In 1882, he was invited to Isfahan by Zil al-Sultan and assigned to govern the caravans in Zahab. On his return to western Iran, he built a fortress in Quratu, which he entrusted to his sons and relatives. After the death of Aziz Khan in 1903, the tribe weakened due to internal conflicts.[235]

1.2.5.3.2. The Sanjabi Tribe

It is one of the frontier tribes, mostly belonging to the Yarsan religious belief. According to its chief, Ali Akbar Sanjabi (1872-1935), there were 5,000 households in the early 20th century.[236] However, Zeki Beg estimated their number at 2,500 (see Chapter III).[237]

1.2.5.3.3. The Goran Tribe

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[231] Pierre Oberling, "Bajalan", **Encyclopaedia İranica**, vol. III, Fasc. 5, pp. 532-533, 1988, Available at: https://iranicaonline.org/articles/bajalan-kurdish-tribe, (Accessed: 5 April 2022).
[232] Major Rawlinson, "Notes on a March from Zohab, at the Foot of Zagros, along the Mountains to Khuzistan (Susiana), and from Thence Through the Province of Luristan to Kirmanshah, in the Year 1836", **Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London**, 1839; 26-116, p. 107.
[233] Soane, **Notes on the Tribes**, p. 2; Soane, **Raportêk leser Slêmani**, p. 88.
[234] Soane, **Notes on the Tribes**, p. 2.
[235] Oberling, **op. cit.**, pp. 693-694.
[236] Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 25.
[237] Zeki Beg, **Xulaseyeki Tarixi**, p. 286.

Goran is a common name for the dialect spoken by the tribal groups of Kermanshah and eastern Gulanbar, but it is also the name of a large tribe in Kermanshah. This tribe has an ancient history and the governors of Ardalan originally belonged to this tribe.[238] The tribe consisted of eight main clans. The prevailing religious belief of the tribe is Yarsan, but some clans are Sunni Shafi'is such as Qadir Mirwaisi and Taishi. These two used to be part of Jaf before and followers of the Naqishbandi Sheikhs of Tawela and Biara on the Ottoman side in the Hawraman region.[239]

1.2.5.3.4. The Kalhur Tribe

Kalhur is the largest tribe in Kermanshah. In the early 20th century, the number of families in this tribe was about 12,000.[240] Soane calls them the strongest tribe in the south (the third group). The chief of the tribe, Daud Khan, became the greatest ruler of the plains between Kermanshah up to the Ottoman frontier and had a relatively independent power following his agreement with the Goran and Sanjabi tribes.[241] Most of the clans of this tribe are Shiites and some of them are Yarsan.[242] On the Iranian side, this tribe lived in the cities of West Gilan, Harunawa, part of Karand, Naftshahir, Somar, Gawara, Ayvan Mahidasht, and Sarpel and Qasr-i Shirin.[243] From the Ottoman side, They lived in the border areas of Kirkuk, Sulaymaniyah, and Khanaqin.[244] The following are some of its famous clans: Khalidi, Shiani, Siyasiya, Kazim Khani Talash, Khaman, Karga, Kolapa Harunawayi, Mansouri, Kulajo, Alwani, Shuan, Mahidashti, Blagh Beg, Zainal Khani, Shaini, Aywani, Gilani, Zuberi, Manshi, Gleni, Sherg, Deirayi, Warmzyari. Each of these clans has its region, and the name of the region is often the name of the clan.[245] The chief of the tribe, Daud Khan was also the chief of the Khalidi clan.[246]

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[238] Rich, **op. cit.**, vol. I, p. 80.
[239] Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 10.
[240] Godarzi, **op. cit.**, p. 26. Sanjabi states the Kalhur tribe is not only the largest in Kermanshah, but perhaps the largest Kurdish tribe, with about 20, 000-30, 000 families. See Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 6.
[241] Soane, **op. cit.**, p. 464.
[242] Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 4.
[243] Godarzi, **op. cit.**, p. 12.
[244] Al-Azzawi, **op. cit.**, vol. IV., pp. 242-243.
[245] Godarzi, **op. cit.**, p. 20.
[246] Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 6.

After strengthening his power and defeating a force of the governor of Kermanshah, Iqbal al-Dawla, he gradually imposed his power over all the clans of his tribe and other tribes of Kermanshah. In 1902, Ala ad-Dawla, the governor of Kermanshah, gave him the title of Sardar Muzaffar and officially recognized him as Ilkhan of Kalhur.[247] In the late 19th century, the tribe has been part of the disputes between the Ottoman Empire and Iran over several important border areas such as Somar, Mandali, Saify, and Malakhtawi.[248]

1.3. DISPUTED AREAS AND BORDER DEMARCATION BETWEEN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND IRAN

From Ararat to the Gulf, the Kurdish tribes spread over two-thirds of more than 2,000-kilometer borderlands between the Ottoman Empire and Iran.[249] On the Ottoman side, this geography begins from Bayazit (present-day Doğubayazıt), passing through Van and Hakkari extending to Khanaqin and Sulaymaniyah provinces. On the Iranian side, it starts from Azerbaijan province, passing through Kurdistan province and extending to southern Kermanshah and Elam provinces. The Ararat and Zagros Mountain ranges formed a wide line along the frontier, which became a natural barrier between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. However, until the second Erzurum treaty and a series of negotiations held to determine the border between the two states, the border remained unclear and has seen many expansions and reductions on both sides. As the Ottoman Empire (or its local officials) became stronger, it expanded its power to Tabriz, Sinna, Kermanshah, and Hamadan. Likewise, Iran advanced toward Van, Mosul, and Baghdad. This was primarily due to the constant shift in the balance of power between them. All the attempts to define the border from the middle of the 19th century did not yield a decisive result and

[247] Godarzi, **op. cit.**, p. 26.
[248] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, p. 209, 217.
[249] In the early 20th century, Edmonds pointed out that the old border between Iran and the Ottoman Empire from the Gulf to Ararat was about 1, 899 km, of this about 1, 126 kilometers passed through Kurdish areas. Which is about 60 percent of the border between Iran and the Ottoman Empire. See Cecil J. Edmonds, **Kurd Turk Arab**, Trans. by Hamid Gawheri, Dezgay Çap-u Blawkrdnaway Aras, Erbil, 2004, p. 164.

several disputed areas along the border between the two states were not resolved until the fall of the Ottoman and Qajar rules. Parallel with the two states' disagreements over disputed areas, the Kurdish tribes played a major role in intensifying border conflicts on the one hand and determining Iran's or Ottoman's ownership of these areas on the other hand. The ownership of each of the two states over a tribe made the lands of that tribe the property of that state. In this regard, besides the military, the economic and political importance of the subjection of each tribe, it also proved the state's ownership of the quarters and pastures of these tribes. Therefore, during the border demarcation negotiations, members of the demarcation commissions of both states often tried to prove ownership of the disputed areas to the tribes that were their subjects. Geographical, linguistic, sectarian (religious doctrines), political, and economic interests were the most important factors that contributed to determining the subordination of each of these tribes to either state. Each tribe, through taking advantage of the vagueness and openness of the borders tried as much as possible to avoid recognizing the sovereignty of either state and preserve their limited independence and this further complicated the demarcation of the borderline and became a serious problem of the border conflicts. [250] To understand the factors that participated in the nature of the border conflict between the Ottoman Empire and Iran in the late nineteenth and early 20th century, in this section, we discuss the border, border disputes between the Ottoman Empire and Iran.

1.3.1. From Frontiers to Borders: Defining the Concepts and the Demarcation Process

The concept of the border as a defined, accepted, and dividing line between two sovereign states is a new topic that has developed in modern history.[251] Before the formation of the modern states, political entities were usually separated by

[250] For example, Article 3 of the Treaty of Erzurum 1847, states that tribes whose ownership has not yet been determined will be given a period of time to decide for themselves.

[251] For the definition of *snur-hdud* see **Turk Dil Kurumu Sözlükleri**, available at https://sozluk.gov.tr/ (accessed; 3 May 2021) For the definition of the border see **Cambridge Dictionary**, available at https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english-arabic/border (Accessed in 3 may 2021).

natural and human barriers rather than a definite line.[252] The boundary of each political entity was in constant expansion and reduction according to shifts in the balance of power between itself and the opponents. Therefore, within an empire, instead of borders, the classical concept of frontiers can provide a better understanding of its geographical extents. Since frontiers express the front line of a political entity against the unknown or 'empty spaces' as Baud & Schendel describe it.[253] In Qajar and Ottoman literature, occasionally the words *sarhad* for frontiers, and *hudud* for border were used. [254] Concerning the Ottoman Empire and Iran, the treaty of Erzurum 1847 and the attempts to demarcate the border during the second half of the nineteenth and early 20th centuries can be considered as the transition phase from an open frontier to a precise borderline. In the late 19th century, population growth, the discovery of minerals, especially oil, and the efforts of both states to seize them highlighted the importance of creating a more accurate boundary.[255]

1.3.2. Borders and Frontiers Between the Ottoman Empire and Iran

Until the end of the 16th century, the borders of the Ottoman Empire were guarded by *akıncılar* (raiders) who were mostly frontiersmen. As their name suggests, their job was to raid. The state paid them neither expenses nor salaries, but they were exempted from taxes and lived on the spoils of war. For 250 years, *akıncılar* played a major role in protecting and expanding the western borders of the

252 For further details on terminology differences between borders, frontiers, boundaries and borderlands see Hesen Pirdeşti ve Meryem Kemeri, "Mefhum-e Merz-u Serhad ve Seir-e Tehevolat-e An", **Ruşd-i Amuzş-o Joghrafiya**, No. 1, (1394) 2015, p. 15; Thomas D. Hall, "Borders, Borderlands, and Frontiers, Global", **New Dictionary of the History of Ideas**, available at https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/dictionaries-thesauruses-pictures-and-press-releases/borders-borderlands-and-frontiers-global (Accessed 23 Nov. 2020).

253 Michiel Baud and Willem Van Schendel. "Toward a Comparative History of Borderlands." **Journal of World History**, vol. VIII, No. 2, 1997, p. 214.

254 "Serhat", **Kamus-ı Fransevi**, p. 672, Available at https://fransizca.cagdassozluk.com/fransevi/fransizca-sozluk-madde-14285.html (Accessed: 23 Nov. 2020). In fact, both the words *sarhad* and *hudud* are used in the same sense as frontiers. Dervish and Hurshid Pashas, the representatives of the Ottoman Empire, used the word *hadud* extensively, while the Iranian representative for border determination Jafar Ali Khan, used the word sarhad. As Pirdashti and Kamari point out, the word merz gradually replaced the word sarhad in Iranian literature. For further details on the use of terminology of *hdud*, *marz* and *sarhad* see Pirdeşti and Kemeri, **op. cit.**, passim.

255 See Chapters IV, V.

Ottoman Empire.[256] Nevertheless, gradually, this method of guarding the frontiers changed and when the expansion of the Ottoman Empire ended and the standing phase began, *Sarhad Kullari* (frontier servants) who settled in the forts on the frontiers took this task and became observers and guards. Over time, the era of *Sarhad Kullari* changed as well to a newer organization, especially after the abolishment of the Janissary army, *Sarhad Kullari* was also disbanded and a new unit linked to the central administration was formed in provinces.[257] On the eastern side, as this study demonstrates the Kurdish regions with their geography and people have become a buffer zone between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, often preventing the two states from direct confrontation. For hundreds of years the Kurds were both an obstacle to direct clashes as well as a connecting bridge between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. In the meantime, neither state has been able to impose permanent and complete power over the Kurdish tribes so they have resorted to agreements or coercion with local elites, which have allowed them to have regional political and socio-economic freedom. Until the mid-19th century, Kurdish local powers were in a constant struggle to maintain regional sovereignty and always approaching one of the two countries according to their interests. Later, the Kurdish tribes replaced the emirates and continued the same tradition until the late 19th and early 20th centuries when Istanbul and Tehran tried to put an end to this tradition through negotiations and border demarcation commissions.

1.3.3. Border Demarcation and Disputed Areas

Although the Treaty of Erzurum 1847 was the most critical turning point in the history of the settlement of border disputes between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, disagreements over the interpretations of some articles of the treaty, left the door open for more border conflicts for the next 70 years. This is especially true for the second article, which should have put an end to the disputes as follows:

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[256] Abdülkadir Özcan, "Akinci", **TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi**. Available at: https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/akinci (Accessed:26.04.2022).

[257] Abdülkadir Özcan, "Serhad Kulu", **TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi**. Avialable at: https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/serhad-kulu (Accessed: 26 April 2022).

> Iran promises to cede all plains of Zahab province, i.e., the western part of the province, to the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire promises to cede the eastern part of the province of Zahab, i.e. all its mountainous areas along the Karand River, to Iran. Iran promises to give up all claims of ownership over the city and province of Sulaymaniyah and not to interfere in its affairs. The Ottoman Empire promises to give up the city and port of Muhammara, Khudhr Island, Abadan port, and all the lands on the left of Shatul Arab that were under the control of those tribes that are subjects of Iran. [258]

As will be explained below, the second article which was devoted to resolving the disputes over the three important areas Muhammara (Khorramshahr), Zahab, and Sulaymaniyah), failed to achieve that goal. As for the first region, Iran's representative Mirza Taqi Khan could not attend when the signed text of the treaties was exchanged in Istanbul, and Mohammad Mirza Khan of Shirazi (the ambassador of Iran in Paris) represented Iran. At that time, an annex called the explanatory notes "*izahat*" which contained some explanations on some subjects related to Muhammara, was signed by representatives of Britain, Russia, the Ottoman Empire and Iran. Later Tehran claimed that Mirza Mohammad Khan was only an employee to exchange signatures and had no right to add or subtract anything to the treaty, so they did not recognize the annex.[259] Although the explanatory notes were only about Muhammara, in later years, Ottomans made the acceptance of the Erzurum Treaty of 1847 conditional on Iran's acceptance of these notes. This issue remained unresolved until 1912.[260] Regarding the ownership of Sulaymaniyah, the problem stemmed from the fact that Ottomans referred to their administrative divisions and previous treaties, to expand the boundaries of the province to include some territories that Iran considered as its own,[261] which were located within a long strip of the border

[258] For the Turkish text of the treaty see **Muahedat Mecmuası**, Ceride-i Askeriye Matbasi, 1297 (1880), vol. III, pp. 5-6. For the Persian text of the treaty see Mirza Jafar Han Mushir al-Dawla, **Risalaya Tahqiqat-e Sarhadiyya**, Ed. Muhammad Mushiri Davar Panah, Tehran, 1348, pp. 43-47.
[259] For the text of the four articles of the explanatory notes see Mushir al-Dawla, **op. cit.**, pp. 42-43. Raien states that when the text of explanatory notes arrived in Tehran, the Shah tore it up and immediately sent a letter to the Ottoman, Russian and British ambassadors, telling them that their representative had no right to make any changes to the agreement of Erzurum, see Esmaiel Raien, **Iranian's on British payroll**, Kiab Crop, 2014, p. 79.
[260] See Chapter V.
[261] For the summary report of the meeting of the Iranian-Ottoman Border Commission see **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1037. 29 Receb 1330/1912.

including Zahab, Sardasht, Sauj Bulaq, Somai, Bradost, Chehriq, Hodar fort, Salmas, Qutur, Abagha, Maku, and Khuy.[262]

1.3.4. Boundary Demarcation Commissions and Search for Borders

According to Article 3 of the Treaty of Erzurum 1847, the two countries agreed to establish a joint commission to demarcate the border with representative employees and engineers from both sides.[263] Subsequently, the Ottoman Empire appointed Dervish Pasha and Iran appointed Mirza Ja'far Khan Mushir al-Dawla, as their representatives to the Frontiers to determine the border. Until then, not only was there no clear map of the border between the two states, but there was much uncertainty about the administrative and political dependence of much of the border areas. This was due to the fact that the ownership of the territories between the two states was constantly changing based on the shifting balance of power of the two states and their regional authorities near the border on the one hand and the interests and conflicts of the tribes among themselves and (or) with one of the states, on the other hand. The task of demarcating, or rather drawing a dividing line within such an unstable frontier was entrusted to the border demarcation representatives of both countries. On the Ottoman side, Dervish Pasha and Hurshid Pasha, and on the Iranian side, Mirza Jafar Khan and later Mohib Ali Khan pioneered this transition. In the efforts of these four statesmen (which they later published in books), instead of drawing a dividing line, they still tried to prove their respective countries' ownership over the towns, villages, and tribes that were located on the opposite side territories. On the Ottoman side, Dervish Pasha, who was also a negotiating member of the treaty of Erzurum II, presented his observations to the Porte in 123 articles, which were later published in a book named *"Tahdid-i Hudud-ı İraniye"*. [264]

[262] Mushir al-Dawla, **op. cit.**, pp. 83-84.
[263] See article 3 of the Erizurum treaty II. **Muahedat Mecmuasi**, vol. III, p. 6
[264] In fact, Dervish Pasha's book has been published under three names, see Dervish Paşa, **Tahdid-i Hudud-i İraniyye**, İstanbul; Matbaa-i Âmire, 1286; **Devlet-i Aliyye ile İran Devleti beyninde olan hudud layihasıdır**, İstanbul, Matbaa-i Âmire, 1870/1287; and, **Hudud-i Iraniye-ye Dair**, Matbayi Ahmed Ihsan, 1321.This study relies on the latter.

Dervish Pasha's book was the result of three years of travel accompanied by delegation members from the southernmost to the northernmost of the frontier. He conducted field research on the border and collected detailed information about the population of the area. In his research, he relied on historical documents and the opinions of the inhabitants. In this regard, he collected many details on various topics such as social history, geography, the financial and livelihood of the tribes, the number of households and the ethnic diversity along the frontier, as well as customs and traditions, religion and beliefs of people. Hurshid Pasha, who was also a member of the Dervish Pasha's team during the investigation, presented an informative book to Sultan Abdulmejid I entitled *Seyâhatnâme-i Hudûd (*Frontier's Travel Account).[265] Hurshid Paşa's book is much more precise and detailed than Dervish Pasha's. Both documents later became an essential source of the Porte's view of the eastern border of the Ottoman Empire and were referred to by the Ottoman border determination commissioners as evidence. Regarding Iranians, Mirza Jafar Khan Mushir al-Dawla, who represented Iran from 1849 to 1855, presented his observations after six years of field research, which he later published in a book under the title of *Risala-ye Tahkkikat-e Sarhadiyyah,(*Frontier's Investigations letter).[266] Like the Ottoman representatives, Mushir al-Dawla made detailed notes on border areas and tribes; In addition, he criticizes the positions and writings of Dervish Pasha in part of his book and accuses him of being "excessive and expansionist".[267] Similarly, this book became an important reference used by representatives of the Iranian border demarcation commissioners and they referred to it constantly.

Regarding the commission that was decided to be established in the third article of the treaty of Erzurum II, it faced great difficulties from the beginning, especially since Dervish Pasha, before arriving in Baghdad to meet with the border

[265] Hurshid Pasha's research lasted four years, some of which he wrote during his travels and others he added later. As he himself points out, his travelogue began in the Gulf, at the easternmost border of the Ottoman Empire. It includes the provinces of Basra, Baghdad, Shahrazur, Mosul, Van and Bayazit of Erzurum province and describes the cities, villages, plains, lakes and mountains, the inhabitants of the region, their livelihoods and income. Hurshid Pasha, **Siyahet Name-i Hudud: Geştnamey Snur le Nêwan Du Dewleti Osmani u İranda**, Trans. by Mehmud Homer Bawzyi, Ferbun, Erbil, 2019, p. 13.
[266] Muhammad Mushiri, "introduction to" Mushir al-Dawla, **op. cit.**, p. 12.
[267] Mushir al-Dawla, **op. cit.**, p. 84.

commissioners, turned to Qutur with an Ottoman force and took over it. Nevertheless, eventually, a commission with participants from Ottomans, Iranians, Britons and Russians was formed and started negotiations from January 1950 to September 1952[268] but due to disagreements on the demarcation of the borders of Muhammara and Zahab, it did not fulfill its goals and then completely stopped functioning due to the Crimean war (1853-1856) and the Anglo-Persian War (1856-1857).[269]

In 1869, a large and detailed map of 16 pieces was drawn up along the length of the border with the participation of Russian and British representatives. Two copies were sent to both Istanbul and Tehran, so that each of the two states could define its claims and demands on the map. While drawing the map, the two states agreed to maintain the status quo until a final agreement on the demarcation of the border was reached.[270] Status quo later became a term referring to disputed territories along the frontier. According to the agreement between them, neither side was allowed to construct buildings or forts or set up any boundary markers, in the disputed area. If a fresh disagreement arose, meetings between the Ottoman Empire and Iran should be held and Britain and Russia should be consulted until the final boundary line is drawn.[271]

In 1874, another commission was formed which was attended by representatives of the Ottoman Empire, Dervish Pasha and Mustafa Pasha, the former governor of Erzurum, and Mirza Muhib Ali Khan and Mirza Muhsin Khan from Iran.[272] Dervish Pasha insisted that the added annex called explanatory notes of the

[268] **GESIO.**, vol. II, "introduction" p. 16.
[269] **Ibid.**, 23.
[270] **GESIO.**, "Introduction", vol. II, p. 23.
[271] Soane, **Raportêk leser Slêmani**, p. 101. See also, Kurt, **op. cit.**, p. 972. Scofield notes that following this agrement, the two states were developing a growing awareness of territoriality, which was not previously evident. This was reflected in incidents occurring along the frontier and, more importantly, in their attitudes towards local movements within and across the borderlands. As he mentions, in 1867, the routine movements of the Kurdish Mangur tribe from Persia to areas under Ottoman control caused a significant uproar, even though these movements had been unnoticed for many decades. Richard Schofield, "Narrowing the frontier: mid-nineteenth century efforts to delimit and map the Perso-Ottoman border." **War and Peace in Qajar Persia**, Routledge, 2008, 161-185, p.163.
[272] Mohib Ali Khan, later became one of the most important members of the Iranian border commission. He wrote a number of articles in response to Dervish Pasha's Tahdid-i Hudud-i İraniyye

treaty of Erzurum II, should be used to determine the borders of Muhammara but the Iranian representative refused.[273] Disagreement between the two sides on the acceptance or rejection of the explanatory notes disrupted the work of the commission until the Sublime Porte agreed to resume its sessions in August 1875 at the request of the Iranian ambassador in Istanbul. In the meeting of 1875, there was a profound disagreement over the Qutur region. While Iran considered it as part of Azerbaijan province, the Ottoman representatives regarded it as a critical security point on the military route and summer pastures for its tribes, and was not willing to give it up. Therefore, the commission again ended inconclusively[274] until the Russo-Turkish War (1877–1878) ended all border demarcation activities, and later in the treaty of Berlin 1878 the Ottoman Empire was forced to give up Qutur (which till then officially was a district in Van province) to Iran.[275]

1.3.5. Three Areas of the Ottoman's Demand from Iran

If only the Kurdish regions be focused on, after the Russo-Turkish War (1877-1878) until the beginning of World War I (1914-1918), there were three important regions from Ararat to southern Khanaqin that were subjects of serious debates from both states: 1-The Qutur region which was an important strategic area, trade, and military border route between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. 2-The fertile plains of Lahijan and Wazna which are located on the east and south sides of the Qandil Mountains. 3-The oil-rich areas of Zahab.

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and Hurshid Pasha's Seyahet Name-i Hudud, which was later in 1907 published in a book entitled Mulahazat-u Muhakamat, (Observations and Trials) and 'Du Layha der Tehdid-e Hudud-e Iran u Osmani (Two Articles Determining the Borders of Iran and the Ottoman Empire). He strongly criticized both Dervish and Hurshid Pashas and proposed a new border line that covered some areas inside the Ottoman territory. For example, in contrast to the argument of Dervish Pasha, which had put Maku and areas south of Maku to the slopes of Lake Urmia inside the Ottoman territory, Mohib Ali Khan included Little Ararat, toward the south to Iran. Moreover, in his opinion, even Bayazit was part of Iran and, in his words; "Iran gave it up out of humbleness to show its friendship to the Ottoman Empire". Mirza Mohib Ali bn Muhammad Taki Nazimul-Mulk, **Mecmu'ya-e Resail-u Lavaiyh-e Tahdid-e Hudud-e Iran-u Osmani**, Ed. Dr. Nasrullah Salihi, Tahuri, Tehran, 1395, p. 68.

[273] Melike Sarıkçıoğlu, **Osmanlı-İran Hudut Sorunları (1847-1913)**, Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2013, p. 96.

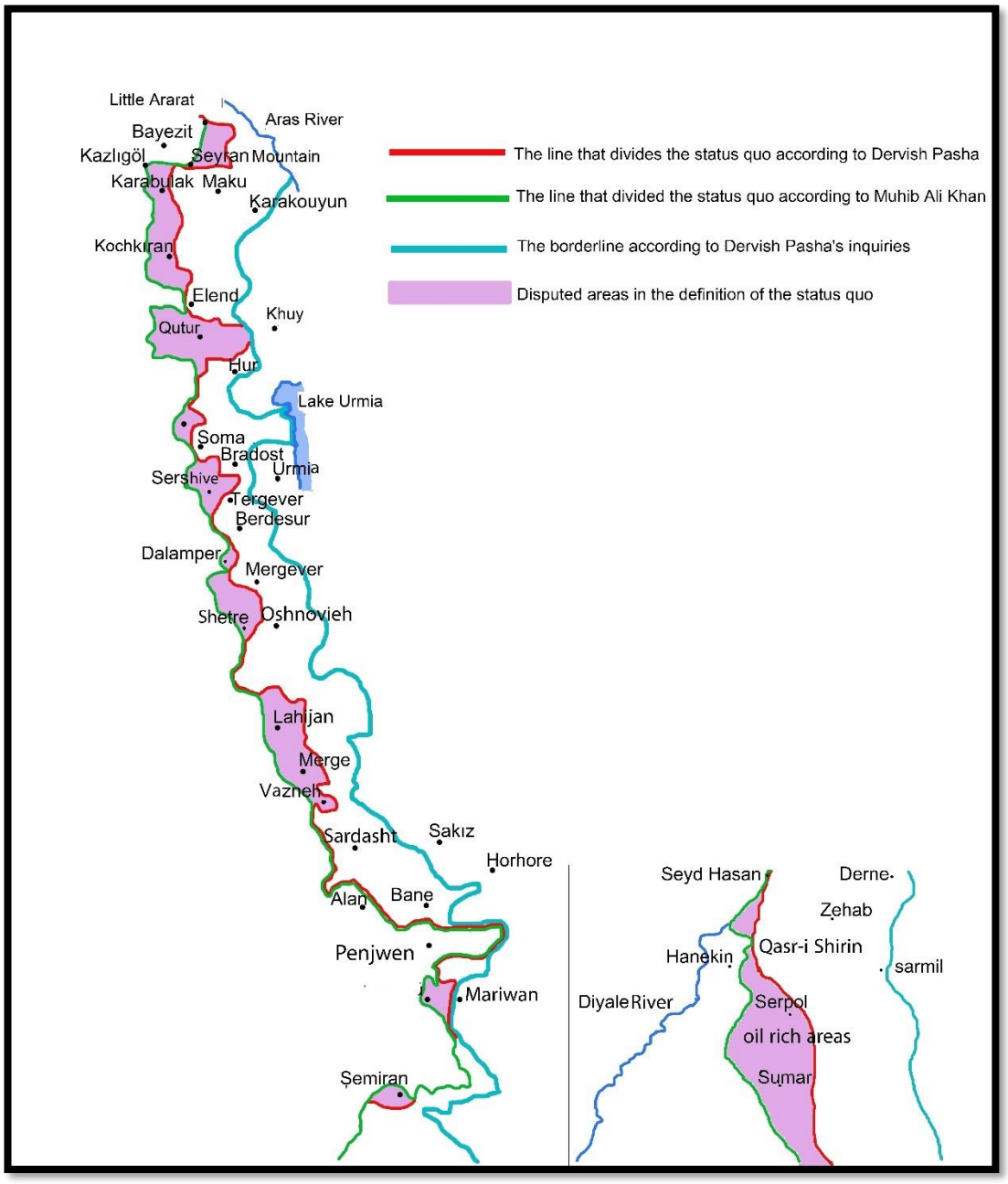
[274] **Ibid**, 98-99; **GESIO.**, 2.C, pp. 21-23.

[275] Tahir Sezen, **Osmanlı Yer Adları**, T.C. Başkanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, Yayın No. 26, Ankara 2007, p. 483.

Among these areas, dozens of districts and hundreds of villages along the border were known as the "status quo" from north to south. The most important areas were Avajik, Chaldiran, Aland, Girdian, Somai, Bradost, Targawar, Margawar, Bardesur, Vazna, Bana, Zrebar Lake, Zahab and Qasri Shirin.[276] However, later on, the Ottoman Empire claimed other areas that were located within the Iranian border. Dervish Pasha had designated these areas as Ottoman historical areas. From 1905-1912 part of them fell under the Ottoman rule. In addition, in the years before World War I, when Iran was divided into Russian and British political and economic spheres of influence and was busy with its internal problems, the dream of annexing all Sunni Kurdish regions of Iran to the Ottoman Empire developed for some Ottoman politicians. Therefore, under the influence of the political events that occurred during this period, the Ottoman Empire defended its ownership of three columnar areas against Iran as explained below.

First was the area of the status quo assigned by the mediating countries, which was divided into two parts: (1) all the areas that were located in the status quo and still part of the frontier's region were considered by the Ottomans as their own. (2) within the designated status quo until its fate is finally decided, there were disputes over the demarcation of the "current" borderline. In other words, the dispute was over defining the current borderline that divides the status quo areas into two parts. Both the Ottoman Empire and Iran had different views regarding that line. In the coming years, each of the two states defended their affiliated tribes' ownership of those areas during border disputes. Such as the Ottomans' claim of the Haideran's ownership and the Iranian's claim of the Jalali tribe's ownership of the Abagha plains in the north. As well as both sides defended their tribes' ownership of Wazna and Kani Baz (Nazar Ali Beg). [277]This subject became especially important at the 1874 commission meeting when the Ottoman and Iranian representatives (Dervish Pasha and Muhib Ali Khan) disagreed on the demarcation of the border (See Map 3).

[276] See **BOA. HRT.h.**, No. 457, 14 Rebîülâhir 1331; **BOA. HRT.h.**, No. 458, 8 Cemâziyelevvel 1334.
[277] In this regard, see the letters between the Ottoman Ambassador and the Iranian Foreign Ministry on the ownership of Kani Baz in **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 380; **GESIO.**, vol. IV, Nos. 682, 674, 699.



Map 3. The temporary borderline between the Ottoman Empire and Iran from 1869 to 1912 (before finalizing the fate of the status quo), disputed areas, and the borderline according to the research of Dervish Pasha.[278]

[278] Adapted from the original map of "Türkiye-İran hududu haritası", **İstanbul Üniversitesi**, **Nadir Eserler Kütüphanesi Harita**, IUNEK92405, w.date.

Second: the areas that Dervish Pasha had historically designated as Ottoman territory. Dervish Pasha relied on two historical and geographical factors to determine the border that he called the ancient border (*Hudud-ı Kadimia)*. Historically, some of these areas belonged to the emirates that were subjects of the Ottoman Empire, and their rule was terminated in the mid-19th century. For example, Mohammad Pasha of Rawanduz (1775-1836) for a while was ruling some of the areas that Dervish Pasha had defined as the former Ottoman borders.[279] In addition, the Ottomans' legal justification was that all of those areas were formerly part of the Sulaymaniyah province that in the treaty of Erzurum II, Iran had promised to give up its claims of.[280] Moreover from the topographical point, these areas form a large plain between two mountain ranges of Zagros; From north to south, the plains of Avajik, Chalderan, Khuy, Somai, Bradost, Targawar, Margawar, Oshnovieh, Lahijan, and Bana divide the Zagros Mountains into two parts (See Map 4), and the line of Dervish Pasha pushes the Iran boundaries to the eastern parts of the mountain. From 1905-1912, some of these areas fell under Ottoman rule. However, Soane, who was in Sulaymaniyah during the Ottoman occupation of these territories, considered the new boundary that was determined by the Ottomans based on certain natural phenomena can never be a separating wall between the two states like the old border, which was the main line of the Zagros Mountains. So, he considered it as a weak border in terms of natural obstacles. However, he acknowledges that the new border has united all the Kurdish tribes and created a separating line between the Kurds and Iran (See Map 4).[281]

[279] Mohammad Pasha also took control of Sauj Bulaq, which was beyond the line of Dervish Pasha on the Iranian side, and the regions of Margawar and Sardasht. Hurshid Pasha refers to this and points out that Mohammed Pasha of Rawanduz (former governor of Rawanduz) had all these areas under his control and all the areas were part of the Ottoman Empire until then. Hurshid Paşa, **op. cit.**, pp. 300-301. For the letter of Muhammad Khan of Zangana to the Ottoman Grand Vizier Rashid Muhammad Pasha, see Nawshirwan Mustafa, **Mirayati Baban**, p. 143.
[280] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1037. 29 Receb 1330/1912.
[281] Soane, **Raportêk leser Slêmani**, p. 109.



Map 4. Geographical and topographical dimensions of the old Ottoman border according to Dervish Pasha.

The third area was all the areas inhabited by the Sunni Kurds. This subject developed especially during the cabinet of the Committee of Union and Progress. This coincided with dozens of petitions for intervention submitted to Istanbul and Ottoman consulates in Iran by the Kurds (See Chapters IV and V).

CHAPTER 2

SHEIKH UBEIDULLAH'S MOVEMENT AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE OTTOMAN-IRANIAN RELATIONS

After the end of the Russo-Turkish War (1877–1878), Kurdish areas on both the Ottoman and Iranian frontiers experienced difficult situation created by security and economic problems. This brought together many Kurds in the Ottoman and Iranian territories around a common political project until the last months of 1880, under the leadership of Sheikh Ubeidullah Nehri, a large force of Kurds from the Ottoman Empire and Iran launched a massive attack against the Iranian rule in the Kurdish regions in the north-west of Iran and took over several important Kurdish cities for a short period of time. However, Sheikh Ubeidullah and the forces he had brought into Iran returned to the Ottoman territories after a major military defeat. This incident, despite its short duration, created a major and long-term diplomatic confrontation between the two states, and its effects lasted for a long period. In this chapter, the background of the uprising, the reasons that led to its formation, and the impact of the Ottoman-Iranian political conflicts on the rebellion and its consequences will be examined.

2.1. THE EMERGENCE OF SHEIKH UBEIDULLAH IN THE OTTOMAN-IRANIAN POLITICAL DISPUTES

2.1.1. Building a political power on the ruins of the Kurdish emirates

Sheikh Ubeidullah (1826-1883) was the son of Sayyid Taha Nehri who was one of the two most prominent caliphs of Mawlana Khalid Naqshbandi. From the mid-19th century onwards, two main factors contributed to Sheikh Taha's (and later his family's) rise to power alongside his religious hegemony. The first reason was that during the confrontation of the Botan (present-day Cizre) emirate with the Nestorians (for its religious nature) and later during the rebellion of Bedir Khan

against the government, Sheikh Taha supported Bedir Khan and his emirate.[282] After the defeat of Bedir Khan's uprising, Sheikh Taha and his children moved to Shamdinan in Hakkari, where they were respected by the state authorities because of their religious status.[283] The fate of Sheikh Taha, along with the main participants in Botan and Hakkari uprisings, was the same as that of religious and political figures elsewhere in the Kurdish regions; politicians were removed, killed, and banished while Sheikhs and clerics remained in their places.

The second point was related to the nature of the new Naqshbandi tariqa, which, unlike the Qadiri tariqa, it had the potential for further expansion. While in the Qadiri tariqa, being a Sheikh was restricted to the sadat families like Nehri and Barzanji, in the Naqshbandi tariqa, this tradition changed and Mawlana Khalid left behind more than 60 caliphs who later became Sheikhs. In the Naqshbandi tariqa, not only being sayyid was no longer a requirement, the Nehri family which considered itself to be Sadat, became the caliph of the "non-sayyid" Mawlana Khalid.[284]

After the fall of the Botan and Hakkari emirates, Sheikh Taha continued his religious guidance in the Nehri Khanaqa and in a short time gathered more than 10,000 murids around himself, some of whom were on the Iranian side.[285] According to a report from the governor of Hakkari, those fleeing forced conscription gathered around Sheikh Taha, who used his position and influence to protect them.[286] During this period, Mohammad Shah Qajar gave several villages as *tiyul*[287] to Sheikh Taha

[282] McDowall, **op. cit.**, p. 52.
[283] Sheikh Taha's status was so high that Nurullah Bey, the Emir of Hakkari surrendered to the Ottoman forces by his intercession after fleeing to Iran. See Ateş, **Ottoman-Iranian borderlands: Making a boundary**, **1843–1914**, Cambridge University Press, 2013, p. 8.
[284] Although there is no convincing evidence to confirm his claim, Muderis attributes the genealogy of Mawlana Khalid to Imam Osman; the third Caliph of Islam. See Muderris, **op. cit.**, p. 7.
[285] N.A. Khalfin, **Xebat le Rêy Kurdistanda**, Trans. by Jalal Taqi, Sulaymaniyah, 1971, p. 96.
One of the most prominent murids of the Sheikh, on the Iranian side was Sheikh Kamal, who became one of the key characters of the border events from the movement of Sheikh Ubeidullah until the early 20th century. (See Chapter III).
[286] **BOA. MVL.**, No. 227/21.
[287] Tiyul is the granting of a land to someone by state, to provide himself with income through the taxation of it. See Mohammad Moin, **Ferheg-i Farsiy-e Mu'yin**, available at: https://www.vajehyab.com/?q=%D8%AA%DB%8C%D9%88%D9%84&f=moein (Accessed: 28 June 2021). For more details about the terminology of tiyul see Osman Gazi Özgüdenli, "Tiyûl", **Tdv İslâm Ansiklopedisi**, available at: Https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/tiyul (Accessed: 28 June 2021).

to run the affairs of his Khanqah.[288]In the following years, as their power expanded, the Nehri family controlled 200 villages on both sides of the frontier.[289]

The donation of these villages by the Shah was in order to use the religious hegemony of the Nehri family to establish peace in the frontier areas and control the nomadic tribes. However, the issue of these villages over the next few decades strengthened the political hegemony of the Nehri family and created security and political challenges for Iran. In 1853, Sheikh Taha died and his brother Sheikh Saleh succeeded him. Sheikh Saleh, contrary to Iran's will, during the years of the Crimean War (1853-1856), incited Iranian Kurds to support the Ottomans against the Russians. Based on his influence, despite sending food, gunpowder, and weapons to the Ottoman Empire, several thousands of Iranian Kurds participated in the war against the Russians.[290] In 1865, Sheikh Saleh died and Sheikh Ubeidullah was 34 years old when he succeeded him and became the Sheikh to lead his tariqa.[291] Inheriting the material and spiritual legacy of his family, he was able to strengthen his influence in an unprecedented way in the years to come. The literature left from the late 19th century demonstrates that Sheikh Ubeidullah played the role of a true ruler and had a particularly charismatic character. About a thousand people from all walks of life and all parts of the Kurdish regions visited his palace in Nehri daily.[292] There he listened to the audience, solved the problems of the Kurdish tribes that were always in conflict, and helped the poor and orphans.[293] At the same time, he became

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[288] Abbas Mirza Mulk Ara, **Şerh-i Hal**, Ed. by Dr. Abdulhuseiyn Nevayi, Tehran, 1361 p. 153.
[289] Dr. Jalili Jalil, **Raperini Kurdekan 1880**, Trans. by Kaws Kaftan, Baghdad, 1987, p. 80; Hama Baqi, **Şorşi Şêx Ubeydulla-i Nehri (1880) le Belgenam-i Qajari'da.**, Erbil, 2000, p. 45.
[290] See two letters from the Russian consul to the governor of Azerbaijan entitled 'Complaint of the Russian consul about the hostile behavior of the people of Sauj Bulaq and Sardasht toward Russia, and their cooperation with the Ottomans". **GESIO.**, vol. II, Nos.187, 188, 13 may 1854 & 22 may 1854. As Khalfin points out, before Sheikh Saleh, the Russian consul in Azerbaijan warned his country regarding Sheikh Taha's dominance among Iranian Kurds and Sheikh's relationship with Imam Shamil Naqshbandi in the Caucasus. Khalfin, **op. cit.**, pp. 96-97.
[291] Hama Baqi, **op. cit.**, p. 46.
[292] Wefayi confirms that he stayed with Sheikh Ubeidullah for 14 years and taught in his madrasa. During those years, at least 300 people stayed there daily, and sometimes as many as 1, 500 especially in the summer. See. Mirza Abdurraḥim-i Sablakhi Wefayi, **Tuhfetul Muridin**, Trans. by Muhammed Hama Baqi, Eebil, 1999, p. 37; Abbott and Curzon, report that 500-1, 000 people visited him daily. "Consul-General Abbott to Mr. Thomson", **HCPP. (House of Commons Parliamentary Papers) Turkey. No.4 (1881)**, Document No. 8, 8 July 1880; Curzon, **op. cit.**, vol. I, p. 553.
[293] Rev. S. G. Wilson, **Persian Life and Customs: With Scenes and Incidents of Residence and Travel in the Land of the Lion and the Sun**, Edinburgh & London 1896, p. 110.

a powerful authority that could control, direct, and punish. As the British diplomat Abbott states:

"His character stands out in clear contrast with that seen in Persian officials as well as Turks… The Sheikh's people show great reverence and affection for him, but at the same time dare not disobey him. They say he is a just ruler and judge. He never takes bribes nor allows his officials to do so. Death is the punishment given to anyone who breaks his law. [294]

For the first time, a Kurdish figure has managed to transcend regional boundaries and amass significant followers. The Kurdish poet Wefayi, who was also one of the murids of the Sheikh, describes in a poetic style that with the coming of Sheik Ubeidullah to "*the throne of the leadership of the tariqa, a great change occurred in the world*".[295] According to his narration, during the Sheikh's pilgrimage to Mecca; he passed by Istanbul with 100 murids at the invitation of Sultan Abdul Aziz (1861-1876). Sultan allocated a private royal ship for this trip along with several pashas and official representatives of the state welcomed him.[296] During this trip, Sheikh Ubeidullah stayed in Istanbul for 20 days and met the Sultan. After his return, his status increased among the people and statesmen.[297] As some Western writers describes,

Next to the sultan and sheriff of Mecca, he was the holiest person among the Sunnis. Thousands were ready to follow him not only as a chief but as the vicar of God.[298]

The emergence of Sheikh Ubeidullah as an Ottoman figure with some of his murids on the Iranian side posed a serious threat to Iran. The big warrior tribes such as Bilbas, Harki and Shikak, who were moving between the Ottoman Empire and Iran regardless of borders, considered Sheikh Ubeidullah as their spiritual leader. By

[294] "Correspondence respecting the Kurdish invasion of Persia", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 8.
[295] Wafayi, **op. cit.**, pp. 34-35.
[296] **Ibid**, p. 53; **Tercuman-i Hakkikat**, No. 764, 12 January 1881, p. 2.
[297] Wefayi, **op. cit.**, p. 54.
[298] Wilson, **op. cit.**, p. 110. Speer, **op. cit.**, p. 74. The same description about Sheikh Ubeidullah has been given by some other diplomatic and Journalistic reports. i.e., **The central Presbyterian**, "The Kurdish Invasion of Persia" 22 Dec. 1880.p. 7; **The central Presbyterian**, 22 December, 1880, p. 4**; Chicago daily tribune**, November 28, 1880, p. 3**;** "To Consul General Abbott", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 8/3, 8 July 1880.

inciting these tribes against Iran, the Sheikh could have created a major security problem for Iranian sovereignty, especially at a time when the Ottoman Empire and Iran were in the process of determining their borders. The strengthening of the power of the Sheikh and the imposition of his authority over these areas as an Ottoman subject could give the Ottoman Empire an excuse to consider the area as its own in the future as it happened in the early 20th century (see Chapter IV, V).

Another threat that Sheikh Ubeidullah could cause Naser al-Din Shah was Sheikh's familial relations with Abbas Mirza, the younger half-brother of Naser al-Din Shah, through Yahya Khan of Chehriq; a descendant of Hakkari emirs and murids of Sheikh Ubeidullah who ruled Chehriq until the end of Muhammad Shah's reign. Abbas Mirza's mother was the sister of Yahya Khan. Naser al-Din Shah regarded Abbas Mirza as a threat to his throne and therefore removed his title of Naib al-Saltana (regent) and gave him the title of Mulk-Ara. Abbas Mirza fled Iran after being nearly blinded by Shah and spent about 27 years in Baghdad and Istanbul until Naser al-Din Shah permitted him to return.[299] In any possible coup that may happen against Shah, Abbas Mirza could have used Kurds because of that kinship.

Iran, therefore, tried to eliminate Sheikh Ubeidullah's influence over the Kurdish regions on the Iranian side. The primary step was to take those villages back from Sheikh Ubeidullah, so that he would not have any legal justification for his presence on the Iranian side. Thus, in the first escalation in December 1872, Haji Yousef Khan Shuja' al-Dawla, the governor of Urmia and Khuy, asked the residents of Margawar to pay taxes to the Iranian treasury immediately. However, they refused and informed the officials they had sent what was demanded to Sheikh Ubeidullah before. As a result, Shuja' al-Dawla decided to tax them by force. He sent an army to Margawar and his soldiers burned Kurdish villages and houses and also looted their livestock. Upon receiving this news, Sheikh Ubeidullah sent a force to the area and they confronted the army of Shuja' al-Dawla, resulting in the deaths of people on

[299] Nawshirwan Mustafa Amin, **op. cit.**, p. 154; Hama Baqi, **op. cit.**, p. 194.

both sides.[300] After this incident, Sheikh Ubeidullah asked the Porte to defend his rights in Iran.[301] Diplomatic talks and correspondence between Ottoman and Iranian officials continued throughout the 1870s to solve the issues of the villages without any results.[302] In a letter sent to the Iranian Foreign Ministry, the Ottoman ambassador in Tehran expressed his dissatisfaction with Iran's policy on the issue and added:

"Regarding the issue of His Excellency, the distinguished personality of Sheikh Ubeidullah Effendi which has led to the continuation of all these negotiations and exchange of letters and the concern of the Ottoman officials, indeed, an investigation should have been conducted to establish the truth."[303]

After a long period of correspondence and diplomatic pressure, the Iranians finally agreed to form a commission. The commission consisted of representatives of both the Ottoman and Qajar states. Mirza Abdulrahim (Wefayi) participated in the meetings as the representative of Sheikh Ubeidullah and became the secretary of the commission according to his narrative.[304] The participation of Sheikh Ubeidullah's representative as one of the parties to the investigation demonstrates the status of Sheikh Ubeidullah, especially with the Porte. This was an unprecedented incident in the discussions between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. Agha Mir Sadeq who represented the Iranian state in the commission wrote to Tehran that according to his investigations, Sheikh Ubeidullah had legal documents from Mohammad Shah Qajar proving without any doubt that these villages belong to Sheikh Ubeidullah himself and that Shuja' al-Dawla launched these attacks and killing for his benefit.[305] After the matter was clarified, the Ottoman Empire demanded payback for Sheikh Ubeidullah's damages but Iran refused to compensate for the losses. Meanwhile the Balkan uprisings and the tensions between the Ottoman Empire and Russia gave the

[300] A report from the Russian consul in Tabriz to the Russian ambassador in Tehran, 6 January 1873 as cited in Khalfin, **op. cit.**, p. 121.
[301] **Ibid**, 122.
[302] To the exchanged letters regarding the Sheik Ubeidullah's villages in 1870s see **GESIO.**, vol. III, Nos.545-572.
[303] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 559.
[304] Wafayi, **op. cit.**, p. 21.
[305] Mujtaba Burzuyi, **Barudoxi Siyasi Kurdistan, 1980-1948**, Trans. by Naznaz Muhammad Abdulkadir, Yousuf Khidr Choban and Soran Alipoor, Erbil 2005, p. 65; Hama Baqi, **op. cit.**, p. 135.

Iranians a good opportunity to make more excuses and put more pressure on the Ottoman Empire. So, contrary to the expectations of the Ottoman Empire and Sheikh Ubeidullah, the Iranian foreign minister sent a letter to the Ottoman ambassador in Tehran, in a threatening language, giving Sheikh Ubeidullah two months to prove that he was right; otherwise, Iran would collect taxes from the past three years from the places where it had not been paid due to the unresolved issues.[306] In response to the letter, the Porte ordered the withdrawal of the members of the committee of inquiry and declared that after all the evidence was presented, there was no point in extending the work of the committee.[307]

The Iranians wanted to cut off Sheikh Ubeidullah's ties completely with Iran but compensation for Sheikh Ubeidullah's losses meant Iran recognized Sheikh Ubeidullah's ownership of these villages and gave formal permission to his power and hegemony. This was at a time when Naser al-Din Shah and the men of the court had a great hatred for Sheikh Ubeidullah. This is easily seen in the letters exchanged between Naser al-Din Shah, the Foreign Ministry, and the Iranian ambassador in Istanbul.[308] With the suspension of the commission, lunching a military attack seemed to Sheikh to be the only option. Probably withdrawal of the committee by the Porte was a message to Sheikh Ubeidullah that he was free to decide what to do. Around mid-1876, about 7,000 tribal men from the Ottoman side attacked Oshnavieh and caused significant damage to the region. Although the Ottoman Empire denied Sheikh Ubeidullah being involved in the attack, Iran strongly protested the attack and blamed Istanbul for that "*7,000 fighters could not crossover to Iran without informing and consulting the Ottoman authorities"*. Tehran further threatened: if the Ottoman Empire did not prevent its tribes from entering the Iranian territories, Iran would allow its tribes to attack cities and villages on the Ottoman side.[309] It did not take long, as in the words of the Ottoman ambassador to Tehran; "*the wounds of Shuja' al-Dawla's attack had not yet healed*" again, Iranian troops with artillery and infantry led by Iqbal-e-Dawla, the governor of Urmia attacked the Sheikh's villages

[306] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 564, 4 Rebiülahır 1292.
[307] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 565, 13 C. 1292.
[308] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 565.
[309] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 568.

in Margawar, burning fields and houses and killing his murids and supporters and those who managed to escape took refuge in the Ottoman Empire.[310] According to Safrastian, the governor of Urmia had slaughtered several of the Sheikh's Murids and kidnapped several girls.[311] However, due to the Russo-Turkish War, for two years the issue of the Sheikh's lands was neglected in Iran.



Figure 1. Kelat Palace '*Qesra Kelatê';* Sheik Ubeidullah's Palace in Nehri; the picture was taken in 1880. [312]

2.1.2. Gathering Spoils from the Lost War: How Russo-Turkish War (1877–1878) Turned Sheikh Ubeidullah into a Genuine Military Force

From the 1870s onwards, the Ottoman Empire was struggling with a difficult economic and political situation. Despite being in huge international debt, it also faced Balkan rebellions that ended in the Russo-Turkish War. As the war began, the state asked Kurdish sheikhs and notables to join. Sheikh Ubeidullah was the first and most prominent to respond to Istanbul's request. In addition, from Sulaymaniyah,

[310] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 570.
[311] Arshak Safrastian, Kurd û Kurdistan, Trans. by Emin Şhwani, Aras, Erbil, 2005, p. 94.
[312] "Unknown photographer, from Sayyid Geylani archive, " licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license. Available at https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/22/Qesra_Kelat%C3%AA_li_gund%C3%AA_Nehriy%C3%AA_%28Qesra_Sey%C3%AEd_Mihemed_Sed%C3%AEq%29.jpg (Accessed: 25 May 2022).

Kak Ahmadi Sheikh sent a force led by his son Sheikh Saeed, also other tribes, such as Hamawand and Zangana sent troops to participate in the war.[313] Istanbul entrusted the leadership of other parts of the Kurds to the two sons of Bedir Khan; Osman and Hussein Pashas, who were officers in the Ottoman army.[314]

To obtain support for the Ottomans, Sheikh Ubeidullah called for jihad and soon gathered about 50,000 people, including 3,000-5,000 Iranian Kurds.[315] The Armenian writer Ghoryans notes that at the beginning of the war, Sheikh Ubeidullah, with his son Sheikh Sadiq and some other Sheikhs, fought and won in Bayazit and attracted the attention of the Ottomans.[316] According to the deputy governor of Azerbaijan, during the early months of the combat, Sheikh Ubeidullah and his forces attacked Bayazit, killing and arresting some Russians.[317]

However, after about seven months of fighting, due to a dispute with the Ottoman military officers, Sheikh Ubeidullah decided to withdraw his forces. According to him, the reason for the dispute was that Kurds attacked Russians outside the orders of the Ottoman military officers. In contrast, the Ottoman officers neglected the Kurdish fighters and sometimes did not provide them with food for nine consecutive days.[318] If one believes Mirza Hussain Ali Khan, because of the lack of provisions, Sheikh Ubeidullah issued a fatwa for his fighters to plunder the places they captured.[319] These also harmed the Kurdish reputation to the extent that

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[313] Shakir Khasbak, **al-kurd we Meseletu l-Kurdiye**, Bagdad, 1959, p. 27.
[314] Zeki Beg, **Xulaseyeki Tarixi**, p. 118.
[315] According to Sheikh Ubeidullah, his force consisted of 50, 000 men. See Nehri, **op. cit.**, p. 114. Likewise, Ahmed Muhtar Pasha, the Ottoman Commander of the Caucasian and Eastern front, estimates his force at 50, 000 to 60, 000. While according to Abbott, it consisted of 30, 000 men, 3, 000 of whom were from Iranian Kurds. See PRO.FO 60/401 "Abbot to Thomson", Tabriz, May 30, 1877, as cited in Ateş, **The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands**, p. 218. Wefayi, estimates Sheik's force to be approximately 100, 000 fighters, which can be an overstatement. See Wefayi, **op. cit.**, p. 58. Regarding the participation of Iranian Kurds, Faiz claims that 5, 000 Kurds from Bibas and other tribes participated with Sheikh Ubeidullah. See Emir Nizam Garusi, **Guzarişha-u Nameha-e Nizami-u Divani; Derbare-i Vekay-i Kurdistan der sal-i 1297 Hijri**, Ed. by Eraj-e Afshar, Tehran, 1373. p. 544.
[316] Asknder Ghoryans, **Qiyam-i Sheikh Ubeidullah Shemzini dr Ahd-e Nasreddin Shah-e Qajar**, Ed. by Abdullah Merdox, 1356 Tehran, p. 24, as cited in Burzuyi, **op. cit.**, p. 66.
[317] "The Deputy Governor of Azerbaijan to the Minister for Foreign Affairs", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 1 (1878)**, Document No. 176/2, 29 June 1877.
[318] Nehri **op. cit.**, pp. 117-118. Also see, Sheikh Ubeidullah's letter to the Interior Ministry, **BOA. HR.TO** No. 519/69, 4 November 1877.
[319] **HCPP. Turkey. No. 1 (1878)**, Document No. 316/3, July 1878.

Averyanov describes them as a brutal and undisciplined force that was only engaged in looting and disrupting the orders of the Ottoman army.[320] Some Ottoman sources too describe Sheikh Ubeidullah's forces as a chaotic and disobedient force as well.[321]

In contrast to the above narratives, Sheikh Ubeidullah, and Wefayi have different perspectives. According to the Sheikh, Kurds defeated the Russians in Bayazit, Yerevan, and Karabulaq, and 900 of his murids were killed, some of whom were religious scholars.[322] Similarly, Wefayi states that the Sheikh's forces twice defeated the Russian offenses in Bayazit, but "*some of the leaders of the state betrayed*" and left the battleground without fighting in Kars, Ardahan, Bayazit, and some other places for the Russians without taking permission from the Porte. So, Sheikh Ubeidullah was forced to dismiss the army and return to Nehri from Van.[323]

During the War Sheikh Ubeidullah had received about 20,000 weapons from the Ottoman Empire for participating but he never returned these weapons.[324] Besides they collected some weapons as spoils of war.[325] Faiz (who received this

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[320] Averyanov, **op. cit**, p. 210.

[321] Ahmed Arif Bey states that Sheikh Ubeidullah failed to fulfill the big promises he made at the beginning of the war. Mehmed Arif Bey, **Başımıza Gelenler**, Ed. M. Ertuğrul Düzdağ, w.date., vol. III, p. 873. Sheikh Ubeidullah himself points out that when his forces attacked the Russians without consulting the Ottoman officers, they punished them and did not send them food or weapons. These words suggest that the sheikh and his forces operated outside the state's military plan. See Nehri, **op. cit.**, p. 117.

[322] According to Sheikh Ubeidullah, when the Russians came to Bayazit, the Ottoman forces retreated and took refuge with him. In response, he and the Kurds attacked Bayazit and defeated the Russian army without the help of the Ottoman forces. Nevertheless, because the Kurds did so independently, the Ottoman officers and commanders cut off supplies from the Kurdish forces, which caused some of the Kurds to abandon the war and return. Nehri **op. cit.**, pp. 117-118, 123; **BOA. HR.TO.**, No. 519/69.

[323] Wefayi, **op. cit.**, p. 59.

[324] **HCPP. Turkey. No. 4 (1880)**, Document No. 71/1, 25 September 1879.

[325] Wilson, **op. cit.**, p. 111. There are different accounts of Sheikh Ubeidullah's actual role in the Russo-Turkish War. Some Russian and Ottoman writers downplay the importance of Sheikh's participation. Averyanov, for example, claims that the Kurds' motivation for participation was the instinct of plunder that was ingrained in their blood. Jalil also states that the Kurds participated for the sake of looting. Jalil, **op. cit.**, p. 55. Contrary to the above narrations, Sheikh Ubeidullah confirms that they played an important role and were able to defeat Russian forces in Bayazit, Yerevan and Abgha, in his words; "When our army faced the Russians, the faces of the Russians turned yellow like Sandarac. Kurds in the battle were like brave lions and the Russians fell into their hands like goats. The Russians shouted to heaven and the angels praised the Kurds. The Russians were defeated by the Muslims because God had decided that the victory was for the believers. The Russians have not been able to stand for an hour, in the confrontation war, …from Abagha to Bayazit, the Russians fled and the Kurds were following them, the plains and forests smelled the left bodies of the Russians. None of the Roms (Turks) joined the Kurdish warriors". Nehri, **op. cit.**, pp. 116-117.

information from his son, who was the director of the Bijar post office), points out that in a night raid, Sheikh mistakenly attacked the Ottoman forces and took 10,000 weapons as spoils of war. Although Faiz mentions this incident to belittle the Sheikh's role in the battle, no Kurdish or Ottoman document supports this claim but it can give an approximate number of weapons the Sheikh gained in the battle.[326] Moreover, those who left the battlefield did not return their weapons either. In a telegraph to the Grand Vizier, the Ottoman commander Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha described Kurds who had left the battlefield as follows:

> Most of the radif soldiers of this army consist of savage and moody Kurds. During these seven months, none of those who left the front and fled have been arrested.[327]

Thus the outcome of the Russo-Turkish War ended in favor of Sheikh Ubeidullah. Although the war had negative consequences on the political and economic situation in the Kurdish regions, the participation of Iranian Kurds, murids, and followers of the Sheikh in the war strengthened the tie between the Kurds on the Ottoman and Iranian sides and further blurred the virtual boundaries drawn between the two states. In addition, according to Nawshirwan Mustafa, Sheikh Ubeidullah's status became stronger and more stable than before among the Kurds, his political awareness was more profound, and he was familiar with the internal affairs of the Ottoman administration and its weaknesses and problems. He understood better the extent of European hegemony and international relations.[328] Moreover, it was the first time since the fall of the Kurdish emirates that a Kurdish figure had gained the trust of the Ottoman Empire and commanded a large Kurdish army at once. This incident effectively made Sheikh Ubeidullah the leader of all Kurds. As the British consul in Urmia pointed out: "*He is also the acknowledged Civil Monarch of all the Kurds, except a few tribes who are nominally Persian subjects.*[329]

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[326] Amir Nizam, **op. cit.**, p. 544.
[327] Arif Bey, **op. cit.**, vol. III, p. 882.
[328] Nawshirwan Mustafa, **op. cit.**, p. 143.
[329] **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 8/4, 8 July 1880.

2.1.3. Iran's Attitude Toward Kurdish Participation in the Russian-Turkish War

According to Khalfin, Iran offered Russia to join it against the Ottomans throughout the Russo-Turkish War, but Russia, since Iran was not in a position to help anyone, respectfully rejected the offer and promised to reward Iran for its position when the war ended and a peace agreement was signed.[330] However, as in the Crimean War, the Russians had asked Iran to prevent Kurdish participation; similarly, in the war of 1877-1878 they tried to ensure Kurdish neutrality through the Iranians and prevent Kurds from following Sheikh Ubeidullah's call for jihad.[331] However, as mentioned above, some Kurds still participated. Later, during the clashes between Sheikh Ubeidullah's forces and the Russians in the border areas between Iran, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire in Bayazit, Iran threatened to wage war against the Ottoman Empire if the Ottomans did not stop the Kurdish attacks.[332]

Russia was one of the parties that mediated the Iranian-Ottoman border disputes over the past three decades. Therefore, it was important for Iran to secure the support and friendship of Russia, which was likely to be the winning side of the war. The Iranian consul in St. Petersburg, in a letter to the Foreign Ministry, stated he had been able to please Russia about Iran's stance on Sheikh Ubeidullah and preventing Kurdish fighters from entering the Ottoman side.[333] The Russo-Turkish War was not over yet, upon the withdrawal of Sheikh Ubeidullah from the war, Iran granted citizenship to Abdul Qadir, the son of Sheikh Ubeidullah, in order to further distance the Sheikh from the Ottomans. So, Tehran gave Abdul Qadir back the custody of the villages he had taken back from them in the past and paid him 25,000 Qirans a month. Later Sheikh Ubeidullah asked Istanbul to implement his demands, otherwise, he is obliged to go to Iran too.[334] However, the loss of Sheikh Ubeidullah,

[330] Khalfin, **op. cit.**, pp. 151-152.
[331] "Mirza Hussien Ali Khan to Mr. Taylour Thomson", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 1 (1878)**, Document No. 316/3, July 1878.
[332] Khalfin, **op. cit.**, p. 152; "The Deputy Governor of Azerbaijan to the Minister for Foreign Affairs", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 1 (1878)**, Document No. 2/176, 29 June 1877.
[333] **GESIO.**, vol. II. No. 350, 22 Cemaziyelevvel 1294.
[334] Commenting on Sheikh Sheikh Ubeidullah's letter, Arif Bey Writes; "Whatever Iran does it is their business, but how can Sheikh Ubeidullah be used as a pawn by the Iranians to achieve that policy?" See Arif Bey, **op. cit.**, **p.** vol. III, p. 882.

who had the most dominance over the Kurds, was not an option for the Ottoman Empire, as his absence would weaken the Ottomans in their border disputes with Iran on one hand and make it more difficult for the state to deal with Armenians and Nestorians problems on the other hand. For this reason, some Ottoman officials advised the Porte, to leave no room for the Sheikh's rapprochement with Iran. In a letter to the Grand Vizier, Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha emphasizes this fact as follows:

> The telegraphic order sent by your Highness office regarding Sheikh Ubeidullah was read out. Because of his dominance over the people of the region, we must win his heart and not let him go toward the other side. Moreover, we must respect his takiya and through him, we can unite the Kurds with corrupted morals and hearts against the Nestorians of the surrounding areas. In short, winning the heart of the Sheikh has many political and material benefits.[335]

Therefore, as it will be evident, in the following years, despite all the major events that took place between the two states, the Porte tried to please Sheikh Ubeidullah.

2.1.4. The Aftermath of the Russo-Turkish War

In March of 1878, following its loss to Russia, the Ottoman Empire was compelled to sign the Treaty of San Stefano. The treaty included harsh terms that not only bolstered Russia's dominance over the Ottoman Empire, but also over European countries. Unsatisfied with the Treaty of San Stefano, European countries forced Russia to sign a new treaty that amended some of the provisions of the previous treaty. Consequently, a new treaty was signed in Berlin on July 13, 1878. In this treaty, Russia still was able to impose two articles (61 and 62) in favor of Iran and Armenians in return for their position in the Russo-Turkish War. Article 61 resolved an important border issue in Iran's interest:

> The Sublime Porte cedes to Persia the town and territory of Khotour [Qutur], as fixed by the mixed Anglo-Russian Commission for the delimitation of the frontiers of Turkey and Persia.

As for the Armenians, according to article 61:

[335] Arif Bey, **op. cit.**, vol. III, p. 879.

> The Sublime Porte undertakes to carry out, without further delay, the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and Kurds.[336]

The Ottoman Empire formally agreed to these two conditions, but in the coming years, it became clear that it tried to create obstacles to the implementations of both through the Kurds. After the congress, the Ottoman Empire came under international scrutiny for implementing the decisions of the congress. Britain established five military consulates in Anatolia and Armenia to listen to the Christian population's problems against the Ottoman administration and the Kurdish tribal chiefs.[337]

With the appointment of the British consul in Van, propaganda spread that the creation of an independent Armenian state under British protection was imminent. Between 1878 and 1881, two secret organizations of the Armenians were formed, one called the Black Cross Association in Van and the other in Erzurum called Defenders of the Country (Vatan Mudafileri). These rumors had a significant impact on creating fear and anxiety among the Kurds who interpreted Article 61 as a prelude to the creation of a state for the Armenians in and around Van. These coincided with the deterioration of economic conditions, partly related to the consequences of the war. According to Jalil, the people of Anatolia were in very poor living conditions, many people had left their territories because of hunger while corruption was widespread and state institutions were destroyed.[338]

In the autumn of 1878, chaos spread to Van, Mush, and Betlis. The Kurdish tribes of Motkanli, Rashkotanli, and Saliki began to rebel. This anti-state movement grew and spread to the regions of Botan and Hakkari. During this period, this unorganized unrest took the form of an organized movement led by Osman and Hussein Pashas, the sons of Emir Bedir Khan. The two brothers were officers in the Ottoman army and had fought in the Russo-Turkish War. The insurgents captured the

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[336] For the full Text of The Treaty of Berlin 1878 see "Treaty between Great Britain, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Russia, and Turkey for the Settlement of Affairs in the East: Signed at Berlin, July 13, 1878." **The American Journal of International Law**, vol. II, No. 4, 1908, pp. 401–24.
[337] Abdurrauf Sinno, **Osmanlı'nın Sancılı Yıllarında Araplar**, **Kürtler**, **Arnavutlar**, Trans. By Ahsan Batur, İstanbul, 2011, p. 139.
[338] Jalil, **op. cit.**, p. 63.

cities of Julamerk, Zakho, Amedi, Mardin, and Nusaybin. Wherever they captured, they confiscated weapons, stores, wheat, and barley from these regions and declared Cizre their capital. Osman Pasha also gave himself the title of the emir and his name was read along with the name of Sultan in Friday khutbah.[339] However, the Ottoman Empire soon formed a force from Sirt, Erzurum, Diyarbakir, and Erzincan and after several clashes, launched an intensive attack on Cizre and forced Hussein Pasha to surrender while some of those who had participated in the uprising fled.[340] However, according to Khalfin, the Ottomans did not harm the nobles and tribal chiefs as they had not done before, he adds; that they did not even punish Hussein Pasha, who was the main cause of the uprising.[341]

Though during the Bedir Khan family's rebellion, Sheikh Ubeidullah did not participate, after the treaty of Berlin he thought of creating an independent political entity. This was especially after being encouraged by the independence of some Balkan countries from the Ottoman Empire as a result of the Russo-Turkish War. Sheikh Ubeidullah, who had amassed a large military force during the war and was recognized by the Porte, preferred himself to rule the Kurdish regions. Therefore, especially after the rebellion of the Bedir Khan family, whose goal seemed to be to create an administration similar to their father's emirate, Sheikh thought of creating a broader entity.

Two factors made it easier for Sheikh Ubeidullah to attract the Kurdish public opinion. The first was the threat of a formation of a state for Armenians that gave a more religious identity to the political movement which had emerged in the Kurdish regions. Because he was a religious man, the Sheikh became a symbol of Kurdish religious identity in contrast to Armenian religious identity. Second, the acceptance of Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin was, at least officially, neglecting Kurds by the Ottoman Empire, who (according to Sheikh Ubeidullah) took a serious part in the Russo-Turkish War. This was interpreted by the Sheikh and his entourages as a sign

[339] **Ibid**, 73-75.
[340] Khalfin, **op. cit.**, p. 166.
[341] **Ibid**, 118.

that Ottomans had ignored the Kurdish efforts. This point of view is also noted in this poem by the Sheikh:

> All the promises that Rome (Turks) made to us on the day of the war did not fulfill anything, all our services were in vain ... and they failed to convey the sacrifice to the state [the Porte] that Kurdistan made. The Kurdish support for Rome was fruitless.[342]

During this period, fear of the creation of an Armenian state became the main motivation for irritating the Kurds and the Kurdish movement. As Clayton pointed out, sheikhs and Kurds were against any exceptional privileges granted to Nestorians and Armenians.[343] This fear and consideration can be felt in the expression of Sheikh Ubeidullah to the representative of Toussoun Pasha, the governor of Hakkari:

> What is this that I hear, that the Armenians are going to have an independent State in Van and that the Nestorians are going to hoist the British flag and declare themselves British subjects. I will never permit it, even if I have to arm the women.[344]

According to Toussoun Pasha, Sheikh stated that he would send his son Abdul Qadir to Istanbul with the following proposal:

> He will point out the large sum paid to the Sultan by Bedir Khan Bey, when semi-independent, and will offer to pay a still larger sum if his authority over Kurdistan is recognized, and his rule is not interfered with. [345]

Although the Ottoman Empire never agreed to the Sheik's suggestions, he could not be disregarded because the state needed him to counter the Armenian and Nestorian rebellions. These factors enabled the Sheikh to attract the attention of the Kurdish society and the Kurdish tribes. According to witnesses who were in the region during the years after the Russo-Turkish War, he had true authority in Hakkari and its surroundings.[346] These paved the way for him to take ownership of the

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[342] Nehri, **op. cit.**, p. 127.
[343] "Vice Consul Clayton to Major Trotter", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 7/1 11 July 1880.
[344] **Ibid.**
[345] **Ibid.**
[346] As Clayton describes "reports from Hakkari indicate that there is almost complete anarchy there. Kurds, especially the Sheikh's are governing the whole country and the Government seems to be powerless." "Captain Clayton to Major Trotter", **HCPP.**, **Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 40/1, 5 October 1880.

protests that erupted among the Ottoman Kurds and initially began to gather notables and leaders and gained a great power so that when the Ottoman Empire sent one of its religious scholars to negotiate with him, the Sheikh informed him:

> Either I will unite Kurdistan completely and turn it into an emirate like the old Montenegro and Serbia, or I will sacrifice my life for this cause.[347]

2.1.5. Sheikh Ubeidullah's Uprising Against the Ottoman Empire

In 1879, the Kurdish regions on both sides of the Ottoman Empire and Iran were going through political and security instabilities due to the poor economic situation, the spread of diseases, and increased sensitivity between the Kurds and the Armenians. The Kurdish tribes clashed with the Ottoman officials several times over non-payment of taxes or plunder.[348] According to Trotter, in mid-July 1879, the state forces raided the village of Tazeh, killing 60 people from the Harki tribe.[349] Later, Because the Harki tribe had looted a village, on August 6, 1879, the governor of Gevar (present-day Yüksekova) sent a force of 400 men onto the Harki tribe, killing several men and arresting 14 others.[350] Two days after the Gevar incident, 23 principal Kurdish chiefs were arrested in Diyarbakir and deported to Albania.[351]

Upon this incident, Sheikh Ubeidullah gathered other Kurdish Sheikhs and tribal chiefs to prepare for an uprising against the government. Sheikh Mohammed (Beridchan?) was one of those to whom Sheikh Ubeidullah sent a letter, and he immediately informed the governor of Mosul of the plan. After being aware of the plan, the governor of Mosul sent a battalion of two hundred soldiers to Amedi to collect taxes. In contrast, Sheikh Ubeidullah sent his son Abdul Qadir, who had been appointed as the governor of Margawar by Iran, with 900 men to confront the

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[347] **BOA. İ.MMS**. No. 64/301; **BOA. Y.A HUS.**, No. 162/36.
[348] "Consul Abbott to Mr. R. Thomson", **HCPP. Turkey. No.5 (1879)**, Document No. 71/1, 25 September 1879.
[349] "Major Trotter to the Marquis of Salisbury", **HCPP. Turkey. 4 (1880)** Document No. 34, 12 September 1879.
[350] "Captain Clayton to Major Trotter Van", **HCPP. Turkey. 4 (1880)** Document No. 41/1, 6 September 1879.
[351] "Major Trotter to the Marquis of Salisbury", **HCPP. Turkey. 4 (1880)** Document No. 11, 8 August 1879. Also, according to Press reports several other Kurdish tribal chiefs were sent to Istanbul in October. **Daily Los Angeles Herald**, October 24, 1879, p. 2; **The Weekly Miner.**, October 28, 1879, p. 4.

Ottoman forces. However, because the governor had prepared earlier in anticipation, he was able to defeat Abdul Qadir's force.[352] Thus Sheikh was defeated in his first rebellion against the Ottomans, but he explained that the incident was not to confront the state but to mediate between government forces and Kurds through his son. According to a letter he sent to the governor of Van, he blamed the state forces for what happened and he clarified that after a state force burned several villages, killed people, and raped women, he sent Abdul Qadir to subdue the situation and release the soldiers who were captivated by the Hakkari tribesmen. Further, Sheikh Ubeidullah asked the governor not to believe false news against him and assured him to "*inform the state that I am more faithful than ever*."[353] However, the Porte took some precautionary measures to prevent any unwanted incidents. In the autumn of 1879, Samih Pasha was sent to Van to replace Dervish Pasha as commander of the Fourth Ottoman Army. Upon his arrival, an infantry force with two artillery batteries was sent to Van. Later, artillery was sent from Mosul, Diyarbakır, and Erzincan, and several battalions were gathered around Hakkari.[354] On the other hand, Sultan Abdulhamid sent Ahmad and Bahri Beys to investigate the incident and gave them a letter to Sheikh Ubeidullah. After the investigation, the Sultan's representatives conveyed an overall positive image of Sheikh Ubeidullah to Istanbul and informed the Porte that Sheikh Ubeidullah should be shown mercy because of his long-standing devotion to the caliph.[355]

Contrary to his words, however, the Sheikh continued gathering tribal chiefs and pursuing his political programs. In addition to the weapons he had, after the defeat of Amedi, he began to buy more weapons from Iran.[356] Rumors of the Sheikh's preparations for an uprising seem to have spread among Iranian Kurds too. The Russian consul in Iran in December 1879 warned his country that the Sheikh intended to launch an uprising against the Ottoman Empire and form an independent

[352] "Captain Clayton to Major Trotter", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 4 (1880)**, Document No. 41/1.
[353] "Sheikh Ubeidullah to the Vali of Van", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 4 (1880)**, Document No. 49/3, 9 September 1897 (22nd of Ramadan). See also, **BOA. Y.A.HUS**, No. 162/36, 14 L1296.
[354] Jalil, **op. cit.**, p. 88.
[355] **BOA. Y.A.HUS**, No. 162/36, 14 Şevval 1296.
[356] Abbott claims that Sheikh Ubeidullah bought a large number of weapons through an agent in Urmia. "Consul Abbott to Mr. R. Thomson", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 4 (1880)**, Document No. 71/1, 25, September 1879.

Kurdistan in the Kurdish regions of the Ottoman Empire under his leadership.[357] Since then, he has been intensively gathering the Kurdish tribes and meeting with them several times in Nehri. He tried to end the conflicts between the tribes, in this context, he was able to reconcile the Iranian tribes such as Mamash, Mangor, and Piran.[358]

In the coming months, he sought to win Armenian, Nestorian and international supports. Khalfin and Jalil, based on Russian archives, demonstrate that after the Russo-Turkish War, the representatives of Sheikh Ubeidullah used every excuse to enter the Russian consulate. Especially after the opening of the Russian consulate in Van. In October 1879, two months after the incident of Amedi, Sheikh Ubeidullah's representative asked the Russians for help and told the Russian consul Kamsakaran that,

> The Turkish authorities cannot maintain security in Kurdistan; the Turkish administration in Kurdistan is sucking the blood of the population. The sheikh takes it upon himself to save them from this oppression because they consider him their only savior.

However, Kamsakaran told him that because of the strong friendly relationship between the Turks and the Russians, it is better to convey his demands to the Ottoman Sultan directly. Kamsakaran also asked the Russian ambassador in Istanbul, Rastovsky, not to listen to the Kurdish demands and to support the Christians, "*who are smarter and learn faster*".[359]

Since Armenian national activities were intense in and around Van, they viewed the Kurds as their main rivals. This made it very difficult for the Sheikh to win the support of the Russian and British representatives, who were more concerned about the Armenians. The Sheikh had aware that in the middle of the 19th century, the Ottoman Empire, under Western pressure, destroyed the two emirates of Botan and Hakkari because of the conflicts they had with Armenians and Nestorians. In this context, he sought to secure international support by establishing friendly relations

[357] Jalil, **op. cit.**, p. 81.
[358] Hama Baqi, **op. cit.**, p. 76.
[359] Khalfin, **op. cit.**, p. 169; Jalil, **op. cit.**, pp. 83-84.

with the Armenians and Nestorians. As Wilson points out, "*He showed himself friendly to the Christian populations, declaring that he would rule them with equity. He cultivated foreigners, and sought to enlist the public opinion of the world on his side"*.[360] But since the Armenians saw the Kurds as their biggest obstacle, Sheikh Ubeidullah could never convince them, and hence the Britons.

2.1.6. The Agreement of 1880 to Prevent the Expected Rebellion

According to Article 60 of the Berlin Treaty, the Russians withdrew from Bayazit and Alaschkerd and these two places returned to the Ottoman Empire. So, instead of the Russians, the Britons became in charge of the Armenian and Nestorian cause in eastern Anatolia. This ownership also became an excuse for the British presence in the area. However, what was more important for Britain than the Armenians was that any conflict in the border areas would give Russia an excuse to intervene and expand, thus creating problems for Britons to travel to India, which was under their rule. Therefore, following the Berlin Treaty and the emergence of the initial signs of the anticipated Kurdish revolt, the Britons were closely monitoring the situation. Jalil notes that in 1879 Britons sent two officers to the Kurdish regions of eastern Anatolia to investigate rumors of a Kurdish uprising.[361] For this reason, as rumors of an uprising heated up in the early 1880s, they tried to prevent any political escalation that would complicate the situation in frontiers, by establishing diplomatic and security relations between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. For this purpose, the British consuls Thomson in Tehran, Goschen in Istanbul, and other regional consuls have been appointed by Secretary of State Earl Granville. Between May and August, they held several meetings with Sultan Abdulhamid II and Naser al-Din Shah, their foreign ministers, and ambassadors to convince them to tighten the borders and sign a new agreement to prevent the Kurds from crossing the border between the two states.[362] Thomson's proposal, in addition to the dangers associated with Sheikh

[360] Wilson, **op. cit.**, pp. 110-111.
[361] Jalil, **op. cit.**, p. 87; Hama Baqi, **op. cit.**, p. 87.
[362] "Mr. Thomson to Earl Granville", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)** Document No. 1, 14 may 1880; "Earl Granville to Mr. Goschen" **Ibid.**, Document No. 2, 1 July 1880; "Earl Granville to Mr. Thomson", **Ibid.**, Document No. 3, 1 July 1880; "Mr. Goschen to Earl Granville", **Ibid.**, Document No. 4, 3 August 1880; "Earl Granville to Mr. Goschen" **Ibid.**, Document No. 5, 19 August 1880.

Ubeidullah's preparations, coincided with two other issues that were important for the Ottomans to address.

The first was to end the raids of the Shikak tribe led by Ali Khan on some of the Ottoman areas belonging to Sheikh Ubeidullah.[363] This tribe's strength dates back to the mid-19th century when it took the form of a tribal confederation. Until then, the Soma region, west of Lake Urmia, was ruled by a Kurdish family that the Ottomans had appointed in the region. Iran, in turn, encouraged the Shikak tribe to take over the region until they gradually conquered the entire region.[364]After the ownership of Qutur was decided for Iran, this tribe became the strongest tribe in the region and the real ruler of Qutur until the years after World War I (see Chapter V). Therefore, the Ottoman Empire was anxious to end the attacks of Shikak on the Ottoman side and repeatedly protested to the Iranians and asked them to put a limit on the attacks of the tribe.[365]

The second was the issue of Hamza Agha, the chief of the Mangor clan and the strongest man of the Bilbas tribe, who later became one of the main characters in the rebellion of Sheikh Ubeidullah and the Sheikh granted him the title Sepahsalar-i A'zam (Commander-In-chief).[366] Hamza Agha had been involved in several border

[363] Through his son Abdul Qadir, Sheikh Ubeidullah repeatedly asked Iran to stop the Shikak tribe or allow him to confront them, but Iran refused. "to Consul-General Abbott", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 8/4, 8 July 1880.
[364] Hawar, **op. cit.**, pp. 212-213; McDaoul, **op. cit.**, p. 8.
[365] **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 365, 27 Receb 1296; **Ibid**, No. 366, 4 Zilhicce 1296; **Ibid**, No. 367, 12 Zilhicce 1296, p. 671; **Ibid**, No. 368, 20 Zilhicce 1296.
[366] **Tercüman-ı Hakikat** (Newspaper), No. 765, 13 January 1881, p. 2. Mangor, the clan which Hamza Agha belongs to, was the strongest clan of the Bilbas tribe, which was spread along the Ottoman and Iranian border. According to Afshar during the reign of Karim Khan Zand, the governor of Maragha, killed Bapir Agha the chief of Mangor and nearly 1000 men of different clans of Bilbas with a smart technic, while inviting them and then plundered their villages. Ali İbn Emir Gune Han-i Afshar, **Tarih-i Khuruj-i Akrad-u Katl-u Gharet-i Sheikh Ubeidullah-i Bedbuniyad-u İhtişaş-u Fitne-e Ziyad der Memlekt-i Azerbaycan der Senne-i 1297**, Sulaymaniyah 2008, p. 66-67. This incident is written by the official historian and may be an exaggeration regarding the number of the people who were killed with Bapir Agha. However, according to Nawshirwan Mustafa, the magnitude of this event caused the Bilbas tribes to be divided and silent for nearly a hundred years until the appearance of Hamza Agha Mangor, who was able to restore power to the Bilbas tribes. In 1866, Mangors had a conflict with the Karapapak tribe of Azerbaijan. The government-backed Karapapak tribe, was able to defeat Mangor and expel them to Ottoman territory. The governor of Baghdad, Namiq Pasha, later asked the Iranian authorities to force Karapapak tribe compensate for the damage caused to Mangors, but Iran rejected this demand. In response, the Mangor tribe attacked the Karapapaks and killed some men. Rezevi, **op. cit.**, p. 57. In 1867, the Iranian government in an attempt to weaken the Mangors further and put a limit for their violation of border, plundered their

disputes between the Ottoman Empire and Iran in recent years. He was imprisoned in Istanbul for 12 years for some violations. After his release, he settled in the Qandil Mountains near his tribe on the Iranian side.[367] Until the Iranians tried to reconcile him and allow him to return, so he returned to the Mukri region of Sauj Bulaq three years before the rebellion of Sheikh Ubeidullah.[368] After returning to Iran, he entered the Ottoman Empire several times with the chieftain of the Haidaran tribe. According to the governor of Van, he had committed "many crimes in Van and its surroundings".[369] So, the Ottomans repeatedly asked the Iranians to arrest Hamza Agha and not allow him to cause trouble within the Ottoman territories. Finally, at the request of the Ottoman ambassador, the Iranian foreign minister asked the governor of Azerbaijan to get Hamza Agha dead or alive.[370]

So, for these reasons, as Goshen indicated, Sultan Abdulhamid was very keen to resolve the situation and put a limit on the movement of the frontier tribes and the chaos they caused.[371] In recent years, Iran had felt the threat of Sheikh Ubeidullah and warned the Ottomans to prevent him from creating problems for Iran.[372] Eventually, on Thomsen's proposal, Fahri Bey, the Ottoman ambassador in Tehran, and Mushir al-Dawla, the Iranian Foreign Minister, wrote a draft in the mid-1880 to

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villages and arrested two brothers, 11 nephews, the wife and the children of Hamza Agha. In consequence the Mangor tribe took refuge with the Ottoman Empire. Later on, Hamza Agha attacked some surrounding villages and in a night raid attacked a regiment of Iranian cavalry and killed more than 100 people, then went to Lahijan fort. In response, Azerbaijan forces under the command of Shuja' al-Dawla, who was accompanied by a cavalry from some Kurdish Tribes, attacked Lahijan. Unable to resist, Hamza Agha and his clan retreated to the village of Zharawa on the other side of the Qandil Mountain in the Ottoman territory where they were supported by Taqi al-Din Pasha, the governor of Kirkuk. Nawshirwan Mustafa, **op. cit.**, p. 158. This incident has caused a strong Iranian reaction and Tehran sent an army of 10, 000 people to Tabriz near the border and asked Baghdad to remove the governor of Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah from office and hand over Hamza Agha. Ateş, **op. cit.**, p. 201. However, The Ottoman authorities refused to hand over Hamza Agha, instead they agreed that Hamza Agha be investigated by the representatives of both countries. Thus, they held several investigative meetings, in Bagdad in the presence of the Iranian-Ottoman Border Demarcation Commission. **GISIO**. vol. III, No. 621. Following the investigation Hamza Agha arrested in Kirkuk for another rebellion and spent 12 years in Ottoman prison. (**HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, /72/2.

[367] Nawshirwan Mustafa, **op. cit.**, p. 158.

[368] Ahmet Deniz, **Şeyh Ubeydullah Nehrinin Siyasi Faaliyetleri**, MA. Dissertation, Mardin Artuklu University, 2017, p. 102.

[369] **BOA. HR.SYS**., No. 726/75.

[370] **BOA. HR.SYS**., No. 726/77.

[371] "Mr. Goschen to Earl Granville", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 4, 3 August 1880.

[372] **HCPP. No. 5 Turkey (1881),** Document No.74 / 3.

prevent the escalation of the border tribal conflict[373] but the signing was delayed due to the upcoming rebellion until October 1881. [374] The agreement entitled ‘‘On the border affairs and inappropriate movements of tribes” and contained the following;[375]

The following is a draft agreement between His Highness Mirza Hosein Khan Mushir al-Dawla Sepahsalar-i A’zam and His Excellency Fahri Bey the ambassador of the Ottoman Empire:

To maintain peace along the border and find solutions and prevent undesirable consequences for the tribes on the border and all the inhabitants of the frontiers of both the Ottoman Empires and Iran. They should be disciplined and punished by their state or pay financial compensation for their inappropriate behavior. Tribes that transfer their property to the other state and avoid financial obligations will not get good results. Therefore, both states decide on these points;

1. If a person or group of tribes and inhabitants of one of two neighboring States wishes to escape the punishment for murder and plunder or to evade paying taxes and annual fees to their respective state, the other state will not accept them in any way and will arrest them with their money and goods and send them back to their place of origin. And if they are not arrested, both states decide to prosecute them.

2. The tribes located in the disputed areas shall become temporary citizens of the state that controls those areas. Whether they want to come to the area or migrate from there, all the provisions of this agreement will be applied to them. However, this does not change the demands of either state regarding the disputed areas and their resident tribes.

3. Nomadic and tent-dwelling tribes that are located in one of the two States[376] and wish to migrate shall be exempt from the provisions of Article 1 whenever they wish to migrate. However, before migrating, they must return to their local administration and submit any taxes and annual fees they are indebted or if they are charged with murder or robbery, they will not be allowed to immigrate without legal prosecution.

[373] The agreement does not specify the month. After the draft was written, Iran accepted the agreement with some modifications. However, according to British reports, Sultan Abdulhamid and the Porte were convinced about the agreement, as Goshen demonstrates; Sultan Abdulhamid “His Majesty seemed impressed with the urgency of the case and promised to give it his attention at once”. See Goshen's report **Ibid**, (1881) No. 5/4 “Mr. Goschen to Earl Granville” 3 August 1880.
[374] **BOA. Y.PRK.HR**., No. 5/85, 29 Zilkade 1298.
[375] For the text of the agreement see **GESIO.**, vol. II, pp. 675-678; **BOA. Y.PRK.HR**., No. 5/85, 29 Zilkade 1298.
[376] This article may refer to immigrants who were previously subjects, who have temporarily moved to the other state, or to any tribe that wishes to migrate, it is not clear in this article.

4. In any case, the tribes and tent-dwellers mentioned in Article 3, who wish to migrate to the other state within the framework of legal principles and customs, must be moved at least 30 miles inland from the other state to not cause problems. This does not include people who have previously migrated and settled in areas near the border. However, if there are disruptive and notorious people among them who have been complained about before, they must be removed 50 miles from the border. Tribes that have already migrated will not be assigned administrative tasks on the border and if they have been assigned before, they must be replaced.

5. Whenever the tribes and inhabitants of either state cross the border individually or in groups for plunder and evil, they should be punished legitimately and legally by appointing officers from both sides with the assistance of the commission in the light of this agreement and by listening to the local administration and witnesses and return the looted property to their owners. No tribe should be allowed to cross the border without permission from both states.

6. Both countries promise to hand over deserters who have fled the other country and sought refuge with them, regardless of their rank.

7. Political refugees are not covered by this Agreement.

8. The issue of seasonal migration (wintering and summering) of the tribes between the two states and allowing their livestock to graze on the other state's land is prohibited in every way, as it has been in the past.

9. This Agreement shall not annul any other treaties between the two States currently in force. The agreement will come into force three months after its signing and both countries promise not to neglect to implement its provisions.

As the preamble and the points of the agreement show, both states have not yet fully realized the danger of the situation. However, the problem of Sheikh Abdul Qadir's relocation, the attacks of the Shikak tribe, and the issue of Hamza Agha were mentioned indirectly. Although some of the points had previously been agreed upon between the representatives of the two sides, as it became clear in the following years, neither of the two states did abide by the agreements between them.

2.1.7. The Kurdish League and Preparation for an Uprising

By the early 1880s, there were all signs that Sheikh Ubeidullah would revolt on both the Ottoman and Iranian sides. He twice gathered the Kurdish tribal chiefs in March and September of 1880 to plan the uprising. In the first Kurdish meeting, Sheikh Ubeidullah appeared to be planning to revolt in the Kurdish areas under

Ottoman and Iranian control. Russian authors such as Averianov and Kamsakaran entitled that Sheikh Ubeidullah read a speech in the meeting, in which he called the Ottoman caliphate unjust for the Ottoman caliphs were not among the descendants of the Prophet. He also said that they would first attack Iran and then take over the Kurdish areas under the Ottoman rule.[377] However, contrary to the narratives of the Russian authors, the letters and poems of Sheikh Ubeidullah, British reports, and some news from Istanbul newspapers prove that he respected the Caliph and was obedient to him as a religious duty. Considering the various sources, it appears that the Sheikh intended to create a political entity that would be administratively independent and religiously subordinate to the caliphate. Looking at the journalistic and intelligence reports of the years following the Russo-Turkish War, it seems that the political concern of the Kurds within the Ottoman Empire was primarily the Armenian issue. In general, Western newspapers and some Ottoman "reformist" journalists portrayed the Kurds as oppressive, brutal, and obstructive to the "oppressed" Armenian people. In response, a Kurdish nationalist discourse developed.[378] So in those years, it seemed that what was being fought over was whether the region would be a Kurdish or an Armenian state.

In the mid-1880s, the name of a new organization called the Kurdish League became the subject of intelligence and journalism. Journalistic and intelligence reports indicate that the Porte tried to unite the Kurdish tribes through Bahri Bey, a descendant of Emir Bedir Khan, and the representative of the Sultan. The name Kurdish League appeared after the formation of the Albanian League, a national

[377] Averyanov, **op. cit.**, p. 242; Kamsakaran, **Hêrşi Sali 1880-i Şêx Ubeidullah bo ser İran**, Sankt-Peterburg 1884, p. 34, as cited in Aziz Shamzini, **Culanevey Rzgari Niştimani Kurdistan**, Trans. by. Ferid Eseserd, Sulaymaniyah, 2004, p. 121. It seems that among Kurdish literature, Aziz Shamzini, a descendant of Sheikh Ubeidullah, was the first to cite this text from Kamsakaran in the 1960s, and other Kurdish writers later cited it from Aziz Shamzini.

[378] For Western newspapers see, **Rutland Echo and Leicestershire Advertiser**, 12 July 1878, p. 2; **Leeds Mercury**, 16 October 1878, p. 6; **Morning Post** (England), 11 December 1878, p. 5; **Meath Herald and Cavan Advertiser**, 12 April 1879, p. 2; **Diss Express** (England), "Kurdish Atrocities"11 April 1879, p. 6; **The River Press.**, 29 December 1880, p. 2; **Boston Guardian**, Friday 03 September 1880. For Ottoman reformist journalists, see, **Tercüman-ı Hakikat** (Istanbul), No. 694, 4 October 1880, p. 1, in which some Turkish newspapers like "Vakit" and "Ceridyi Havadis" has been criticized for their "hostile" attitudes against Kurds. In response to the anti-Kurdish speech, the newspaper Tercüman-ı Hakikat published several articles in defense of the Kurds. Some of these articles were written by the Kurds and include several articles about defending the historical rights of the Kurds over the regions of eastern Anatolia against the Armenians. See **Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, No. 595, 7 June 1880, p. 4; **Ibid**, No. 735, 9 January 1880, p. 2; **Ibid**, 14 July 1880, p. 2.

organization of Albanian Muslims supported by the Ottoman Empire. There were also rumors that the Kurds were planning to form a league, aiming to create an entity similar to Eastern Rumelia.[379] The newspaper St. Croix Avis reports that Istanbul newspapers referred to both the Kurdish League and the Albanian League as a sign of the Sultan's foresight and firmness.[380] Nevertheless, western newspapers and intelligence reports describe the Kurdish League as an attempt by the Sultan to create obstacles to the provisions of the Berlin Treaty and granting the Armenians' rights.[381] In a letter to Mr. Goshen, the Armenian Patriarch claimed that the Kurdish League was a deception of the Ottoman government to use the Kurds to suppress the Armenian problem and thus described the group as *"The soul of this league is the Ottoman policy. Sheikh Ubeidullah is its nominal center; Bahri Bey is its assiduous emissary.* "According to him, Bahri Beg visited all the Kurdish tribes and tried to bring them into the group through enticement and intimidation.[382] However, because there is no official Ottoman document about the league, it cannot be decided whether the Porte was behind the creation of this league or not, or even if such a league ever existed or not. Nonetheless, it is clear that with the rumors of the formation of the league and the gathering of the Kurdish tribes, the direction of Sheikh Ubeidullah's movement shifted from the Kurdish regions in the Ottoman Empire to the Kurdish regions of Iran. Apparently during Sheikh Ubeidullah's meetings with notable Kurds, some Kurdish chieftains and notables, whom Russian authors call Turkish mercenaries, refused to fight against the Ottomans, contrary to the wishes of Sheikh Ubeidullah. Encouraged by the Ottomans, they tried to convince Sheikh Ubeidullah to attack the Armenians first and then attack Iran.[383]However, it seems that there

[379] **Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, No. 697, 8 November 1880, p. 1. As Sheikh Ubeidullah himself pointed out, the entity he aimed to create was one that would follow the caliphate religiously: "If the Kurds had a president, they would be an unparalleled state. If Sultan had looked at this nation, that are men of difficult days, they would have been competitive with the powerful states in confrontation. I am a descendant of the Prophet, not a Kurd, so what I am saying is not out of discrimination. Nehri, **op. cit.**, pp. 121-122.
[380] **St. Croix Avis**, December 15, 1880, p. 3.
[381] **Boston Guardian**, 03 September 1880, p. 5; **Morning Post**, Friday 03 September 1880 p. 4; **Shipping and Mercantile Gazette**, Saturday 28 August 1880.
[382] "Letter from Monseigneur Krimian", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 6/1, 20 June 1880.
[383] Averyanov, **op. cit.**, p. 243; Şemzini, **op. cit.**, p. 122.

were other reasons behind Sheikh Ubeidullah's rebellion in Iran instead of the Ottoman Empire, which will be explained in the following section.

2.2. THE KURDISH REBELLION AGAINST THE IRANIAN AUTHORITIES

2.2.1. How the Ottoman Subject, Sheikh Ubeidullah Rebelled Against Iran

In his second meeting with the Kurdish tribes in August, Sheikh Ubeidullah decided to attack Iran instead of the Kurdish regions of the Ottoman Empire for several reasons. Although there are different opinions on the motives for this change, the following factors certainly contributed in directing of the rebellion to Iran.

First, the Mukri region (the Kurdish regions of Azerbaijan province) was the area of conflict between Sunni Kurds and Shiite Azeris (Ajam in Kurdish terms).[384] The history of the relationship between the two different ethnic groups is a history of conflict and confrontation. Over the past few centuries, The Kurdish tribes in the region have revolted several times in support of the Ottoman Empire or independently and successive Iranian states have also suppressed them.[385] Therefore, despite the new and temporary reasons related to Sheikh Ubeidullah's conflict with the Iranian authorities, the existing religious divisions between Kurds and Azeris in the region provided a good basis for Sheikh Ubeidullah to choose Sauj Bulaq and

[384] For the relationship between Kurds and Azeris of northwestern Iran, see Nawshirwan Mustafa, Kurd u Aajm, passim. As it's obvious in the title of the book it examines the historical relationship between Kurds and Azeris in northwestern Iran.

[385] During the reign of Shah Abbas, the Safavids in order to prevent the Ottoman Empire from using the presence of Sunni Kurds in the region, after the suppression of the Kurds, compelled thousands of Kurdish families from Mukri and the surroundings of the Lake Urmia to migrate to Khorasan and replaced the tribes of Afshar in the region. Mustafa Emin, **op. cit.**, p. 106. The reason for the establishment of the Afshar tribe in the region was to control and suppress the Kurdish tribes on the Ottoman border. Nobuaki Kondo, "Qizilbash Afterwards: The Afshars in Urmiya from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Century." **Iranian Studies**, Vol. 32, No. 4, [Taylor & Francis, Ltd., International Society of Iranian Studies], 1999, p. 537-56. The Afshars held most of the administrative, military and religious positions since their settlement in Urmia. **Ibid**, p. 549. However, the region was no longer safe because of the successive attacks of the Iranian army to discipline the Kurdish tribes on the one hand and the continued violent resistance of the Kurdish tribes to maintain their independence on the other. Hama Baqi, **op. cit.**, p. 135. However, the region, as a zone of confrontation between Iran and the Ottoman Empire, took the Kurdish-Iranian conflict to another stage. It took on political, ethnic and religious colors and was reflected in the relations of the two ethnic groups in the region's economic, socio-political and cultural life.

Urmia to control first.[386] Ateş indicates that based on the situation that had happened to the Kurds on both sides of the Ottoman Empire and Iran, Sheikh Ubeidullah was in secret contact with the Sultan by sending letters and telegraphs informing him about Iran's behavior toward the Kurds.[387] Further, according to Tercüman-ı Hakikat newspaper in Istanbul, Kurds have repeatedly asked the Ottoman Empire for help in the face of "*Iran's religious oppression, killing Sunni Kurds and burning their homes*". After the Ottoman Empire did not respond, Kurds turned to Sheikh Ubeidullah, who initially asked Sultan Abdulhamid to respond to the Sunni Kurds in Iran. Nevertheless, since the Sultan had only taken the path of fruitless negotiations, Sheikh Ubeidullah himself had to take on the task and meet the demands of the Iranian Kurds.[388]

As mentioned in the first chapter, according to the accounts of Hurshid Pasha and Harries, the Kurds of Mukri, despite being within the borders of Iran, considered themselves followers of the Ottoman Caliphate. Therefore, as mentioned above, some tribes refused to fight on the Ottoman side for religious reasons.

Second, Iran was in a weak military situation at the time, and the Iranian army was busy suppressing the Turkmen uprising.[389] So, the sheikh and his entourages believed that Iran could not help suppress both uprisings together. At the same time, the Sheikh was aware of the internal conflicts of the Qajar dynasty. On the eve of the invasion of Iran, he contacted several members of the Qajar family trying to facilitate his future work politically on the one hand and to use the conflicts within the Qajar family to his advantage on the other. One of them was Shah's brother, Abbas Mirza, who had just reconciled with the Shah and had been restored to the title of Mulk-Ara.[390]

The social relationship between Abbas Mirza and one of the Kurdish families who were murids and supporters of Sheikh Ubeidullah was mentioned above. For

[386] **BOA. Y.PRK.TKM.**, No. 4/10.
[387] Ateş, **Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands**, p. 219.
[388] **Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, No. 804 28 January 1881, p. 3.
[389] Averyanov points out that Sheikh Ubeidullah told the Kurdish tribal chiefs; as Iran is suppressing the Turkmen revolution on one hand and its eastern forces are partly from Kurds who will join us, it is a good time to attack Iran. Avaryanov, **op. cit.**, p. 234.
[390] **Al-Zaura** (Newspaper-Baghdad), No. 878, 7 Zilhicce 1296.

this reason, the Sheikh expected Abbas Mirza to help him invade Iran. In his biography, Abbas Mirza mentions that Sheikh Ubeidullah sent him a letter through two men, informing him that the Sheikh intended to attack Iran. The Sheikh asked him to help, given the deep relationship between their fathers, and in return, Sheikh Ubeidullah will help him overthrow Naser al-Din Shah and become the Shah of Iran. However, Abas Mirza arrested the envoys of Sheikh Ubeidullah and handed them over to Naser al-Din Shah to express his good intentions. In return, the Shah gave him the rule of Qazvin.[391]

Third, the Russians generally accused Britons of encouraging Sheikh Ubeidullah to attack Iran and providing him with weapons. However, all the intelligence letters left in the British archives prove the opposite of the above claim. Britain was anxious to avoid any political turmoil that might give the Russians an excuse to bring troops to the border. Besides, more than protecting the security of Iran, Britons were concerned about protecting the security of the Ottoman Empire. Clayton, the British deputy consul in Van, visited Nehri twice to get information about the Sheikh's preparations for the establishment of the Kurdish League and met with him. Clayton made it clear to the Sheikh that Britain would oppose all kinds of chaos and lawlessness that would threaten the unity of the Ottoman Empire.[392] The Central Presbyterian newspaper too demonstrates that while Russia promised to protect Iran,

> by the terms of the Anglo-Turkish Convention, England bound herself to protect Turkey against any attempts to destroy her authority over her Asiatic possessions.[393]

Disappointed in convincing Britons to support him against the Ottomans, the Sheikh chose Iran as the first site of his uprising, hoping to conquer the Kurdish regions of the Ottoman Empire after consolidating his position in Iran. As Trotter had observed;

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[391] Mulk Ara, **op. cit.**, pp. 156-157.
[392] Jalil, **op. cit.**, p. 120.
[393] **The Central Presbyterian**., December 22, 1880, p. 4.

> The Sheiks' recent move into Persia may have been made under the impression that the Persian government was more rotten than that of Turkey. Once obtained, he would use his greatly increased power against the Ottoman officials. I use advisedly the term" Ottoman Officials" rather than that of Sultan's authority, as I believe to be more or less personally loyal to the Sultan, and he would be ready to submit to his authority and pay him tribute as long as he could get rid of the Ottoman officials, and be looked *de lege* as well as *de facto* the ruling Chief of Kurdistan.[394]

Fourth, as mentioned above, since the end of the Russo-Turkish War, Iran had allowed Abdul Qadir, the son of Sheikh Ubeidullah, to return to govern the Margawar region. So, the Sheikh's family existed in Iran before that. Dr. Cochran, who was in Urmia in 1880, points out that: "*There are a few tribes of Kurds in Persia who are not his subjects*.''[395]

In 1880, both the Ottoman Empire and Iran were in dire straits due to drought. This was especially worse in the regions of Azerbaijan province. According to several reports, people in Khuy, Urmia, and Salmas had eaten all the dogs of hunger and typhus has spread.[396] According to Cochran, hundreds of people died of hunger every day and the government had no solution while some officials had warehouses full of wheat.[397] In such a bad situation, the Azerbaijan authorities insisted on collecting taxes. According to two letters from Sheikh Ubeidullah, one of which he sent to Sultan Abdulhamid II, before he invaded Iran, Mu'in al-Mulk, uncle of Naser al-Din Shah, and Iqbal al-Dawla arrested and insulted Kurdish chieftains and notables in Sauj Bulaq, Urmia, and Oshnavieh. They arrested Kurdish women and girls, took hundreds of thousands of Iranian Rials from the Kurds, and burned their villages.[398] Apart from the indirect reasons mentioned above, during this period, two important events were the direct cause of Sheikh Ubeidullah's attacks.

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[394] "Major Trotter Mr. Goschen", **HCPP. Turkey. No.5 (1881)**, Document No. 22, 20 October 1880.
[395] Robert Elliott Speer, **The Hakim Sahib**, **the Foreign Doctor: A Biography of Joseph Plumb Cochran**, **MD**, **of Persia**. Revell, 1911, p. 80.
[396] **The Anderson intelligencer**, (Anderson Court House, S.C.), 1860-1914, September 23, 1880, p. 4; **Centre Democrat.**, October 07, 1880, p. 3**; Shepherdstown register**, October 30, 1880, p. 1.
[397] For details about the famine of 1880 in Azarbaican and Dr. Cochran's reports, see, Speer, **op. cit.**, pp. 67-74.
[398] **BOA. Y.PRK.TKM**., No. 4/10/1, 17 Rebiülahir 1298. For the other mentioned letter which has been sent to Dr. Cochran by Sheikh, see "Sheikh Obeidullah to Dr. Cochran", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 61/2, 25 September 1880. Abbas Mirza Mulk Ara in his autobiography commenting about the behavior of the Qajar officials in Azerbaijan and the reasons for the attack of

The first incident was that in early July 1880, Iqbal al-Dawla, the governor of Urmia, asked Abdul Qadir, to collect taxes from the Soma region. When Abdul Qadir refused to carry out the task, Iqbal al-Dawla entrusted it to Ali Khan Shikak to carry it out instead of Abdul Qadir. By then, Ali Khan was both a rival of the Sheikh and the Ottomans who had repeatedly protested Shikaks' attacks on the Ottoman side. In response, Abdul Qadir threatened Ali Khan Shikak that he would send forces against them if they carried out the order of the governor of Urmia. Unable to confront the Sheikh, Ali Khan announced his obedience and alliance with him. Thus, the end of the incident both increased the popularity of the Sheikh and gave Ali Khan Shikak to Sheikh Ubeidullah.[399]

According to the Armenian Patriarch, the Sultan's representative Bahri Beg, had previously tried to bring Ali Khan Shikak into the Kurdish League and reconcile them with the Sheikh.[400] Thus, one of the strongest rivals of Sheikh Ubeidullah, who controlled a large area of Khuy, Soma, and Qutur, became the subject of the Sheikh. A few days after the above developments, Sheikh Abdul Qadir visited Bazargar, a border area between Gevar and Bradost, with an Ottoman force. British Consul General Abbott from Tabriz indicates that the tribal chiefs of Oshnoviah and Lahijan are in talks to become supporters of the Sheikh to undermine the power of the Iranian Shah among the Kurdish tribes in the region. Abbott adds that,

> My impression is that Sheikh Ubeidullah is carrying out the wishes of the retrograde party [Pan-Islamism] in Turkey and that his movements ought to be narrowly watched, as is likely to cause embarrassment for both the Persian and Turkish Governments.[401]

Sheikh Ubeidullah wrote; The Iranian rulers who never stop their ugly and greedy deeds, do not consider time or place, just obtaining money through any kind of corruption, and they do not care about their reputation. What only matters for them is money. Especially Muzaffar al-Din Mirza, the crown prince, who made Mirza Ahmad the commander of army and granted him the title of Mushir al-Saltana, then the commander destroyed the lives of the entire people of Azerbaijan and raided the sheikh's villages several times, but the Sheikh endured these insults. He was unaware that this sheikh is no longer the same sheikh. Mulk Ara, **op. cit.**, p. 153.

[399] Jalil, **op. cit.**, p. 119.

[400] "Letter front Monseigneur Krimian", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 6/1, 20 June 1880.

[401] "Consul General Abbott to Mr. Thomson", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 8/2, 15 July 1880.

The second incident was Hamza Agha Mangor's rebellion against the governor of Azerbaijan. In 1880, the administration of Sauj Bulaq was entrusted to one of the Qajar princes, Lutf-Ali Mirza Kashikchibashi. Most Iranian historians agree that the prince was engaged in robbing people, collecting money, collecting excessive taxes, and looting.[402] This prince captured a group of noble Kurds and chieftains of the Mukri region and after torturing them, took a big amount of money and taxes from them. This time he invited Hamza Agha to Sauj Bulaq. According to Ghoryans, one of the witnesses of the incident, one night Lutf-Ali Mirza invited Hamza Agha. While Lutf-Ali Mirza was on the top floor of the building, through one of his men; Mirza Taqi, ordered Hamza Agha to pay taxes on multiple, but the latter told him that he could not pay that amount. When Mirza Taqi conveyed the answer to the Lutf-Ali Mirza, he sent down a chain handcuff with Mirza Taqi and ordered Hamza Agha to kiss and handcuff himself with it. Hamza Agha shouted in Istanbul Turkish in a dramatic scene; "*Ben bunu Kabul etmem* (I do not accept that.)", drew his sword and after wounding several people and frightening the prince's men, fled that night with his brother-in-law and a couple of his men.[403] After this incident, the ruling prince of Sauj Bulaq asked for forces from Tehran to arrest Hamza Agha. Thus, Hamza Agha took refuge with Sheikh Ubeidullah in the village of Nawchia.[404] Looking for such an opportunity, the Sheikh welcomed him warmly and launched his plan to conquer the Kurdish regions of Iran.

2.2.2. The Main Events of Sheikh Ubeidullah's Rebellion

In early October 1880, Sheikh Ubeidullah, who settled in Nehri, launched a plan to conquer the Kurdish regions of northwestern Iran. According to the plan, he entrusted the seizing of Sauj Bulaq and its surroundings to his son Abdul Qadir and Hamza Agha Mangor, and the seizing of Khuy, Salmas, and Urmia to his son Sheikh Mohammad Sadiq and his caliph Mohammad Saeed. As the rebels entered Iran, most of the Kurdish tribes joined them. They were the tribes of Mangor, Mamash, Zarza,

[402] Amir-Nizam, **op. cit.**, p. 32; Mulk Ara, **op. cit.**, p. 154; Guryans, **op. cit.**, p. 15.
[403] Guryans, **op. cit.**, pp. 17-19.
[404] Yusuf Beg Babapur & Meust Gulamiye, **Fitne-i Sheikh Ubeidullahi Kurd**, **(Guzarişha-i ez Vaka-i Hemley-e Akrad be Sefehat-i Azerbaycan der Devrey-e Kajar**), Tehran, 1390, p. 20.

Harki, Rawand, Binari, Piran, and Shikak (some of the Shikaks were under the leadership of Ali Khan in Chehriq, and some under the leadership of Ali Khan's son Qasim Agha).[405] Cochran, who was in Urmia at the time, points out that:

> [even] The Kurds friendly to the Persian government, which were sent to fight the Sheikh, all went over to his side so that now he has a perfect horde with him of these wild, lawless men.[406]

The first force, led by the warlord Hamza Agha and Abdul Qadir, easily seized Margawar and Oshnovieh and approached Sauj Bulaq in a few days. As they approached Sauj Bulaq, the tribal chiefs of the city told the ruling prince that they could not fight against the rebels because they were followers of Sheikh Ubeidullah. As soon as the prince found that the tribes of the city were not ready to defend him, he left the city on October 12, 1880, accompanied by some statesmen, some of whom fled to Mianduab and Bonab, and the prince was sent to Tabriz.[407] Four days after the evacuation of the city by the prince, Hamza Agha, and Abdul Qadir's forces went to the city and were welcomed by the people there. Abdul Qadir and Hamza Agha appointed Khan Baba Khan as the governor of the city and then left for other parts of eastern Sauj Bulaq.[408] According to a letter sent later by Hamza Agha to the Porte during the seizure of Sauj Bulaq, when they entered the government building, they delivered an official speech in the name of the "Caliph of the Muslims" Sultan Abdulhamid II on Friday, they ordered all preachers in the city to deliver khutba (hutbe) on the name of the Sultan.[409]

The second army of Sheikh Ubeidullah's force, led by Mohammad Sadiq and Mohammad Saeed, deployed in northern Urmia and fought with Iqbal al-Dawla for two weeks. According to Abbott, who moved to Urmia from Tehran in early October

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[405] Hama Baqi, **op. cit.**, p. 171; Jalil, **op. cit.**, p. 125.
[406] Speer, **op. cit.**, pp. 82-83.
[407] Afshar, **op. cit.**, p. 52; "Consul General Abbott lo Mr Thomson", **HCPP. Turkey.** No. 5 (1881), Document No. 77/5, 7 October 1880; Hama Baqi, **Raperini Hamza Aghai Mangor le namekani Qacarda**, Erbil, 2002, p. 71.
[408] Afshar, **op. cit.**, p. 53.
[409] **BOA. PRK.EŞA**., No. 2/71/3, 29 Zilhicce 1298. Apart from Hamza Agha's letter the text of Sheikh Abdul Qadir's Friday khutba was sent to the Porte in Arabic. In the khutba, he blames the Iranian regime and praised Sultan Abdulhamid II and prays for the continuation of his rule. For Sheikh Abdul Qadir's khutba and prayer letter, see, **BOA. PRK.EŞA.**, No. 2/71/1-2, 29 Zilhicce 1298.

to observe the events, nothing could prevent Sheikh Sadiq from conquering Urmia, because Iqba al-Dawla's forces were only two scattered regiments. So if the Kurds had attacked Urmia suddenly, they could have easily captured the city.[410] On October 20, 1880, Sheikh Ubeidullah marched to Urmia with a force of 6,000 men. Upon his arrival, he sent two different letters to Iqbal al-Dawla and Dr. Cochran, the American missionary, in which he explained the cause and purpose of his rebellion. He asked Iqbal al-Dawla to surrender the city without bloodshed, and asked Dr. Cochran to convey his message to Britons. In both letters, Sheikh Ubeidullah explained that Kurds are a separate nation and they want to manage their affairs.[411]

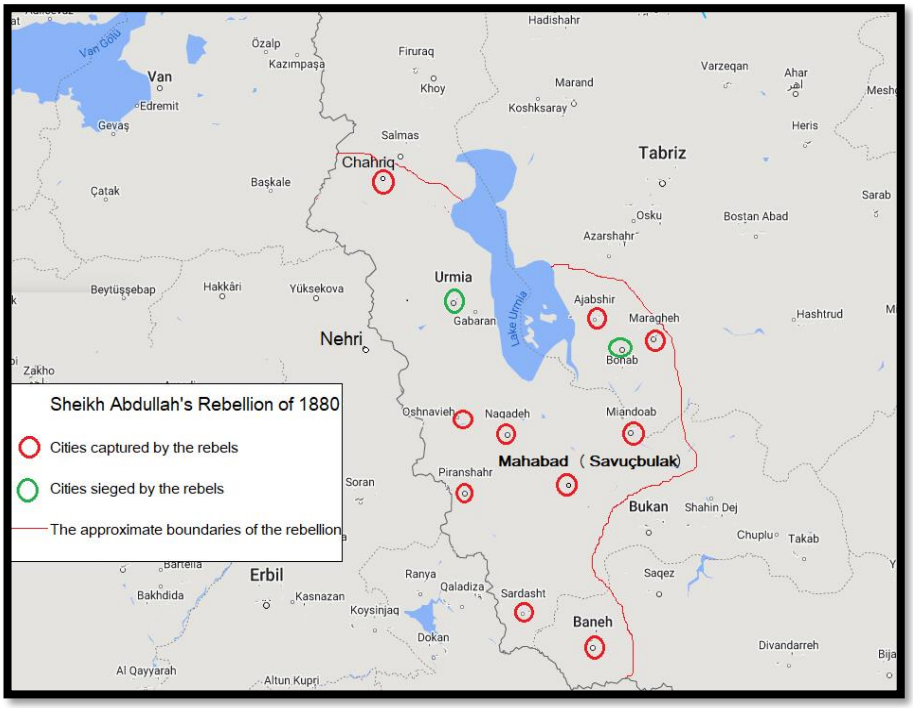
At that time, Iqbal al-Dawla had left the city trying to prevent Sheikh Sadiq and Khalifa Saeed's army from further advance so the city had been left defenseless and Iqbal al-Dawla's forces were blocked from returning to the city.[412] Trying to enter the city without bloodshed, Sheikh Ubeidullah called on the people of the city to surrender peacefully. However, the statesmen and clerics asked Dr. Cochran and Mr. Labaree (American missionary), who were in the city, to ask Sheikh Ubeidullah

[410] **HCPP.**, **Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 77.

[411] The Following is a part of the letter that Sheikh Ubeidullah has sent it to Iqbal al-Dawla: "The Governor is, no doubt, aware that there are 500, 000 families in Kurdistan including Turkish and Persian subjects. No serious inquiry having now been made into the condition and affairs of Kurdistan. Its people have always been painted in the very worst colors. There may be bad characters among them, but why should the innocent be classed with the guilty? The reason why complaints are made against the Kurds is that neither the Turkish nor the Persian Governments have either the power or the will to govern them properly. Through all this the Kurds get a bad reputation, and they in their turn have no respect for their Rulers. In view of this state of affairs, both the Persian and Turkish Kurds have resolved to unite and form a single nation, and keep order among themselves, and they undertake to bind themselves in writing that no disorder shall take place in their country. **HCPP.**, **Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 61/5. The Following is a part of the letter that Sheikh Ubeidullah has sent it to Dr. Cochran; I Send Mullah Ismail to explain, confidentially as I have verbally explained to him the state of affairs here, and I especially request that you will inform the English government of the facts of the case in Kurdistan, and the respecting the going of my son to Souj Bulaq. The Kurdish Nation consists of more than 500, 000 families, in people apart. Their religion is different (to that of others), and their laws and customs are distinct. It is known among all nations as mischievous and corrupt. This is how Kurdistan has been depicted. If one person (from among them) does an evil deed. A thousand peaceable an orderly persons gain an ill respect. Be it known to you for certain that this has all been caused by the laches of the Turkish and Persian authorities, for Kurdistan is in the midst between these two countries, and both governments, for their own reasons, do not distinguish between good and evil characters…The Chiefs and Rulers of Kurdistan, whether Turkish or Persian subjects, and the inhabitants of Kurdistan one and all are united and agreed that matters cannot be carried on in this ay with the two governments, and that necessarily something must be done, so that European Governments having understood the matters, shall inquire into our state. We also are a nation apart. We want our affairs to be in our hand. **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)** Document No. 61/3, "Sheikh Obeidullah to Dr. Cochran" 5 October 1880.

[412] Speer, **op. cit.**, p. 84.

to give them one day to think about the Sheikh's proposal and he did.[413] While the Sheikh was waiting for them to respond, Iqbal al-Dawla and his forces managed to escape at night and returned to the city. According to Afshar, when the Sheikh realized that he had been cheated, he laid siege to the city,[414] but, as explained below, it was too late.



Map 5. The Areas Occupied by the Kurdish forces during Sheikh Ubeidullah's rebellion.

2.2.3. The Repercussions of the Rebellion on the Ottoman-Iranian Relations

The Ottoman Empire's attitude toward the Kurdish uprising derived from the relationship that Istanbul had with international parties, including Iran, Russia, and Britain, and domestic parties, such as Kurds and Armenians. Internationally, the Ottoman Empire had just lost a vast territory one of which was Qutur. As mentioned

[413] **Ibid.**, 85.
[414] Afshar, **op. cit.**, p. 109. Averyanov, **op. cit.**, p. 246.

above, after its victory in the Russo-Turkish War, Russia compelled the Ottoman Empire to leave Qutur to Iran because of the latter's stance during the war. The Ottoman Empire was aware of Iran's position in the war. Therefore, although the Ottomans historically considered the region as their own, they had not forgotten Iran's position during the war. Besides, most of the Kurdish areas of Azerbaijan Provence fell within the map that Dervish Pasha had defined as the old and real frontiers of the Ottoman Empire and most of the population were Sunni Kurds. Therefore, the capture of these areas by an Ottoman sheikh had been interpreted as the Ottoman advance in these territories. In addition, Sultan's good attitude toward the Sheikh was partly due to the fact that despite the Sheikh's hostility toward the state officials, he respected the Sultan from a religious point of view.[415]

As has been mentioned, before the uprising, Sheikh Ubeidullah had asked the Sultan to put pressure on Iran to improve the situation of the Sunni Kurds. He had previously threatened to attack Iran. Five months before the uprising, Tercüman-ı Hakikat newspaper wrote; Sheikh Ubeidullah announced through the notables who visited him; *"If the Ottoman Empire allows me, I will put an end to the Iranian state let al.,one with the Armenian's.*" According to the newspaper, Sheikh Ubeidullah added, *"If his majesty the Sultan orders us, I will demolish Ajamstan [Iran] and Armenia and turn them into Kurdistan, and Kurdistan means Osmanistan*".[416] After these rumors, the Iranian ambassador informed the Porte that Sheikh Ubeidullah was preparing to attack Iran with 5,000 soldiers.[417] These suggest that the Ottoman statesmen were aware of the Sheikh's intentions toward Iran, but, apart from reassuring Iran, they did not do that much to prevent the Sheikh.

Concerning the Ottoman Empire, despite the victory of the uprising could have expanded the borders of the Ottoman Empire eastward, it also could bring all the Kurdish tribes that have been a source of tension and headaches between the two states into its borders and could resolve the border issues with Iran in this way for

[415] This paradox is clearly visible even in the divan of Sheikh Ubeidullah. While he strongly criticizes the state officials and draws a line between the Kurds and the Turks, he also expresses his love and sincerity for the Caliph. Nehri, **op. cit.**, pp. 113-114.
[416] "Sheikh Ubeidullah Efendi", **Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, No. 592, 3 June 1880, p. 2.
[417] **HCPP. Turkey. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 74/1.

good. However, it was a risky gamble for the Porte, because the Kurdish issue had several different domestic and international dimensions. Domestically, for the Porte, the Kurds' real goal was unclear whether the Kurdish movement was a national separatist movement or whether would it bring Iranian Kurds under the Ottoman rule, as the Soran and Hakkari Emirates had done previously. Internationally, the Porte's direct support for the Kurds could have had negative international consequences for the Ottoman Empire. Russia was the first candidate to intervene to help Iran strengthen its political and military hegemony in the region. The British, meanwhile, were trying to prevent anything that could become an excuse for the Russians to strengthen their influence in the region. So, the Porte generally had a vague stance about the events. As will be explained below, despite its constant assurances to Iranians, it's handling of events did not please them.

Sheikh Ubeidullah's revolution had not yet begun when Iran tried to warn and convince the Ottomans in various ways to prevent the Kurdish invasion of Iran. First, the Ottomans assured Iran that they would not allow any attack on Iran from the Ottoman side. In September 1880, Iranian Foreign Minister Mirza Nasrullah Khan warned the Ottoman ambassador in Tehran that the Sheikh intended to attack Iran. A few days later, after investigation, Fahri Bey assured the Iranians; he had received news from Van that the rumors were untrue.[418] Afterward, Sultan Abdulhamid II guaranteed Iran's ambassador in Istanbul that they would not allow the Sheikh and Kurds to attack Iran.[419] A few days later, again he informed the ambassador that he appointed Samih Pasha to monitor Sheikh Ubeidullah's movements.[420]

At the beginning of the uprising, when Sheikh Ubeidullah himself had not yet entered the war, the Ottomans wanted to portray the issue in a way that related to the tribes inside Iran. The Ottoman consul in Tabriz telegraphed the Iranians that he had visited Sauj Bulaq and found that the Iranian Kurdish tribes had carried out the uprising. Naser al-Din Shah wrote on the margins of the telegraph: *"Their telegraph is meaningless; they know that these are the bold acts of the Sheikh and they oversee*

[418] **GESIO.**, **vol.** III, No. 573, 22 Şevval 1297.
[419] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 574/1, 29 Şevval 1297; **Ibid**, vol. III, No. 575/1, 30 Şevval 1297.
[420] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 574/2, 5 Zilhicce 1297.

that."[421] Naser al-Din Shah believed that Sheikh Ubeidullah's activities were planned by the Ottomans, but initially, the uprising was viewed by the Ottomans as internal unrest in Iran. The two most prominent military figures of the uprising, Hamza Agha and Sheikh Abdul Qadir, had previously been promoted by the Iranians. Therefore, apart from accusing Iran of harboring and respecting Ottoman fugitives, the Porte warned the Iranian ambassador that they could not hold Sheikh Ubeidullah responsible.[422]

With the rapid developments that the Iranians had not expected, Iran began to take more diplomatic measures to put pressure on the Ottoman Empire to help Iran end the uprising and The Shah personally asked the Sultan to support Iran against the Kurds.[423] Despite its direct talks with the Porte, Tehran took more political measures and resorted to the Britons, Russians, and French in order to put pressure on the Ottomans. Naser al-Din Shah considered the Ottoman Empire to be the encourager and supporter of Sheikh Ubeidullah's invasion. He complained that the Ottoman Empire, despite being aware that Sheikh Ubeidullah was preparing to attack Iran, not only had not taken steps to prevent him but also had secretly supported and encouraged him. Responding to the Shah, the Britons tried very hard to convey Naser al-Din Shah's demands to the Porte and the Ottoman authorities. From the very beginning of the uprising, they interfered and tried to convince the Porte that this movement was a serious threat to both the Ottoman Empire and Iran. They later became Naser al-Din Shah's envoys to the Porte and were in a hurry to convince the Ottoman Empire and Iran for the need to end the movement. In the British view, the breakdown between the Ottoman Empire and Iran would have brought Iran closer to Russia, which was not in the interest of Britain.[424] On 2 October 1880, according to Mr. Thomson, the Shah eagerly requested that pressure be exerted on the Porte through the British government to invite Sheikh Ubeidullah back to the Ottoman

[421] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 576, 30 Şevval 1297.
[422] "Note from the Sublime Porte to the Persian Embassy", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 74/2, 25 October 1880.
[423] **Chicago Daily Tribune**, 14 October 1880, p. 6; **Alexandria Gazette**, 14 October 1880, p. 2; **Memphis Daily Appeal**, 14 October 1880, p. 2; **The Cheyenne Daily Leader**, 14 October 1880, p. 1; The **Salt Lake herald**, 15 October1880, p. 2; **The Holt County Sentinel**, 22 October 1880, p. 4.
[424] **HCPP. Turkey. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 69.

territory, as he was an Ottoman subject.[425] On the same day, the British consul in Tabriz, Abbot, visited Urmia and met with Sheikh Ubeidullah, then informed Earl Granville that:

> Now the Sheikh makes no secret of his intentions. His project is to place himself at the head of a Kurdish Emirate and to annex the whole of Kurdistan, both in Turkey and Persia.[426]

Taking advantage of Britons' sensitivity to Russian intervention, on October 11, 1880, Nasser al-Din Shah invited the British ambassador to his palace, asking him to put pressure on the Porte to help Iran in suppressing the Kurdish rebellion and to bring military forces to the border to prevent the movement of Kurds, or else, Russia may intervene effectively in Azerbaijan under the pretext of protecting the lives of its subjects. The Shah added;

> He had thought that on the western frontier of his kingdom, he had a civilized neighbor who was able to keep order in his house, and who had both the power and the will to prevent hordes of armed ruffians from crossing the border to burn pillage, and killing; he had not expected that the subjects of the Sultan in the west would behave like the Turkomans in the east.[427]

In addition to the Britons, Naser al-Din Shah sought refuge with the Russian ambassador and sent a letter to the Russian emperor asking them to play an active role in resolving the disputes between the Ottoman Empire and Iran.[428] Being aware of the sensitivities of both Britain and the Ottoman Empire to the Russians, Tehran while warning Britons and the Ottomans of the danger of Russian interference, at the same time from the early days of the uprising, tried to convince the Russians to join the scene. On September, 30 1880, the Russian ambassador in Tehran informed his respective country that the Shah was asking the Russian government, to send troops to the Azerbaijan frontiers, to ask Sultan to quell the Kurdish unrest, to punish their leaders, and to compensate Iran.[429] Responding to the Shah, on October 18, 1880,

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[425] **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 23.
[426] "Consul Abbott to Mr. Thomson", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 77/5, 7 October 1880.
[427] "Mr. Thomson to Earl Granville", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 11, 11 October 1880.
[428] Khalfin, **op. cit.**, p. 142; Jalil, **op. cit.**, p. 149.
[429] Khalfin, **op. cit.**, p. 185.

Russian Emperor Alexander II ordered the foreign ministry to inform the Shah that Russia is ready to help. He also ordered the Caucasus army to make military preparations on the Iranian Azerbaijan border and to assist Iran when necessary.[430] They even threatened that *"if Iran cannot discipline the Kurds, they will discipline them*".[431] Russian intelligence reports indicate that the Russians largely believed that the Kurdish uprising was a British intrigue, and there were even rumors that the Britons had prepared weapons for the Kurds.[432] This led the Russians to take the matter more seriously and to make military preparations on the border.

The diplomatic efforts of the Russians, British, and Iranians coincided with the spread of news of the Sheikh's letters and speeches regarding his intention to create an independent Kurdistan. After returning from Urmia, consul Abbott went to the Ottoman consulate in Tabriz on October 22, 1880, and conveyed Sheikh Ubeidullah's words. He said that "*Sheikh Ubeidullah has made it clear that he wants to unite the whole of Kurdistan and form an independent government."* He also told the Ottoman consul that Iran alone could not end the rebellion. In early November 1880, the Ottoman ambassador in Tehran, Fahri Bey informed his respective country of Abbott's remarks.[433] In addition, Fahri Bey informed Istanbul that Sheikh Ubeidullah had contacted the Shah's brother Abbas Mirza and asked him for help, and promised him that he would support him to become the Shah of Iran after the success of the rebellion.[434] Meanwhile, in addition to the Iranians, Russian and British ambassadors in Istanbul continued to encourage the Porte to work seriously and send troops to the frontier to help Iran end the uprising.[435]

Consequently, the Ottoman Empire promised Iranians to take some practical steps. By mid-November 1880, the Iranian ambassador in Istanbul met with Sultan Abdulhamid II a couple of times. The Sultan assured Iran of his assistance in ending the uprising. According to the Iranian ambassador, Sultan told him:

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[430] **Ibid.**, 186.
[431] **Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, No. 755, 1 Kanunievvel 1881, pp. 1-2.
[432] Khalfin, **op. cit.**, p. 185; **Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, No. 755, 1 Kanunievvel 1881, pp. 1-2.
[433] **BOA. HR.SYS.**, No. 726/110, 3.
[434] **BOA. HR.SYS**., No. 726/112, 2.
[435] Jalil, **op. cit.**, p. 135; Khalfin, **op. cit.**, p. 187.

> I will send a special envoy to bring Sheikh Ubeid [ullah] here and return his son. Forces have been sent to the border to prevent aid from reaching the rebels and to prevent Iranian rebels from entering the Ottoman side. Let his majesty [the Shah] know that there is a foreign intrigue in this rebellion. God willing, the result will be in the interest of both Islamic states. I have ordered the commander of the army to help Iran end the uprising. Be sure nothing contrary to the friendship between the two countries will happen. I am concerned for the true unity of the two Islamic states.[436]

However, despite the Ottoman's assurances, they did not effectively work to stop the uprising. This situation increased Iranian suspicions about the Porte's true intention toward the rebellion. Even after Sultan's assurances, the Iranian ambassador in Istanbul, telegraphed his respective country that the Ottoman assurances were not credible and that Iran had to resolve the situation by its own military force.[437]

2.2.4. Defeat and Withdrawal of the Kurdish Rebels

Alongside diplomatic efforts between Iran, the Ottoman Empire, Russia, and Britain, military field events were changing on a daily basis. After the military victories of Hamza Agha and Abdul Qadir in Sauj Bulaq, they intended to move to Tabriz. However, they faced resistance from state forces in the cities of Miandoab, Bonab, and Maraghah. Initially, a group of Kurds led by Abdul Qadir's uncle; Mira Beg went to Miandoab to negotiate with its people and authorities and obtain supplies for their army, but Mira Beg and his group were executed by the Iranian authorities there.[438] After the killing of Mira Beg, some of his forces were killed and his army, which consisted of the Bilbas tribe, fled. Upon realizing that his uncle was murdered, the wrathful Abdul Qadir and Hamza Agha with a large Kurdish force launched an attack on Miandoab. Unable to defend themselves, the state forces retreated to Bonab, and the city fell to the Kurdish tribes, who carried out a mass killing in the city.[439]

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[436] **GESIO.**, voll.III, No. 574/4, 11 Zilkadde 1297.
[437] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 574/7, 6 Zilhecce 1297.
[438] "Consul General Abbott to Mr. Thomson", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881),** Document No. 77/5, 7 October 1880.
[439] Hama Baqi, **Raperini Hamza Agha**, pp. 37-38. In a letter to Amir Nizam, Sheikh Ubeidullah emphasized that the incident had taken place without his knowledge, but some Iranian tribes such as

The Miandoab incident negatively affected the rebellion's reputation. According to various sources, the Kurdish tribes killed a large number of people in the city. Armenian writer and Iranian bureaucrat Ghoryans indicates that 800 Muslims, 20 Armenians, and 50 Jews were killed in the incident.[440] Afshar claims that the Kurds killed women, children, and religious scholars in the city upon Abdul Qadir's fatwa.[441] Further, Abbott estimates the number of residents killed in the city at about 2,000.[442] After capturing Miandoab on October 25, 1880, Abdul Qadir's army moved to Bonab, where after three days of heavy defense, and the arrival of military assistance from Tehran, state forces compelled the Kurds to withdraw.[443] After three weeks of bloody fighting, an Iranian force led by the Commander in Chief Mirza Hussein Khan, and a force from Hamadan and Garus, led by the Minister of Public Interest (Vazir-i Fewa'yid), Hassan Ali Khan Garusi (Amir Nizam), were sent to Maragh.[444] Meanwhile, Taimur Pasha Khan of Maku marched to Urmia from Khuy and Salmas with several thousand soldiers including part of the Kurdish Jalali tribe and six artillery.[445]

According to Afshar, who was in Urmia at the time when they heard the news of the arrival of Taimur Pasha Khan and were sure that they would win, the Shiites of Urmia attacked and looted the houses of Sunni civilians.[446]As far as Afshar and Dr. Cochran are concerned, Khan-i Maku's forces did not fight Sheikh Ubeidullah, rather because he had an old disagreement with Iqbal al-Dawla, instead of confronting the Sheikh's forces, he attacked and looted Sunni villages that were the subjects of Iqbal al-Dawla.[447] However, the state forces in Urmia increased to 8,000-10,000 soldiers,

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the Mamash tribe were to be accused (which later joined the Iranian Army). He further explains that they attacked because of their own tribal enmity. **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 599.

[440] Askndar Goryans, **op. cit.**, p. 43.

[441] Afshar, **op. cit.**, p. 63.

[442] "Consul-General Abbott to Mr. Thomson", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 56/2, 7 November 1880.

[443] Afshar, **op. cit.**, p. 170.

[444] Hama Baqi, **op. cit.**, p. 211.

[445] **HCPP.**, **Turkey. No. 5 (1881),** Document No. 61 /7.

[446] Afshar, **op. cit.**, p. 144.

[447] Speer, **op. cit.**, p. 95; Afshar, **op. cit.**, pp. 150-153. This is confirmed by the Ottoman ambassador in Tehran, in a letter he sent to the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. **BOA. HR.MKT**., No. 1152/22/5, 23 Zilkade 1297.

and capturing Urmia became impossible for Sheikh Ubeidullah.[448] As Iranian military preparations increased on both sides, Russia brought five battalions, a Cossack regiment, and three artillery batteries to the frontier to assist Iran.[449] The Ottoman Empire, meanwhile, sent 11-12 infantry battalions and 24 artilleries to the frontier an cavalry forces to Van and Hakkari.[450] At the same time, the Sultan decided to appoint Nafez Pasha instead of Samih Pasha as the commander of the Fourth Ottoman Army, because the latter had shown softness toward the Kurds.[451] While the Sheikh was surrounded on all sides, rumors reached Urmia, that the Ottoman forces entered the Sheikh's village; Nawchia.[452]

At the time when Sheikh Ubeidullah seemed disappointed in the outcome of his rebellion, Sultan Abdulhamid, as he had promised the Iranian ambassador, sent Hasan Agha, Dilaveroğlu, and the prefect Rashid Bey from Van to Urmia to advise the Sheikh to disperse his army and return.[453] Upon the arrival of the Sultan's message, the Sheikh decided to withdraw and sent orders to Hamza Agha and Abdul Qadir to do the same.[454] According to Tercüman-ı Hakikat newspaper Sheikh Ubeidullah after receiving Sultan's message delivered a speech to his follower stating:

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[448] Speer, **op. cit.**, p. 92. According to the Akhtar Newspaper, published by the Iranian embassy in Istanbul, Iran's military preparations were as follows; a military force of 25, 000 soldiers and a force of 12, 000 led by Hishmet al-Dawla consisted of Shahsevens, Bakhtiari and Cossack soldiers. A force of 5, 000 men was led by Itimad al-Saltana, a force of 5, 000 men was led by Taimur Pasha Khan, and a force of 13, 000 men was led by Iqbal al-Dawla. From Akhter newspaper, as cited in **Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, No. 755, 1 December 1880.

[449] **Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, No. 733, 7 December 1880, p. 2.

[450] **The Mankato Free Press**, 2 December 1880, p. 4; Khalfin, **op. cit.**, p. 188. **The Mankato Free Press**, December 02, 1880, p. 4.

[451] Iran's Ambassador to Istanbul, Muinul al-Mulk, in a telegraph to the Iranian Foreign Ministry explains that he spoke privately with Sultan Abdulhamid, who told him that the reason for removing Samih Pasha was that he facilitated the movement of the Kurds between the two countries, which paved the way for Sheikh Ubeidullah's uprising. **GESIO.**, Vol. III. No. 574. Days later, Iranian newspapers reported that Nafez Pasha had been ordered to cooperate with the Iranians in arresting the sheikh and other rebel leaders. See **Tercumani Hakikka**t, No. 718, 19 October 1880.

[452] Speer, **op. cit.**, p. 91. Also see Averyanov, **op. cit.**, p. 127.

[453] **BOA. Y. PRK ASK**., No. 4/82; Averyanov, **op. cit.**, p. 246; Khalfin, **op. cit.**, p. 189.

[454] There are different accounts of how the two forces withdrew. Averyanov points out that Hamza Agha and Abdul Qadir moved to Tabriz after seizing Maragha and got as close as 25-35 kilometers to Tabriz. However, when they heard the news of Sheikh Ubeidullah's withdrawal, they quickly retreated too. Averyanov, **op. cit.**, pp. 245, 247. Jalil, even demonstrates that after Hamza Agha's forces approached Tabriz, foreign consulates began collecting their papers and archives to leave the city. Jalil, **op. cit.**, p. 127.

> Oh Kurds, may the highest rank be exalted to His Majesty, who is in Rome today and is the Caliph of the Muslim emirs and the servant and guardian of Haramain Sharifain. His Excellency's (Ghazi Sultan Abdulhamid) obedience is a religious duty. Since he has asked the Kurds to retreat, we must listen to him.[455]

In consequence, the Kurdish forces led by Sheikh Ubeidullah retreated from Urmia to Margawar and Bradost, while the Sauj Bulaq wing retreated to Bana and Margawar, and the state forces followed them.[456] Accordingly, Sheikh Ubeidullah began to withdraw on November 11, 1880.[457] First, they stayed in the frontier areas and then returned to the Ottoman side. On November 29, 1880, Dr. Cochran stated that:

> The war may be fairly considered over. Taimur Pasha has gone up into the districts behind the Seir Mountains and found that the Kurds have fled, taking everything with them, and burning their villages.[458]

Thus, Sheikh Ubeidullah's rebellion, which lasted nearly two months, ended in failure, causing the death of thousands of Sunnis, Shiites, Christians, and Jews, burning and destroying hundreds of villages, and displacing nearly 10,000 people and the long-term effects lasted for several years. Sheikh Ubeidullah's civilian force consisted of Kurds who had received no military training. Some of those who joined the uprising were violent people who began to loot and kill which was contrary to Sheikh Ubeidullah's claims and goals. According to Russian and Western sources, Sheikh Ubeidullah himself was very concerned about correcting the reputation of the Kurds, protecting the lives of civilians, and punishing those who hurt noncombatants. [459] After the withdrawal of Sheikh Ubeidullah's forces, the Iranians initially thanked the Ottomans for their attitude toward the recalling of the Sheikh and the military measures they had taken to end the uprising.[460] However, on the one hand, the way

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[455] **Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, No. 804 28 January 1881, p. 3.
[456] Hama Baqi, **op. cit.**, p. 22-23.
[457] Wilson, **op. cit.**, p. 115.
[458] Speer, **op. cit.**, p. 95.
[459] Regarding Sheikh Ubeidullah's efforts to preserve good reputation of the Kurds, "The Savannah Morning News" reports that Sheikh Ubeidullah executed 30 Kurds for looting villages. **Savannah morning news**., 24 January 1881, p. 2. However according to Khalfin, which apparently his narration is more accurate, the Sheikh has crucified three of his followers for attacking non-combatant people. **op. cit.**, p. 131.
[460] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 574/18, "Telegraphs from the Iranian ambassador in Istanbul" 21 Muharrem 1298; **Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, No. 720, 22 November 1880; "Note sent by the Persian Embassy to the Sublime Porte", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 74/3, 15 November 1880.

Iran dealt with the Kurds during and after the uprising, and the way the Ottomans' dealt with Sheikh Ubeidullah after the end of the rebellion, on the other hand, made the political relations between the two states to be complicated again.

2.2.5. Iran's Reaction to the Kurdish Rebellion and the Ottoman Attitude Regarding the Same

According to British Consul Abbott, while tracking the rebellions and capturing Kurdish areas, Iranian troops began to take revenge, looting all the Sunni villages and slaughtering their men. Even the Christians were not protected from the looting and killing of the state army.[461] Furious about the situation, Naser al-Din Shah ordered the Commander in Chief to "*behead and hang anyone they arrest*" from the "evil" Bilbas, Shikak, Harki, Mamash, and other Kurdish tribes.[462] Based on this order, the Commander in Chief, who led the capture of Sauj Bulaq, ordered his army not to spare any Kurds and to burn their villages.[463] According to the Saturday Press after taking control over Sauj Bulaq, they destroyed the surrounding Kurdish villages and in mid-November 1880, about 2,000 unburied bodies were found around the city.[464]

The situation was worse in Urmia. The Iranians too acknowledged the massacres and plunder of Taimur Pasha Khan. Because of his disagreement with Iqbal al-Dawla, Taimur Pasha Khan began to plunder the villages belonging to him. Even Christian and Shiite villagers were not protected. As Wilson quoted, he killed all the Kurds he met. Once he slaughtered 40 Kurds with his own hands and after exhaustion left the task to his soldiers to finish the job. Those prisoners who were lucky would only cut off their tongues. Visitors to his camp saw a row of prisoners who had just had their tongues cut out.[465] As well as Savannah Morning News describes Taimur Pasha's actions as follows;

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[461] "Consul-General Abbott to Mr. Thomson", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 66/1, 19 November 1880.
[462] **Fitney-e Sheikh Ubeidullah-i Kurd**, p. 435.
[463] Vakit (Newspaper), 3 February 1881, as cited in Jalil, **op. cit.**, p. 139.
[464] **Saturday press**, (Honolulu, H.I.), 04 Dismember 1880. p. 4
[465] Wilson, **op. cit.**, p. 116.

> The Sheikh was driven back, but the troops stayed, and are committing frightful ravages throughout all the rich valleys of that region. Towns are sacked, women surrendered to the brutality of the soldiers, and men are beheaded. The leader, Timour Pasha, was ordered to send back a certain number of Kurdish heads to Tabriz, and not having been able to make up his tale from the army of Ubeidullah, he takes them from the shoulders of the people whom he came to protect. The barbarity of these fighting hordes on the underside of the world seems to belong to nightmare stories of ghouls and their doings. One Soonnei [Sunni] Hadji was compelled to take his children's heads in his skirt and march with them through the camp. The peaceable Nestorian Christians have been attacked by Timour Pasha, and many of them murdered."[466]

In addition to that, according to the New Ulm weekly Review newspaper on November 24, 1880, in Tabriz, 300 Kurdish prisoners were beheaded then the walls of Tabriz were decorated with their heads. [467] Afshar too admits that wherever Taimur Pasha Khan went, he confiscated money, goods, property, and livestock. He destroyed everything around Urmia and "*turned its people to dust*", Afshar adds that he cannot talk much about Taimur's actions to protect the reputation of the religion and the state.[468]

Accordingly, Iran's treatment of the Kurds of Sauj Bulaq and Urmia created a new series of political debates between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. The commander of the Fourth Ottoman Army notified the Porte that the behavior of the Iranian soldiers had a negative psychological impact on the region, causing families, including women and children, to flee. "*it is clear that this inhuman and un-Islamic treatment is unacceptable to His Majesty the Sultan*," he added.[469] About two weeks after the defeat of the Kurdish forces, the Ottoman Ambassador in Tehran Fahri Bey warned the Iranian Foreign Ministry that according to the news they have received from their consul in Tabriz, the Iranian forces have shown no mercy to anyone in Urmia and Sauj Bulaq, raping women and making the blood and property of all non-Shiites lawful. Also, they have even transgressed the Nestorian population. The ambassador stressed more that this kind of treatment creates a sense of revenge

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[466] **Savannah morning news**, 24 January 1881, p. 2. The same story is reported by the British Ambassador Abbott, "Consul-General Abbott to Mr. Thomson", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 66/1, 19 November 1880.
[467] **New Ulm Weekly Review**, December 01, 1880, p. 2.
[468] Afshar, **op. cit.**, p. 167.
[469] **BOA. HR.MKT**., No. 1152/22/9, 9 Teşrinisani 1296.

among the Kurds and damages the friendly relations between the two states.[470] At the same time, Fahri Bey instructed the Ottoman consul in Tabriz to go to the Crown Prince, the governor of Tabriz, and warn him of the behavior of the Iranian soldiers without hesitation and to tell him frankly that *"this brutality from the Iranian government soldiers is not graceful."*[471] In response, Tehran assured the Ottoman ambassador that it would warn its army commanders not to violate humanitarian principles.[472]

However, what was happening in those areas was not just about the unsystematic behavior of the military commanders and the temporary and unplanned retaliation of the Iranian army, Naser al-Din Shah himself repeatedly issued tough orders to loot, kill and burn people. After the end of the rebellion, Iran appointed the Commander in Chief Haji Sadr al-Dawla as the governor of Sauj Bulaq. Following the spread of the news of the harsh treatment of the Iranian army, he tried to adopt a softer policy toward the people of the region, but the Shah warned to crack down on those who were even less concerned about helping state forces. In a letter to Sadr al-Dawla, he ordered:

> Don't get me wrong, that I had said to try to win the hearts of the Kurds and Sunnis. I did not mean not to punish them for their actions, which would encourage the enemies of the religion and the state more. Those who were negligent, traitors, and rebels should be killed, burned, set on fire, their wives and children taken prisoner, and their homes destroyed. Those who are innocent must also be disarmed and fined cash and goods to cover the expenses of the army and the court's gifts.[473]

According to different reports, due to the harsh measures taken by the Iranians in suppressing the revolution and dealing with the results, about 60,000 to 100,000 people of the Kurds immigrated to the mountainous areas and took refuge in

[470] **BOA. HR.MKT**., No. 1152/22/5, 23 Zilkaade 1297.
[471] **BOA. HR.MKT**., No. 1152/22/6, 23 Zilkaade 1297.
[472] **HCPP.**, **Turkey. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 70 / 2.
[473] **Fitne-i Sheikh Ubeidullah-i Kurd**, p. 498. After rumors spread that one of the nobles of Talsh had contacted Hamza Agha, Nasreddin Shah ordered Haji Sadr-u Dawla to warn the governor of Talsh to "tell everyone there, that if only one of them acts or thinks against the law, we will burn Talish. Let them know very well." **Fitne-i Sheikh Ubeidullah-i Kurd**, p. 341.

the Ottoman Empire, and 20,000 of them fled to Hakkari and stayed with Sheikh Ubeidullah.[474]

Some Kurdish cities, such as Oshnovieh, were completely deserted to such an extent that the new governor of Sauj Bulaq, Amir Nizam Garus (described below), asked Tehran to let several hundred houses from the Karapapak tribe rebuild the city.[475] Iran's military measures not only caused loss of life and property but also forced people to become Shiites. According to Abbott, the entire Sunni population of Urmia, about 5,000 families, had left the city, except those who had made a vow to convert to Shiite.[476]

2.2.6. The Post-Rebellion Tensions Between the Ottoman Empire and Iran

As mentioned above, after the end of the revolution, many Kurdish areas were attacked by Iranian troops. As a result, tens of thousands of people were displaced, some of whom fled to the Ottoman side, while others remained in the mountainous areas of Qandil, Salmas, and Sardasht. Iran's dealing with the consequences of its victories, on the one hand, and the Ottoman attitude toward the tribes that turned to the Ottoman side, on the other, led to a new series of controversies. The two states' attitudes on how to solve the problems were very different. A couple of days after the Sheikh's retreat, Sultan Abdulhamid II summoned the Iranian ambassador in Istanbul Mu'in al-Mulk and told him that after the arrival of his special envoy, the Sheikh returned immediately with his sons and followers and sent a telegram, expressing his obedience, saying that the reason for

[474] **BOA. BEO. A.MKT.MHM**., No. 486/28, 19 Zilhicce 1297; **BOA. Y. PRK. MYD**., No. 1/85, 8-12 Şubat 1296; **HCPP.**, **Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 74 /6.

[475] Amir-Nizam, **op. cit.**, p. 183. The Karapapak tribe was one of the Azerbaijan Shiite tribes that joined the uprising of Sheikh Ubeidullah and later left the Shaikh's army with Mohammed Agha Mamash and joined the state forces. Unlike the Kurds, however, the government did not punish Karapapak. In a letter to the Sultan, Sheikh Ubeidullah referred to this, as evidence of Iran's discrimination against the Sunni Kurds. **BOA. Y.PRK.TKM.**, No. 4/10, 17 Rebîülevvel 1298.

[476] **HCPP.**, **Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 86/2. "The Jewish Advance" reports that the Shiites believed that all Sunnis in the region had an agreement with the Kurdish Tribes. Therefore, following the Sheikh's withdrawal Shiites looted their villages and killed a number of people, two of whom were Jews. Only those who were hiding managed to escape. **The Jewish advance**, February 25, 1881, p. 3.

the uprising was the oppression of the Iranian authorities against the Kurds. The Sultan also added:

> I would like to inform His Majesty that the return of the Sheikh will end the chaos. Now it is better to send a commission to act with some Kurds in politics and forgive others. I will also send a commission to investigate the complaints they have about our administration. It is in the interest of both countries to deal gently with the unrest and resolve it.[477]

Apart from Sultan's attitude, when the Sheikh's forces were defeated, the Ottomans not only did not prevent the Sheikh and other refugees but also officially decided to accept any tribe that migrated from Iran to the Ottoman side.[478] However, Naser al-Din Shah, who was very irritated with the Sheikh's safe return, had a different view of dealing with him. He instructed Mu'in al-Mulk to ask the Ottomans to allow the forces of both states "since they were brothers" to attack Nawchia, "grab the beard of that despicable (*pider-sokhtah*) Sheikh and debase him."[479]

The Sheikh and the Iranian Kurdish tribes' presence in Hakkari, while bearing the agony of defeat, was a serious threat to Iran. Therefore, Tehran took all diplomatic and legal measures to force the Ottoman Empire to end these threats. In this regard, it made several demands to the Ottomans. The first was the arrest and punishment of Sheikh Ubeidullah. Naser al-Din Shah, who had initially expected the Ottomans to arrest the Sheikh, after realizing the Sheikh's arrival in Hakkari, ordered the Iranian ambassador in Istanbul to strongly protest the Ottoman attitude and ask them to let both Iran and the Ottoman armies to attack Hakkari from both sides and capture the Sheikh.[480] In addition to that, Tehran made the same request to the Porte through Russian and British embassies.[481]

Iran even asked the Ottoman Empire to abide by the previous agreements between the two states, in particular the fifth article of the Treaty of Erzurum II, which required the punishment of Sheikh Ubeidullah and the extradition of the other

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[477] **GESIO.**, Vol. III, No. 574/9 16 Zilhicce 1297.
[478] **BOA. YPRK.TKM**., No. 4/1, 19 Muharrem 1298.
[479] **GESIO.**, Vol. III, No. 546; **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 552.
[480] **GESIO.**, Vol. III, No. 552
[481] "Earl Granville to Mr. Goschen", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, **Document No.** 48, 24 November 1880; "Mr. Plunkett to Earl Granville", **Ibid**, Document No. 58, 29 November 1880.

fugitives to Iran.[482] In response to Iran's request to punish Sheikh Ubeidullah, the Porte replied that Sheikh Ubeidullah could not be responsible because the main reason for the uprising was the violence that the Azerbaijan authorities used against Hamza Agha and other Kurdish tribes and that Sheikh Ubeidullah withdrew from the war at the request of the Sultan.[483]

Regarding the Kurdish refugees who had fled to the Ottoman territories, the Porte promised to disarm them but not to force them back to Iran.[484] At the same time, the Ottoman Empire accused Iran of forcing Iranian Kurdish tribes to flee to the Ottoman side because of the harsh measures taken by the Iranian army. In this regard, the Porte notified the Iranian embassy in Istanbul to restore peace and stability, Iran should accept the results of its victories, abandon the policy of revenge and issue a general amnesty for the Kurdish tribes who fled from the state troops.[485]

Another demand of Iran was that the Ottoman Empire punish the Ottoman tribes that had attacked Iran. In response, The Porte informed the Iranians that the uprising would not have ended easily without the Ottoman Empire's actions to prevent the Ottoman tribes from entering Iran, so, Iran must appreciate the Ottoman attitude in this regard. In addition, the Porte reminded Iranians that all its previous demands from Iran to punish the Iranian tribes that attacked Baghdad, Mosul, and Van were ignored.[486]

While diplomatic tensions were continuing between the two states, Istanbul newspapers that were strongly critical of Iran's policy in dealing with its subjects added fuel to the flame. Upon Sheikh Ubeidullah's return to Nehri, Tercüman-ı Hakikat wrote an article that strongly criticized Iranian policy and described it as a racist oppressive regime that had no mercy on the Sunni people. This was at a time

[482] **HCPP.**, **Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 74 /1.
[483] "Note from the Sublime Porte to the Persian Embassy", **HCPP.**, **Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 74 /4, 28 November.
[484] **GESIO.**, Vol. III, No. 574/13, 2 Muharrem 1298.
[485] **BOA. Y.PRK.MYD**, No. 1/85, 25 Rebîülevvel 1298; "Note from the Sublime Porte to the Persian Embassy", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 74/6, 29 November 1880.
[486] "Note from the Sublime Porte to the Persian Embassy", **HCPP.**, **Turkey. No. 5 (1881),** Document No. 74 /4, 28 November; **BOA. Y.A.HUS.** No. 166/49, 16 Safer 1298; **GESIO.**, Vol. III, No. 574/13, 2 Muharrem 1298.

when Iran was demanding the extradition of Hamza Agha and the punishment of Sheikh Ubeidullah. The article was giving morale to the rebels and asked Hamza Agha not to give up his weapons in any way, since his duty was to defend Islam and to fight disbelief.[487] In addition to the above articles, Istanbul newspapers, Tercüman-ı Hakikat, Havadis, and Vakit published articles criticizing Iran's treatment of the Kurds and its religious policy. In response, the Iranian embassy strongly protested the writings. According to the Iranian ambassador, the Porte's silence in the face of these writings had given the newspapers more courage, which made the Kurds feel that public opinion was behind them and encouraged them to continue their behavior.[488] In one of the articles, published in Tercüman-ı Hakikat, a Kurdish writer from Lahijan, sarcastically discussed some of the Shiite religious beliefs.[489]

The Iranian ambassador interpreted this as an insult to the religion and sacredness of the Iranian people and called on the Porte to put a limit on this.[490] The newspaper responded to the ambassador's remarks in subsequent numbers, indicating that though what had been written reflected the views of their authors, Iran should treat its subjects as a government, not in a spirit of revenge that was not worthy of the state and would only produce more hatred.[491] This was the same answer that the Porte gave to the Iranian ambassador, adding that insisting on violence would only result in the Iranian tribes pouring into Ottoman territory in masses till they had the opportunity to take revenge, so they would cross the border and resume violence and loot in Iran.[492] However, on Iran's constant demand, the Ottoman Publications Office finally banned articles about Kurdish victories and Iranian failures that were harshly critical of Iran.[493]

Although Iran again protested all of the Porte's responses, it gradually abandoned its other demands lest complicating the issues and creating further

[487] **Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, 21 Kanunievvel 1880, p. 3.
[488] **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 74/8.
[489] **Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, 21 Kanunievvel 1880, p. 3.
[490] **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881), Document No.** 74/8.
[491] **Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, 23 Kanunievvel 1880, p. 1.
[492] **HCPP., Turkey. No. 5 (1881),** Document No. 74/8.
[493] **Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, No. 765, 13 Kanunisani 1881, p. 2.

sensitivities. However, the stay of Sheikh Ubeidullah and his sons in the region left Iran in danger of a potential Kurdish attack again. Therefore, Tehran eagerly continued to demand the removal of Sheikh Ubeidullah.[494]

2.3. OTTOMAN-IRANIAN COOPERATION AND THE END OF SHEIKH UBEIDULLAH

2.3.1. Sheikh Ubeidullah's Preparations for a Fresh Attack on Iran

As talks between Istanbul and Tehran on the fate of Sheikh Ubeidullah continued, the Kurds began preparing for a new attack on Iran. According to Russian intelligence reports, as early as January 1881, Sheikh Ubeidullah and the Kurdish tribes began to reorganize and prepare again.[495] As rumors of Kurdish preparations increased, aide-de-camp to the Sultan, Ahmad Ratib Bey was appointed to meet with the refugees, investigate the Sheikh's complaints, and prevent any new conflict between the Kurds and Iran. Ratib Bey left Rawanduz in mid-February and because snow had blocked the way he reached the Sheikh after 24 days, and stayed for three days in Nawchia. On the way, he was warmly welcomed by the Kurds and hundreds of them were clearing his way off the snow. Ratib Bey made it clear to Sheikh Ubeidullah that the Ottoman Empire would not support any disturbance by its subjects against Iran. In response, Sheikh Ubeidullah repeated his subjectivity to the Sultan and though he promised Sultan's representative that he would not move without Sultan's orders, notified him of the 100,000 refugee (*muhajir*) families whose homes were occupied by Iran and who have sold their belongings to buy weapons, could not be stopped from attacking Iran if a solution was not found.[496] Additionally, Sheikh Ubeidullah himself wrote a long letter to the Sultan about the reasons for the Kurdish attack on Iran and at the end of his message, wrote:

> If the Ottoman Empire does not do something to completely end the oppression and aggression of Iran against the people of Islam [*ahl al-Islam*] in Iran, they will never give up taking revenge. The constant prayer of the Sheikh himself

[494] For exchanged messages between the Porte and the Iranian Embassy regarding these issues see **HCPP.**, **Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 74/1-8.
[495] "From Kamskaran to Zinovev" 13 January 1881, as cited in Khalfin, **op. cit.**, p. 190.
[496] **BOA. Y.PRK.MYD.**, No. 1/85, 25 Rebîülevvel 1298.

is always to the sultan (May Allah continue his state and glory). By Allah's will, I will not deviate from the command of the Sultan for all my life, but let him be assured that I have nothing to do with the *ahl al-rafz* (Shiites) except for the people of Islam at home and abroad. I ask you not to hold me responsible for anyone in Kurdistan, not even my sons.[497]

On his return to Rawanduz, Ahmad Ratib Bay was accompanied by Sheikh Abdul Qadir and three hundred men who were Iranian refugees. When they arrived in Rawanduz, they asked him to bring 30-20 notables with him to Istanbul to inform the Sultan about their sufferings. Ratib Bey, however, told them that there was no need for them to come to Istanbul promising that he would convey their messages to the Sultan. In the emphasis on the Sheikh's words, the Iranian Kurdish refugees told the Sultan's representative that they would not recognize the rule of the Shah and did not consider themselves as his subject, because they had lost their security and their property had been looted by the Iranian authorities. They warned again; if the Ottoman Empire did not solve their situation, they would attack Iran again in the spring.[498]

After Rawanduz, Ahmad Ratib Bey accompanied by Sheikh Abdul Qadir went to Erbil and met with many other Kurdish tribal chiefs. According to the rumors reached Amir Nizam the governor of Sauj Bulaq, after the meeting, they sent a complaint to Sultan Abdulhamid from the Erbil telegraph center, asking:

Why does Russia support its co-religionists in Karabakh and Serbia but the Caliph of the Muslims is fine with Iran shedding the blood of the Kurds, looting their homes, converting them, and expelling them from their homeland for the sake of their religious beliefs.[499]

After meetings, just as Ratib Bey had predicted, Sheikh Ubeidullah, despite promising the Sultan not to take any steps against Iran, continued to prepare the military and reorganize the Kurdish tribes. Sheikh Ubeidullah's continuation was due to the fact that there was no clear prospect of resolving the situation of the tens of

[497] **BOA. Y.PRK.TKM.**, No. 4/10, 17 Rebîülevvel 1298.Sheikh Abdul Qadir which accompanied the Sultan's representative, on his return from Rawanduz, sent a letter to the Sultan which its content close to the Sheikh Ubeidullah's letter. He also confirmed that if the Kurdish situation was not resolved, they would attack Iran again.
[498] **BOA. Y.PRK.MYD.** No. 1/85, 25 Rebîülevvel 1298.
[499] Amir-Nizam, **op. cit.**, p. 197.

thousands of families who had fled Iranian rule. These families had told Ratib Bey they could not return to their homes based on Iranian promises, because even after Iran issued a general amnesty, five hundred Kurdish families were killed by Iranian soldiers, and their homes were looted.[500]

The conditions of the Kurdish tribes who remained in Iran were no better than those of the refugees in the Ottoman Empire. Iran had made Sauj Bulaq the center of state activities since the uprising to control the situation. To fulfill this task, the Shah appointed Hassan Ali Khan, known as Amir Nizam Garusi, as the governor of Sauj Bulaq. Amir Nizam, a religiously extremist former minister of Public Interest, was originally from a Shiite Kurdish father and an Armenian mother. After the defeat of Sheikh Ubeidullah's forces, he was able to overcome the situation by intimidating, attracting, and using the Kurdish tribes and personalities against each other. Using the policy of divide and rule to control the Kurdish tribes, he did not hide that he had been able to instill enmity among the Kurdish tribes smartly . In a letter to Naser al-Din Shah, he admits that *"Since Qadir Agha* [Hamza Agha's brother] *came and is still here, I have been thinking of creating divisions among the Kurds."*[501] Even though the tribes themselves had suffered great economic losses, he had imposed "the tax of disgracefulness" (*rû-siyâhi*) of 40,000 Iranian Tomans on each of the Kurdish tribes of Mukri which was offered to Naser al-Din Shah.[502] The Shah also decided that only the Sunni [Kurdish] population of Urmia, Sauj Bulaq, Salmas, Khuy, and the surrounding villages should be responsible for providing the army with supplies.[503]

[500] **BOA. Y.PRK.MYD**., No. 1/91, 22 K 1296.
[501] **Ibid.**, 34.
[502] Amir-Nizam, **op. cit.**, p178; "Mr. Thomson to Earl Granville", **HCPP. Turkey**, **(1881),** Document No. 69, 20 Dismember 1880.
[503] **Fitne-ye Sheikh Ubeidullah**, p. 433.



Figure 2. Hasan Ali Khan also known as Amir-Nizam, circa the 1890s

The Kurdish tribal chiefs who remained in their areas can be divided into two groups. Some of them left Sheikh Ubeidullah's block and joined the Iranian forces before the outcome of the fighting was decided. The most prominent figure of this group was Mohammad Agha Mamash. Muhammad Agha had previously contacted the governor of Rawanduz to ensure that he and his tribe would be allowed to migrate to the Ottoman side, if necessary, but his request was rejected and he was threatened with extradition to Iran if he migrated.[504] So, before it was too late, he returned to the Iranian army and in later events became one of those who took a serious part in helping the government confront other Kurdish tribes. Nevertheless, the Iranian government, still in addition to "the tax of disgracefulness", fined his tribe 3,000 sheep and cattle as compensation.[505] The second group was those who did not cooperate with the government or surrendered later. These faced severe punishment from the government and local authorities. These included Jalil Khan Mukri and Khan Baba Khan, the former of whom participated in the mass killing of

[504] **BOA. Y.PRK.TKM.**, No. 4/8, 2 Muharrem 1298.
[505] Amir-Nizam, **op. cit.**, pp. 187-188.

Miandoab, despite the state's promise of amnesty, he was blown from the mouth of a cannon at Tabriz.[506] The latter was initially pardoned but during military supplies collection in one of the villages belonging to his tribe a clash broke out between the villagers and the government soldiers, and the Azerbaijan army chief, Ittimad al-Sultan, bombed the village, killing Khan Baba Khan and 15 people close to him.[507]

Given the situation, there was no convincing reason for Sheikh Ubeidullah to retract his decision to attack Iran and to be indifferent to the fate of the Iranian Kurds, who regarded him as their leader. So, ironically, contrary to what Istanbul wanted, the Sheikh took advantage of the arrival of Ratib Bey (or perhaps he interpreted it) to create more legitimacy for his case. In this regard, after the meeting of the Kurdish tribes with the representative of the Sultan, Sheikh Abdul Qadir held a new meeting with the chiefs of the tribes. The participants of the meeting in Erbil all vowed to support Sheikh Ubeidullah and return to Sauj Bulaq and Urmia as before.[508] Perhaps that was how Kurds understood Ratib Bay's approach; if Iran did not improve the situation of the Kurds in the way they wanted (which they thought was impossible), the Ottoman Empire would support the Kurds to revolt. One of the noble Kurds attended the meeting in Erbil. In a letter to Hassan Agha of Kum Kala which was located in Sauj Bulaq wrote that Ahmad Bey stayed in Erbil for two nights and gathered all the tribal chiefs of the region, gave them morale, and left. Then the tribal chiefs agreed to wait two months if they were supported by Istanbul, otherwise, they would resume their attacks on Urmia and Sauj Bulaq.[509]

After these meetings, Sheikh Ubeidullah tried to reorganize himself more enthusiastically and sent letters to most of the Kurdish tribal chiefs in Iran, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire, asking them to be patient and prepare themselves. In the letters, Sheikh Ubeidullah claimed that the Ottoman Empire had shown sympathy and that he had discussed "secrets" with the aide-de-camp to the Sultan. The contents

[506] **The Silver State**, 7 June 1881, p. 2; Wilson, **op. cit.**, p. 118.
[507] Hama Baqi, **Raperini Hamza Agha**, p. 87; **HCPP.**, **Turkey. No. 5 (1881)**, Document No. 70/2; **Ibid.**, Document No. 191.
[508] Amir Nizam, **op. cit.**, p. 265.
[509] **Fitne-i Sheikh Ubeidullahi Kurd**, p. 265.

of the letters sent by Sheikh Ubeidullah to the Kurdish tribal chiefs are similar. The following is part of a letter he wrote to one of the tribal chiefs, Mamand Agha Piran:

> These days the aide-de-camp to the Sultan, His Excellency Ahmad Bay had come here to discuss some highly secret matters. By the grace of Allah, everything will go as planned. All countries have blamed Ajam [Iran] and supported our rights. The states' actions indicate that they are handing over Kurdistan to us. All that remains is for us to stay united and for the refugees to be patient and not return to Iran [Ajam].[510]

Although the Sheikh had promised not to take any action against Iran, the Ottoman Empire was suspicious of his words. So, the Porte sent secret officers and inspectors to the Sheikh's area to monitor his movements. Ottoman inspectors received one of the Sheikh's letters which he had sent to the tribes of Arjish, asking them to get prepared for jihad against Iran in late March.[511] After the Porte received solid evidence of the Sheikh's secret efforts, gathered Kurdish tribes, making a covenant with them that none of them would participate in the Sheikh's planned uprising again.[512] Apart from the Porte's suspicions about Sheikh Ubeidullah's hidden intentions, another issue that annoyed the Porte was the Sheikh's insistence on defending Iran's Sunnis, which was a challenge to the Porte which considered itself the protector of all Sunnis, as the Grand Vizier had pointed out.

> If Iran oppresses the Sunnis, it is not appropriate for Sheikh Ubeidullah to cross the border into Iran. However, not only the Kurds of Van and Hakkari but also the Kurds of other places are acting on the orders of the Sheikh. The Porte has to resolve the issue of Iran's oppression of Sunnis within the framework of international law. Because any new movement might provoke the Russians, the Fourth Ottoman Armey must try every possibility to prevent any unwanted event from happening.[513]

However, the issue had a different and larger resonance in Iran. Rumors spread among the Kurds of Iran, that Ratib Bay visited Sheikh Ubeidullah to support him and reorganize the Kurdish tribes. According to "confirmed" reports reached Amir Nizam, even Hamza Agha Mangor, who was previously wanted by the Ottoman authorities, attended the meeting in Erbil. Later, rumors spread that Hamza

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[510] Amir-Nizam, **op. cit.**, p. 195.
[511] **BOA. Y.A.HUS.**, No. 167/42, 27 Cemâziyelevvel 1298.
[512] **BOA. Y.PRK.ASK**., No. 7/34, 27 Cemâziyelevvel 1298.
[513] **BOA. Y. EE.**, No. 82/6.

Agha was appointed governor of Pishder and Bitwen, located west of Qandil and were the wintering quarters of the Bilbas tribe.[514] Along with these rumors, several articles were written in Istanbul newspapers defending Sheikh Ubeidullah's position and blaming Iran's policy toward the Kurds.

However, there are reports in Russian sources about the Ottoman military and logistical assistance to Sheikh Ubeidullah. Based on Russian archives, Khalfin points out that the force which Sheikh Ubeidullah was reorganizing was being trained by 26 Ottoman veterans. He adds that Sheikh Ubeidullah asked Rashid Pasha for weapons and ammunition and in November 1881, the latter sent 39 boxes of Martini rifles and 20 boxes of military supplies to the Sheikh.[515]

However, by taking the Ottoman formal documents and the Sheikh's letters into consideration, it becomes clear that these rumors were part of the Sheikh's political propaganda to give morale to the Kurdish tribes who were looking for international support, because the propaganda of Ottoman support was very important to Sheikh Ubeidullah. This is evident in the response to one of the letters the Sheikh sent to one of the tribes of Sardasht, in which the nobles of the tribe replied; if the new uprising was consented to and cooperated by the Ottoman Empire, they would participate.[516] Furthermore, Sheikh Ubeidullah's assurances prompted some of the Kurdish tribes on the Iranian side to resume defiance of the government. For instance, the people of Sardasht, who still had a hidden relationship with Hamza Agha, after the sheikh's letters and the rumors of a fresh attack by the Kurdish tribes, refused to pay taxes to the state representatives.[517] Amir Nizam, who had established a strong intelligence network among the Kurdish tribes, received many of the Sheikh's letters and according to the rumors he received Ottomans were making unnatural movements and gathering forces in the areas of Sulaymaniyah and Rawanduz.[518]

[514] Amir-Nizam, **op. cit.**, pp. 254-257.
[515] Khalfin, **op. cit.**, p. 138.
[516] Amir-Nizam, **op. cit.**, pp. 257-258.
[517] Amir-Nizam, **op. cit.**, pp. 197-198.
[518] Amir-Nizam, **op. cit.**, p. 256.

In response, Iran started preparations by carrying out some steps on both the field and diplomatic levels. Amir Nizam began to mobilize forces consisting of the tribes of the region and similar to Erbil's meeting of Ratib Bey with the Kurdish tribes, he gathered all the religious scholars, nobles, and tribal chiefs around Sauj Bulaq and made a covenant with them not to oppose the state in any way until death.[519]

Diplomatically, Iran made more efforts and took all diplomatic measures to force the Ottoman Empire to remove the Sheikh. Naser al-Din Shah ordered the foreign minister to send the contents of one of Sheikh Ubeidullah's letters to Mu'in al-Mulk and instructed him to deliver the letter to the ambassadors of other countries and say to the Porte: "*Why do you allow this despicable to make such a mess every day and not let the border be stable for a minute?*." The Shah also ordered the Iranian ambassador to hand over the script of the letter to the Sultan and strongly protest against it, and to deliver it to the Russian ambassador in secret.[520]

Asking the British ambassador to force the Porte to remove the Sheikh, Mu'in al-Mulk stated that the proximity of Sheikh Ubeidullah to Hakkari, which was close to the open cities of Iran, had forced Iran to deploy 30,000 men on the border, that thousands of them could die because of the cold and harsh weather in the region.[521]

On the other hand, Iran appointed former foreign minister Mirza Hussein Khan to work out an agreement with Russia to remove the Sheikh. Aware of Iran's intensive efforts to get Russian support, Fahri Bey warned the Porte that Russia might take advantage of this opportunity, gather forces and make inconvenience the Ottoman Empire.[522] Two weeks later the Russian ambassador in Istanbul, during a visit to the Ottoman Foreign Ministry warned the minister that if the Ottoman Empire did not remove Sheikh Ubeidullah from the frontier, the Russian forces deployed in the area would pursue the Sheikh wherever he goes.[523] At the same time, Naser al-Din Shah called Fahri Bey in Tehran and told him in tears; if the Ottoman Empire

[519] Amir-Nizam, **op. cit.**, p. 267.
[520] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 581.
[521] **HCPP. Turkey. No. 5 (1881),** Document No. 47.
[522] **BOA. Y.PRK.HR**., No: 5/63, 14 Rebîülevvel 1298 as cited in Deniz, **op. cit.**, p. 169.
[523] **BOA. Y A RES.**, No. 10/26.

did not remove the evildoings of Sheikh Ubeidullah, Iran would be ready to give up part or all of Azerbaijan to Russia so that it would not fall into the hands of the Kurds.[524] Fahri Bey, who realized the seriousness of the matter, warned the Porte that there would be great political problems for the Ottoman Empire in case the Sheikh was not removed.[525] Finally, as will be discussed below the Porte decided to bring Sheikh Ubeidullah to Istanbul.

2.3.2. Sheikh Ubeidullah's Invitation to Istanbul

Under the constant pressures on the Ottoman Empire, along with the potential threats that Sheikh Ubeidullah could have on the eastern frontier of the Empire, the decision to bring the Sheikh to Istanbul was made. However, the Ottoman Empire feared that pressure and harassment of Sheikh Ubeidullah might lead him to seek refuge in Iran and the Iranians would take advantage of this opportunity to use it against the Ottoman Empire. So, the Porte tried to make sure that Iran had no such intentions. Therefore, before the forced dragging of the Sheikh to Istanbul, the Ottoman Foreign Minister summoned Mu'in al-Mulk and informed him that it had been decided to bring the Sheikh (to Istanbul) and that if he disobeyed, weapons would be used against him, but he asked what Iran's reaction would be if Sheikh Ubeidullah sought refuge in Iran: "*We will certainly not give him asylum, but I must ask my country too*" Mu'in al-Mulk replied.[526]

After about six months of political debate, Sultan Abdulhamid II ordered Nafiz Pasha to summon the Sheikh and his two sons to Istanbul. Replying to the Sultan's order Sheikh Ubeidullah stated he would accept the invitation with pride out of respect for the caliph and decided to go to Istanbul in late March but because the Porte was not sure what Sheikh Ubeidullah would do before traveling to Istanbul, issued orders for the necessary places to monitor the Sheikh's movements.[527] Although Sultan Abdulhamid had ordered him to bring his two sons with him, Sheikh Ubeidullah apologized to Nafiz Pasha for not being able to bring his sons. So,

[524] **BOA. Y.A.HUS.**, No. 166/112.
[525] **BOA. Y.PRK.HR**., No. 5/63, 14 Rebîülâhir 1298, as cited in Deniz, **op. cit.**, p. 169.
[526] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 556.
[527] Deniz, **op. cit.**, p. 170.

he went to Van on the appointed date, without his sons, and reached Erzurum on July 12, 1881, from where he went to Istanbul by the Black Sea.[528] The news caused great joy among Iranians, and Naser al-Din Shah wrote a letter to the foreign minister asking him to instruct Mu'in al-Mulk to express his satisfaction and give medals and decorations to the Ottoman pashas and officials who participated in dragging Sheikh Ubeidullah to Istanbul.[529]

However, contrary to Tehran's expectation, Sheikh Ubeidullah was sent to Istanbul with great respect and protection, attracting the attention of those who observed the situation. Wafayi indicates that he was sent to Istanbul with a group of his murids from the Black Sea on a private ship. There, a lot of nobles, influential people, and state officials came to welcome him.[530] On his arrival in Istanbul, Sheikh Ubeidullah met with Sultan Abdulhamid. Regarding their meeting, The New York Daily Tribune reported the following;

> The reception of the Sheikh was quaintly Oriental, given his history and the circumstances of his arrival in this city. The day after his arrival Sheikh Ubeidullah was taken to see the Sultan. The Sultan kissed his hand and had a long talk with him about the state of the country and the best means of extricating the state from its difficult position. He showed so much regard for the Sheikh that it has even been rumored that this Kurdish chieftain might soon become Grand Vizier. A large house near the palace was set apart for the residence of the Sheikh; horses, carriages, and servants were placed at his disposal: and everyday food from the Royal table is sent to the house for the delectation of the Sheikh and his suite.[531]

The Eaton Democrat, however, reveals; although the Sheikh was "*holding court, and exercising public influence not much inferior to that of the Sultan himself,*" at the same time, the police closely monitored his activities.[532] Thus, the Porte has fulfilled Iran's main demand, in return tried hard to defend the Sheikh's demands. In late November 1881, Fahri Bey called on the Iranian authorities to compensate for the damage caused by the Iranian forces in 1870, 1876, and 1881 against the interests of Sheikh Ubeidullah. Fahri Bey also threatened the Iranian government that if Iran did not implement the demands, the frontier tensions would

[528] Deniz, **op. cit.**, p. 171.
[529] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 557.
[530] Wafayi., **op. cit.**, pp. 59-60.
[531] **New-York tribune**, **"**Affairs in the Orient**"**, (New York), September 10, 1881, p. 5.
[532] **The Eaton Democrat**, (Eaton, Ohio), September 28, 1882, p. 4.

resume.[533] Responding to Fahri Bey's demands, Iran's Foreign Minister indicated that the areas claimed by Sheikh Ubeidullah never belonged to him and that he had taken some by *tiyul* and others by deception. In addition, the Sheikh's hostile behavior toward Iran was the reason for the confiscation of his property. In addition to that, Iran, despite rejecting the Porte's demands, under the influence of Russian encouragement and guidance, proposed more demands to the Porte. The Russian ambassador in Tehran Zinovev advised Mirza Saeed Khan to express his surprise to the Porte for supporting an organized military attack on the fertile lands of Azerbaijan. He also advised him to make a counter-demand to the Porte to compensate Iran for the damages.[534]

Later, in response to a letter from Sultan Abdulhamid II to Naser al-Din Shah in which he called the Shah for the formation of a commission to investigate Sheikh Ubeidullah's claims about the persecution of Sunnis in Iran, the Iranian Foreign Ministry sent a letter to Fahri Bey. According to the contents of the letter despite denying the oppression of Sunnis by its governors, Tehran argued that even if it was so, Sheikh Ubeidullah had no right to intervene, just like how the Shiite sheikhs did nothing about the *"insults against Shiite citizens outside Iran*." More warningly, Tehran notified that Sheikh Ubeidullah intended to unite Kurds on both sides of the Ottoman Empire and Iran and create an independent Kurdistan government. Therefore, the minimum punishment for him should be exile or life imprisonment.[535] While Tehran and Istanbul continued diplomatic talks on Sheikh Ubeidullah, he remained in Istanbul for a year. This duration was a good opportunity for Iran to strengthen its power over the border areas, and dominate the Kurdish tribes by killing and imprisonment of tribal chiefs and personalities that may have hindered the imposition of its power in the region.

The two most prominent tribes that played an important role in the uprising of Sheikh Ubeidullah and remained in the border areas until then were the Mangor tribe led by Hamza Agha and the Shikak tribe led by Ali Khan. The Mangor tribe, led by

[533] Khalfin, **op. cit.**, p. 140.
[534] Khalfin, **op. cit.**, p. 141.
[535] **BOA. Y.PRK.EŞA.**, No. 2/73/1, 29 Zilhicce 1298.

Hamza Agha, was in the mountainous regions of Bradost between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. During the Kurdish retreat, Iranian soldiers destroyed Mangor villages. They killed and took many Kurds prisoner, and looted thousands of cattle in the villages of the Mangor.[536] After the Kurdish uprising, until July 1882, when Sheikh Ubeidullah was still in Istanbul, Iran repeatedly tried to reconcile, arrest, or kill Hamza Agha through the Kurdish tribal chiefs who had surrendered to Iran. In the first attempt, the Commander in Chief Haji Sadr-u Dawla sent a letter to Hamza Agha to reconcile him and convince him to stop rebelling. However, Hamza Agha agreed only under the condition that the state would return to him the rule of Sardasht and Margawar and never ask him to visit the governor of Azerbaijan, but his demands were refused by the Commander. Later, Amir Nizam through Kurdish tribal chiefs tried to convince Hamza to surrender to the government, but he insisted on his demands to Amir Nizam too.[537] Hamza Agha's presence was a threat to the Iranian soldiers in the area, and because of him, the state representatives could not stay in the region. Therefore, the state provided a great incentive to arrest and kill Hamza Agha. In response to the demands of some of the Kurdish tribes who asked for "the tax of disgracefulness "to be lifted which was both financially difficult and kept the tribes in a notorious situation, Amir Nizam made the arrest or killing of Hamza Agha a condition for the fulfillment of their demands.[538] For this reason, some of the tribal chiefs were eager to help reconcile Hamza Agha with the state. After Sheikh Ubeidullah had stayed in Istanbul for a year and Hamza Agha was wanted by the Ottomans[539], the latter lost hope of another uprising. Having no other choice but to meet with Amir Nizam, Hamza was convinced to reconcile with the state. Meanwhile, Amir Nizam with the presence of the mullahs and religious scholars of Sauj Bulaq kissed the Holy Qur'an and swore that he would not harm Hamza Agha if he attends the meeting and would make him the ruler of the Kurdish regions (or Mangor region) for a small fee. Hamza Agha, based on this inviolable pledge, agreed to meet Amir Nizam. Finally, on the third day of Ramadan (July 19,

[536] Jalil, **op. cit.**, p. 141.
[537] "Notes from Amir-Nizam to Ala' al-Devlah", Amir-Nizam, **op. cit.**, p. 313.
[538] Amir-Nizam, **op. cit.**, p. 418.
[539] The Iranian Ambassador in Istanbul, a letter to his respective Ministry explains that the governor of Van promised him, if Hamza Agha comes to the Ottoman territory, they would hand him over to Iran. See **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 558.

1882), Hamza Agha and a hundred of his men entered the camp of Amir Nizam. They directed them to the tent where they were supposed to meet. While Hamza Agha was awaiting the meeting, they opened fire on his tent from a distance on the orders of Amir Nizam. Then they sent Hamza Agha's head to Urmia and kept it on a spear in public for several days.[540] After Hamza's assassination, the Russian embassy strongly protested the killing, telling Iranians that the treatment would undermine the state's confidence among the Kurds. Seeking to find excuses for how Hamza Agha was killed, the Iranian foreign minister advised Iranian officials to deny that they gave promises and assurances to Hamza Agha. Discussing the issue with the minister, Amir Nizam wrote:

> Of course, the two letters I wrote to reassure Hamza Agha reached the Ottoman authorities and it shows that we were trying to reassure Hamza Agha and forgive him. Therefore, our denial of these documents, or our regret about them, will catch us in a lie, and this will affect the reputation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[541]

After the assassination of Hamza Agha, the situation became easier for the Iranian authorities to impose their power over the region and force the local tribes to recognize the border. The only party left to be dominated was the Shikak tribe which the Qajar forces led by the Austrian officers were able to take over their territory.[542] Subsequent to the rebels' defeat, when the tribe migrated to the Ottoman Empire, Iran repeatedly asked the Ottoman Empire to hand over the tribe. Under Iran’s constant demand, in August 1881, the tribe with two thousand households was besieged by an Ottoman force led by Colonel Ahmed Bay. The siege was based on an order from the Porte regarding preventing Ali Khan and his tribe from entering the Ottoman Territory. However, Ali Khan was able to convince the Ottomans that the Iranians were oppressing the Sunnis and killing their families and children.[543] Nevertheless, the Iranian foreign minister complained to Fahri Bey that the Ottoman Empire,

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[540] Wilson, **op. cit.**, p. 120; Afshar, **op. cit.**, p. 212-21.
[541] The Russian letter is not available. However, two long reports from Amir Nizam about how the Russians should be replied, include excerpts from the contents of the Russian letter. According to Amir Nizam's reply, the Russians apparently indicated that Amir Nizam's actions would also cause protests from the Ottomans. See Amir-Nizam, **op. cit.**, pp. 553-558; Hama Baqi, **Raparin-i Hamza Agha**, pp. 191-201.
[542] Ateş, **op. cit.**, p. 65.
[543] **BOA. A.}MKT.UM.**, No. 1680/74, 8 Şevval 1298; **BOA. HR.MKT**., No. 1152/22, 9 Safer 1298.

contrary to their agreements, was harboring all tribes that were fleeing the law. He also asked Fahri Bey to explain this to his respective country;

> Unless this tribe [Shikak] is handed over and all our demands regarding the frontier are met by the Ottoman border guards, there will be no peace and security on the borders.[544]

Ali Khan, whose father, Ismail Agha I, had been assassinated by the ruler of Azerbaijan,[545] due to his position and political hegemony, could pose a major challenge to Iran's efforts in consolidating its power across the border, especially because his in-law was in charge of Mahmudi district on the Ottoman side. So, the Iranians were concerned that he would join the Ottoman Empire too. Therefore, according to Afshar, Saif al-Dawla, the governor of Khuy and Salmas, was able to give complete assurance to Ali Khan through several representatives. Ali Khan, based on the promise of Saif al-Dawla, went to Khuy, but contrary to his expectation was sent in chains to Tabriz,[546] where he was imprisoned and remained in custody for the rest of his life.[547]

2.3.3. Sheikh Ubeidullah's Escape from Istanbul and the End of the Tensions

Despite the high respect shown to Sheikh Ubeidullah in Istanbul, "*it soon became apparent that the palace assigned him was his prison*," as Wilson describes.[548] The Sheikh spent the first week in the palace, and for a year none of the statesmen visited him in his residence house, which upset the Sheikh.[549] However, he regularly exchanged letters with the Kurdish regions and was aware of the events taking place in Iran. Wafayi, from Sauj Bulaq, emphasizes that he had exchanged letters with the Sheikh while the Sheikh was in Istanbul.[550] After three months in

[544] Hama Baqi, **op. cit.**, p. 359.
[545] Ismail Agha I had very good relations with the Qajar authorities. He helped them to counter the stubbornness of some Ottoman subjects, especially during the rebellion of the Muhammad pasha of Rawanduz in the mid-19th century, but he was later killed by Askar Khan for not paying taxes regularly. See Hawar, **op. cit.**, pp. 224-226; Muhammad Naib Pur, Alireza Ali Sofi, Muhammad Amir Sheikh Nuri and Sirwan Husruzade, "Vakavi Zemineha u Avamili Muasir ber Ağaze Şorşi Sımko 1906-1918", **Pejuhişhaye Tarihi**, Devreye 7, No. 3 1394 :1-18, p. 5.
[546] Afshar, **op. cit.**, p. 229.
[547] Naib Pur et al., **op. cit.**, p. 5.
[548] Wilson, **op. cit.**, p. 119.
[549] Deniz, **op. cit.**, p. 172.
[550] Wafayi., **op. cit.**, p. 61.

Istanbul, he asked the Sultan for permission to return to Nehri or nearby to take care of his Takiya and property within the Ottoman Empire.[551] However, to prevent any problems that Sheikh Ubeidullah might create, instead of Nehri, after ten months he was offered to be taken to Hejaz to live there. According to Wafayi, he was processing the offer for three days until he finally decided to leave Istanbul secretly and flee back home.[552] Accordingly, Sheikh Ubeidullah escaped in August 1882, which coincided with the month of Ramadan. To flee secretly, it was announced by his murids that Sheikh Ubeidullah was meditating [*i'tikaaf*] this month and could not receive anyone, then he was able to obtain a Russian visa with a fake passport. He crossed the Black Sea to Russia and from there he went to Iran and returned to Hakkari. [553] According to Jalil, the news was well received among the Kurdish tribes, and many tribal chiefs went to meet him with armed forces and about 5,000 soldiers gathered around him.[554]

However, the news in Iran was initially interpreted that the Ottomans were behind his liberation and wanted him to return to the frontier. [555] Ironically, rumors spread within the Ottoman Empire that Sheikh Ubeidullah had fled through the Iranian embassy.[556] This reflected the uncertainties that both states had toward each other. Soon, however, military preparations were made by both the Ottoman and Iranian states to prevent any movement of Sheikh Ubeidullah. In addition to military preparations, Iran began threatening the Kurdish tribes with severe punishment if they helped the Sheikh.[557] In this regard, the governor of Sauj Bulaq gathered mullahs, nobles, and tribal chiefs compelling them to promise to be loyal to the government and to confront the Sheikh if he attacked.[558]

However, by the time the Sheikh reached Nehri, his "Commander in Chief" Hamza Agha, and Ali Khan Shikak, the two strongest supporters of his cause, were

[551] **BOA. Y.PRK.AZJ.,** No. 4/96.
[552] Wafayi., **op. cit.**, p. 61.
[553] For more details about the story of his escape, see, **The Indianapolis journal**, (Indianapolis) 21 November 1883, p. 3; **The Eaton Democrat**, (Eaton, Ohio) 28 September 1882, p. 4.
[554] Jalil, **op. cit.**, p. 153.
[555] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 583.
[556] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 584.
[557] Jalil, **op. cit.**, p. 154.
[558] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 587.

no longer around, so the Sheikh could not do much. Meanwhile, the Ottoman Empire, along with the military preparations, sent the Aide-de-Camp Kamil Bey to ask the Sheikh to return to Istanbul. The Sheikh despite reaffirming his obedience to the Sultan, asked to be allowed to stay with his family in Mosul or Van which was rejected by the Porte.[559] In August 1882, Kamal Bey, Sultan's third secretary, came to Van to persuade the Sheikh to settle in Hijaz. Unhappy with the offer, Sheikh Ubeidullah fortified in Oramar fortress with some of his men but after 18 days of siege, Kamil Bey and Mustafa Naim Pasha arrested him on 21 October 1882 and sent him to Mosul with 100 members of his family and supporters. Two months later, he was sent to Hijaz and died there on 12 October 1883.[560] The news of the Sheikh's deportation had a great international reaction[561] and the Iranians were following this process closely. The Sheikh's departure calmed the diplomatic dispute between the Ottoman Empire and Iran for a while, ending a major dispute that had caused much suspicion and heartache between the two for two years. A few months after the Shaikh's exile, Fahri Bey took some tobacco from the Shaikh's village and sent it as a gift to the Iranian foreign minister; using the same language as theirs, he wrote:

> After the exile and removal of the despicable (*pider-sokhtah*) evil Sheikh Ubeidullah from Nawchia, the soil of the area is cleansed of its impurities, so its tobacco, which is your favorite, the yield has increased more than ever and I have brought you some just as you requested. [562]

However, border disputes and religious oppression in the Mukri regions persisted for the next three decades. Until the early 20th century, following Dervish Pasha's Map and the footsteps of Sheikh Ubeidullah, the Ottoman Empire, occupied parts of north-western Iran for seven years. Ironically, during the Ottoman occupation, the Porte used the Sheikh's justifications as a pretext, for their presence in Iranian Kurdish regions. (See Chapters IV & V).

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[559] Ates, **Sheykh Ubeidullah Rebellion**, pp. 68-69.
[560] Hama Baqi, **op. cit.**, p. 24.
[561] **The Indianapolis journal**, 21 November 1883, p. 3; **The Eaton Democrat**, (Eaton, Ohio), 28 September 1882, p. 4; **Sacramento Daily Record-Union**, (Sacramento) 7 September 1882, p. 2; **The Salt Lake herald**, (Salt Lake City) 7 September 1882, p1; **Omaha Daily Bee**, (Omaha) 7 September 1882, p. 1.
[562] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 609, 12 Rebîülâhir 1300.

CHAPTER 3

STATE AND TRIBES IN THE CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN FRONTIERS: PASTURE, PETROL, AND ALLEGIANCE

3.1. INTERNATIONAL BORDERLINE OVER THE TRIBAL QUARTERS: THE JAF TRIBE BETWEEN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND IRAN

The Jaf tribe is one of the largest Kurdish tribes, (if not the largest), spanned the widest frontier area.[563] Its clans, in different seasons of the year, spread from the north to Bana and Saqiz and from the south to Qzil Rabat (present-day Jalawla) and Qasr-i Shirin (See Map No 6). There are no exact statistics available on the number of families and members of this tribe in the area covered by this study. However, various sources estimate the number of Jaf families at between 10,000 and 30,000.[564] Ihtisham al-Saltana, who ruled Kurdistan Province in the late 19th century, estimated the number of its nomadic families who moved back and forth to Iran at 18,000.[565] Major Soane, who stayed in Halabja (the center of Gulanbar district and the residence of the Jaf Pashas) in the early 20th century, estimates the number of Jaf members at 100,000.[566]

The tribe was divided into two main parts: Moradi Jaf and Jawanro Jaf. Jawanro Jaf was the clan that remained and settled in Iran and according to Soane, "*who have forgotten that they were ever Jaf Kurds*."[567] Muradi Jaf was the largest part of the tribe and was officially part of the Ottoman Empire. Historical sources indicate that the name "Muradi" originated from the active participation of the Jafs with the Ottomans in the capture of Baghdad in 1638 during the reign of Sultan

[563] Zekeriya Kurşun and Davut Hut, **Yüzyıllık Sorun: Musul Vilayeti (Tarih, Toplum ve Siyaset)**, 2020, p. 67.
[564] Soane, **Notes on the Tribes**, p. 21, Averyanov, **op. cit.**, p. 159. Sykes, **The Kurdish Tribes of the Ottoman Empire**, pp. 451-486; Also see the notes by editor in Ihtisham al-Saltana, **Khatirat-i Ihtisham al-Saltanah**, Ed. Sayyid Muhammad Mahdi Mosavi, Tehran 1367, p. 465.
[565] Ihtisham al- Saltana, **op. cit.**, p. 465.
[566] Soane, **To Mesopotamia and Kurdistan in disguise**, p. 456
[567] Soane, **op. cit.**, p. 279.

Murad IV. In return, the Sultan gave them the title of Muradi Jaf.[568] In the Treaty of Zahab 1639, the tribe's clans were officially divided between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, and the names of Jaf and some of their clans were mentioned in the treaty.[569]

Since the second half of the 19th century, the vacancy created by the removal of the Kurdish emirates had led to the emergence of several political characters in the region. In the Baban region, one of the forces that emerged was the Jaf tribe. Even though the Ottoman Empire was able to convince the tribe to settle during the reign of Midhat Pasha, governor of Baghdad, and appointed the tribal chief, Muhammad Pasha governor of Gulanbar, it did not prevent the tribe from maintaining their seasonal migrations between the the Ottoman Empire and Iran until the years before World War I. This led to many political and diplomatic problems between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. However, the Jafs, as a semi-independent tribe, had become a buffer zone between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, protecting the two powers from confrontation.

A large number of the Jaf households, tribal ties, and the tribe's ability to maintain nomadic life, made the tribe behave semi-independently. According to Nikitine, the Jaf tribe, unlike other tribes, has made great efforts to maintain its internal unity. Among the major Kurdish tribes, it was the only tribe that maintained internal peace and coexistence.[570] Sykes also describes them as an independent tribe that derived its strength from internal unity and the absence of treachery. Their duty was to pay the state a small tax in exchange for the pastures they used. In the Ottoman Empire, the Jafs agreed with the governor of Baghdad, Omar Pasha, to treat them the same as the Shammar tribe and to take fortieth sheep and goats from them. This tax continued until the Revolution of CUP and the appointment of Nazim Pasha as the governor of Baghdad.[571]

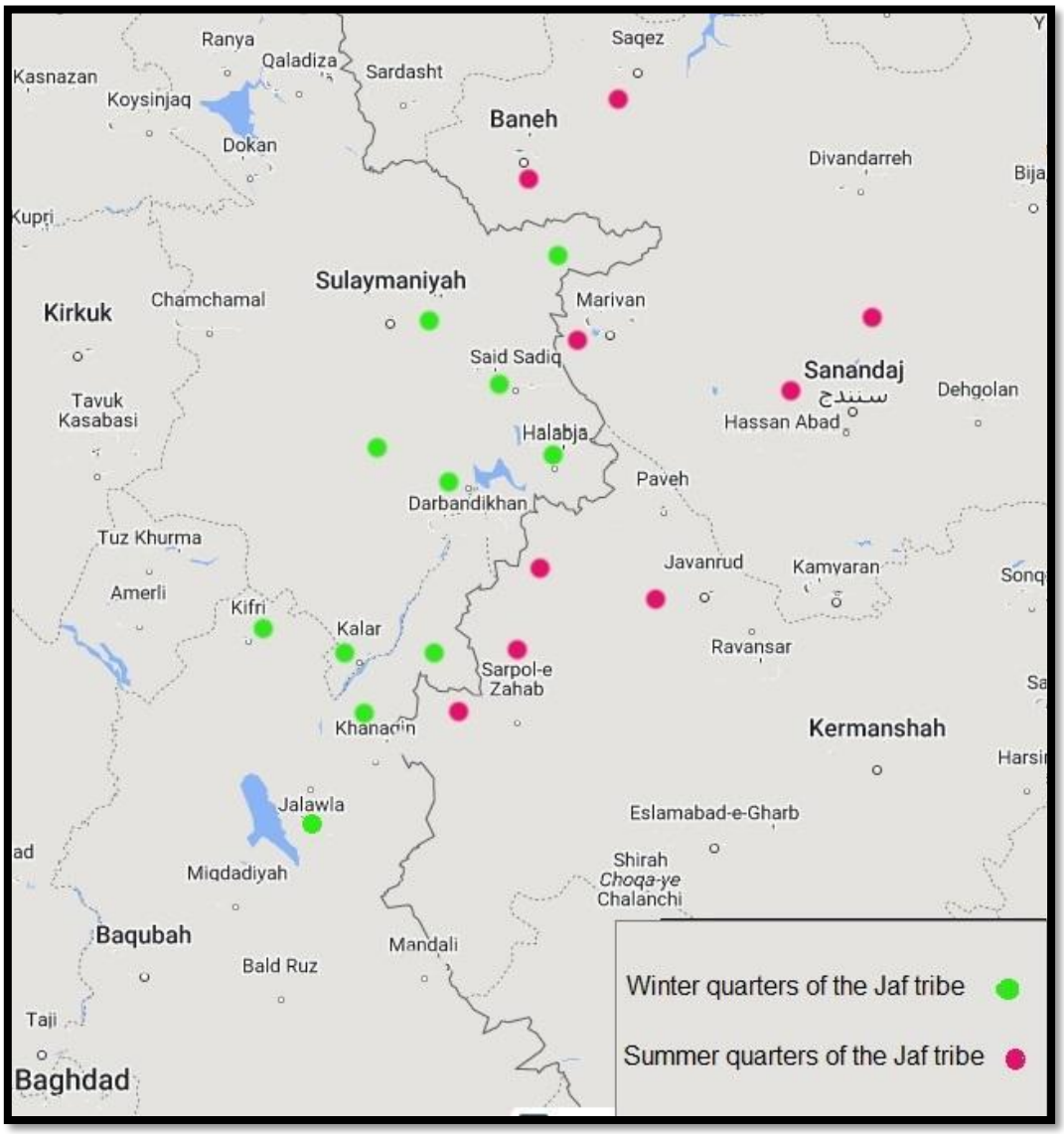
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[568] Basil Nikitine, **op. cit.**, p. 159; Karim Beg-i Fatah Beg-i Jaf, **Tarikhi Jaf**, Ed. Hasan Jaf, w.place, 1995, p. 147.
[569] Dervish Pasha, **op. cit.**, p. 62.
[570] Nikitine, **op. cit.**, p. 160.
[571] Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 170.

According to Averyanov, they were not true subjects of either the Ottoman or Iranian states. They have never officially recognized the Iranian regime, refused to participate in the Iranian army, and have not served in the Iranian military. Iran has repeatedly tried to stop them by using military force but because the soldiers did not open fire, the Jafs ignored their orders and continued their activities. According to him Iranian authorities tried peacefully to prevent the Jafs from entering Iran but to no avail.[572] Similarly, on the Ottoman side, the Jafs neither provided soldiers to the state nor participated in the Hamidiye cavalry.[573]

Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, the tribe migrated in summer and winter over a vast area between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. This has led both states to take special measures to deal with the tribe. The tribe's seasonal migration, in addition to causing damage to the population and agricultural land in the areas it passed through, created many political and diplomatic problems between the two states. In addition, two other issues regarding the Jafs were of concern to the Ottomans. These included the political refuge of the Jaf chiefs in Iran and the suspicious relationship of the Jaf ruling families with Iranian officials. All three topics are discussed below.

[572] Averyanov, **op. cit.**, pp. 158-159.
[573] In 1913, during the Barzan uprising, one of their demands from the Porte was to consider them as unregistered as the Jaf tribe and not to ask them to provide soldiers to the state. See Khalil Ali Murad and Abdulfattah Ali Botani, **Safahat min Tarikh al-Kurd we Kurdistan al-Hadith fi al-Wathayiq al-Osmaniyyah (1840-1915)**, Erbil 2015, p. 54.



Map 6. The map shows the vast area of the winter and the summer quarters of the Jafs.[574]

[574] The map drawn based on the following sources; Hurshid Pasha, **op. cit.**, pp. 259-260; Harris, **op. cit.**, p. 184; Adil Sdiq, **op. cit.**, p. 202; Soane, **Notes on the Tribes**, pp. 20-21; Ihtisham al-Saltana, **op. cit.**, p. 442; **BL. Mss Eur F112/396/2** "Reconnaissance in Mesopotamia, Kurdistan, North-West Persia, and Luristan from April to October 1888. By Lt F R Maunsell, Intelligence Branch". In Two Volumes. Volume I: narrative report, description of larger towns and routes leading from them. Simla: Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Dept, 1890', p. 83.

3.1.1. Mahmud Pasha Jaf and the Repercussions of the Seasonal Migration for Pastures

As mentioned in the previous section, in 1881, the two states signed a new agreement after the second Erzurum Treaty. Article 7 of this new agreement emphasized that tribal migration between the two states should be banned as it has been in the past.[575] However, both before and after the agreement, even in the years after World War I, the Jafs moved between the two states annually in search of pasture.[576] The annual migration of the Jafs to Iran destroyed the fields of the inhabitants of the areas to which they migrated, also some of the nomads were involved in killing and looting in those areas. These acts, expectedly, would endwith Tehran's protests against Istanbul. At the same time, there was a possibility that Iran would attract the Jaf chiefs and convince them to settle in Iran. Therefore, until the early 20th century the Ottoman Empire tried to limit and regulate the migration of Jafs to Iran through various mechanisms. To this end, the Ottoman Empire tried to force the tribe to abandon their nomadic life and settle down, as it had promised Iran in the Treaty of Erzurum 1847.

The first serious attempt to settle the Jafs was made by Omar Pasha, the governor of Baghdad (1858-1859) when he came to Shahrazur with a large army and summoned Muhammad Beg, the chief of the Jaf tribe to Mwana.[577] Omar Pasha told Muhammad Beg that he had come to organize the administration of Sulaymaniyah and Shahrazur and that the Jaf tribe should become part of the new organization and settle within the administration of the region. Muhammad Beg (later Pasha) was not satisfied with the treatment of Omar Pasha and decided to immigrate to Iran.[578] Muhammad Beg was the most powerful Jaf chief and during his leadership, the tribe achieved internal unity and moved on both sides of the border outside the will of the Ottoman Empire and Iran. He understood that what guaranteed his tribe's independence was their nomadic life. Therefore, according to Hassan Jaf, in response

[575] **BOA. Y.PRK.HR**., No. 5/85, 29 Zilkade 1298.
[576] Edmonds points out that even in the 1920s, some Jaf clans waited for the migration season to migrate to Iran to avoid paying taxes. See Edmonds, **op. cit.**, p. 201.
[577] Mwana is located between Sulaymaniyah and Halabja.
[578] Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 171.

to the governor of Baghdad, who asked him to settle permanently in the Ottoman Empire, he stated "*We are like an eagle wherever we go belongs to us, whether it is Iran or the Ottoman territory.*" Additionally, Omar Pasha was later informed by the Baban employees who were with him in the Sulaymaniyah administration that forcing the Jafs would push them toward Iran. In return, Omar Pasha tried to adopt a softer policy toward them.[579] In 1868, Mohammad Beg also rejected the request of the Iranian prince, the governor of Kurdistan Province, for the tribe to settle permanently in Iran.[580] The following year, however, a new shift took place in the tribe's relationship with Iran. Muhammad Beg was persuaded by the Ottoman authorities to settle in Gulanbar, located close to the Iranian border and was already the wintering quarter of the Jaf tribe. Also, Gulanbar was changed to *Kaymakamlik* (district), and Muhammad Beg, was appointed the *Kaymakam* (governor). Further, the lands of this district were given in pieces to the members of the tribe, and households that traveled back and forth to Iran were asked to settle.[581] However, soon after this, in 1873, due to the summer migration of the Jaf tribe to Iran, his relationship with the Ottoman authorities was over and he went back to Iran.[582]

While they were in Iran, Naser al-Din Shah granted Muhammad Beg the title of Khan and made him the ruler of Zahab and the frontier areas of the Ottoman Empire and Iran. To bring the tribe closer to the state, by order of Naser al-Din Shah, Iran also designated his son, Osman Beg (later Pasha) the governor of Javanrud.[583] However, when Prince Motamed al-Dawla asked Muhammad Pasha to settle in Iran permanently, he strained relations with Iranian officials and returned to the Ottoman territory.[584] While Mohammad Beg was in Iran, to reduce his hegemony, the governorship of Gulanbar had been given to the chief of one of the Jaf clans that had

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[579] Mirza Shukrullah Sanandaji, **Tuhfa-ya Nasri der Tarikh u Goghrafiya-ya Kurdistan**, Tehran, 1366, p. 315.
[580] Sanandaji, **op. cit.**, p. 315.
[581] **BOA. BEOAYN.d**., No. 849/29, 19 Şaban 1286. A new change was made in the Ottoman administrative system and from this date onwards, the first administrative authority in *Kaza* (district) was transferred from *mudur* (administrator) to *kaymakam* alongside the district administrative council. See Barış Arsalan, **1265 (M. 1849) Devlet Salnamesine Göre Osmanlı İdari Yapısı**. (unpublished master dissertation) Ankara University, Ankara, 2007, p. 80.
[582] **BOA. DH.MKT.**, No. 1322/89.
[583] For the letter of Naser al-Din Shah, See Hassan Jaf, Jaf, "introduction to" Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 35.
[584] **Ibid.**, 57.

not gone to Iran at the time of Mohammad Beg's migration. In 1877, however, Muhammad Beg returned to the Ottoman side and became the governor of Gulanbar.[585]

Because it was not easy to force the entire Jaf tribe to settle, the Mosul and Baghdad administrations tried to give pieces of land as private properties to those clans who wished to settle. One of the clans that accepted the state's request was the Shatri clan.[586] So, when Muhammad Pasha returned from Iran, arrested the clan's chief; Aziz Shaweys, for not migrating with Jafs and imprisoned him until his death. In 1881, the relatives of the Shatri chief killed Muhammad Pasha in his tent near Kifri for revenge while he was sleeping.[587] After the assassination of Muhammad Pasha, his son Mahmud Pasha succeeded his father and became the governor of Gulanbar and the chief of the Jaf tribe. Mahmud Pasha was an educated man. He left behind a book consisting of a literary collection.[588] In the years that followed, he became the strongest man in the area.[589] According to Soane, Mahmud Pasha claimed to be able to collect 4000 horsemen in a few hours.[590] However, Mahmud Pasha's chieftaincy was a troubled one, beginning with avenging his father's blood (See 3.2.1). He was officially the governor of Gulanber and the head of the Jaf tribe from 1881 to 1888. From the early years of his chieftaincy, the summer migration of the Jafs to Iran resumed. Since 1904, several reports have been sent to the Porte

[585] **BOA. DH.MKT**., No. 1322/89/14.

[586] The Shatri and Haruni tribes had contacted the governors of Sharhazur and Sulaymaniyah, and after receiving land for their settlement, they demanded that they be treated independently in the future, have relationship with the state and pay taxes directly to the state. See **Al-Zaura**, No. 337, 10 Safar 1290.

[587] Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, pp. 57-58. Contrary to the above narration, Sanjabi points out that the reason for his assassination was that Aziz Agha, the chief of the Shatri clan, had joined another clan and revolted against the rule of Muhammed Pasha. So, Muhammad Pasha was forced to flee to Iran and settled in Javanrud. He then set out for Tehran with some horsemen and took refuge with Naser al-Din Shah. In Tehran, he was welcomed by an order from Naser al-Din Shah and was a guest of the state during his stay and the Shah gave him a sword as a gift and the rank of Amir Toman. Finally, through the mediation of Iran and the Ottoman Empire, they agreed to return him to his tribe. He then re-entered Ottoman territory in a friendly manner through Baghdad and reconciliation was made between him and Aziz Agha Shatri. Nevertheless, Muhammad Pasha kept the insult in his heart, so he imprisoned Aziz until he died 'normally or by poisoning'. See Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 21.

[588] Mahmud Pasha's book is a literary collection that contains some of his own poems, Kurdish and Persian poets' in his handwriting, and some letters and documents, which were published under the name of Kashkol-i Mahmud Pasha-i Jaf. See Mahmud Pasha Jaf, **Kashkoli Mahmud Pasha-i Jaf**, Ed. Hasan Jaf, Beirut, 2014.

[589] Soane, **To Mesiopotamia**, p. 270.

[590] **Ibid.**, 456.

about the internal problems of the Jafs and their summer migration to Iran.[591] According to Sanandaji, in 1885, the Jaf tribe, taking advantage of the weakness of the ruler of Kurdistan province, crossed the Iranian border and destroyed several villages and farmlands, and looted about 50,000 Iranian Rials.[592] Also, the Tilako, which was one of the Jaf clans, attacked the Galbaghi tribe in revenge for a previous dispute and killed several of their men. In September 1885, with the help of the tribes of Bana, the governor of Sinna gathered a force and attacked the Tilako clan, killing some men and looting their properties. Sanandaji also demonstrates that every year during the migration season of the Jafs, the Iranian government used to send a large force at great expense to prevent the influx of Jafs into Iranian territory and set up surveillance centers on the border at two points.[593]

The assembly of Iranian troops on the border was expected to cause concerns among the Ottoman authorities in the region. In the spring of 1886, as the Jafs' migration to Iran approached, news reached the Ottoman Interior Ministry that the Iranians had collected a large force on the border to prevent the Jafs from migrating to Iran.[594] While military actions were taken by the Ottoman authorities in Mosul and Sulaymaniyah, diplomatic talks were also established between Tehran and Istanbul. In a letter sent by the Iranian ambassador in Istanbul to the Iranian Foreign Ministry, the ambassador aexplained that he had held talks with Sultan Abdulhamid II and despite denying the accuracy of reports of gathering Iranian military forces on the border, also asked the Sultan to prevent the Jaffs from crossing the Iranian border.[595]

In 1887, the Ottoman Empire, after registering the lands of Shahrazur and Gulanbar as the property of the Sultan (Emlak-ı Hümayun), considered distributing these lands to tribal members as a temptation, so they could settle in the area and not migrate to Iran, hoping to put an end to the Iranian domination over the tribe.[596] Karim Beg indicates that after the decision to register the lands of Shahrazur in the

[591] **BOA. DH.SFR.,** No. 120/47, 31 Kanunievvel 1299.
[592] Sanandaji, **op. cit.**, pp. 379-380.
[593] Sanandaji, **op. cit.**, p. 385.
[594] **BOA. DH.SFR**. No. 129/48, 12 Mart 1302.
[595] **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 237.
[596] **BOA. DH.ŞFR**., No. 136/32, 12 Haziran 1304; **BOA. DH.MKT**., No. 1599/59, 27 Teşrinievvel 1304.

name of the Sultan, the Porte sent Colonel Namiq Pasha to talk to the Jaf chiefs to discuss the matter. Namiq Pasha first visited Osman Pasha in Shahrazur and then went to Halabja to see Mahmud Pasha. While Osman Pasha warmly welcomed Namiq Pasha, Mahmud Pasha welcomed him indifferently and criticized the state's policy of registering the lands of the region on the Sultan, and he told him: "*People's property is all the property of the Sultan, so naming these properties after the Sultan will cause protests among the people*." According to Karim Beg, the way Mahmud Pasha treated Namiq Pasha led him to lobby against Mahmud Pasha and convince the Sultan to remove him as the governor of Gulanbar and the chief of the Jaf tribe and to give the two positions to his brother Osman Pasha.[597] However, according to a long report sent to Sultan's office on October 7, 1888,[598] Mahmud and Osman Pashas have been criticized for their handling of the tribe's summer migration to Iran. The report can be summarized as follows:

> Sulaymaniyah province has been destroyed due to the aggression and oppression by the Jaf and Hamawand tribes. Mahmud Pasha's mismanagement of the Jaf tribe also caused the annual income of the Sulaymaniyah province to drop from 80,000 piastres (kuruş) to 12,000 piastres. He is approaching the Ottoman authorities to achieve his personal goals and is also in contact with Iranian officials. In addition to sending gifts to Iranian princes and noblemen every year, he sent 12 Arabian horses and other gifts to Iranians in May. He keeps one-third of the plunder that his men take in the Ottoman and Iranian territories. Last year, he even sent his brother Osman Pasha to Iran to plunder and then took most of the looted goods and animals. Earlier, the Iranians had asked the Ottoman Empire not to allow the Jafs to migrate to Iran. In response, the provincial and regional authorities had warned Mahmud Pasha, but the Jaf subtribes continued their summer migration to Iran illegally and secretly. Mahmud Pasha supervises the migration of 6,000 Jaf families to Iran every year, where they continue to loot, occupy and steal. Every year, when they return to Sulaymaniyah, they graze their animals on the farms of the people and destroy their crops. As a result, hundreds of villages are destroyed every year. Mahmud Pasha secretly met with Iranian officials and gave them 3,000 piastres to receive the rank and title of Khan and Iran used Mahmud Pasha politically. The "bandits" of the Hamawand tribe are protected by Mahmud Pasha and the Jafs have become the owners and protectors of the Hamawand tribe. Mahmud Pasha and his ancestors are the main obstacles to the settlement of the Jaf tribe.

[597] Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 187.
[598] The Ottoman Turkish name is "Mabeyn-i Hümayun Hazret-i Mülükane-i Baş Kitabet-ı".

The report proposed to the Sultan that Mahmud Pasha, his brothers, and relatives be exiled to Tripoli or the farthest part of the Rum province, then the state officials could settle the Jaf tribe.[599]

Following the report, the Porte appointed a commission headed by the senior advisor to the Sultan, Dervish Pasha, to investigate the situation of the tribe. After investigation, Dervish Pasha proposed to the Sultan that Mahmud Pasha should be removed from the position of governor of Gulanbar and the head of the tribe and be distanced from the Jafs. Dervish Pasha further recommended that Mahmud Pasha be granted the rank of the *Mirimiranlik* and made governor of one of the cities of Hama or Urfa and that the Jafs be settled in the lands of the Gulanbar, Shahrazur, Bazian, and Salahiya (present-day Kifri) districts. His brother Osman, which was in dispute with Mahmud Pasha, shall be appointed governor of Gulanbar instead. Dervish Pasha also suggested that the governor of Mosul be replaced by a more competent person. Both proposals were approved by the Sultan.[600] Thus, based on the proposal of Dervish Pasha, it was decided that; The chief of the tribe (Mahmud Pasha), who was also the governor of the Gulanbar district, would be removed from his post because of his transgression and he would be given the rank of *Mirmiranlik* and appointed governor of Urfa while his brother Osman Pasha would replace him as the governor of Gulanbar.[601]

The Porte's decision created an undesired situation among the Jaf ruling family. Although Osman Pasha was officially assigned the governor, during this time, Mahmud Pasha remained in Halabja for four months and had actual authority over the tribe and the district. So, Osman Pasha interfered less in the administration of the tribe because Mahmud Pasha was the elder brother and successor of their father.[602] Later, according to Çetinsaya, after reviewing all the complaints about Mahmud Pasha, Sultan Abdulhamid II canceled the decision to assign him as the

[599] **BOA. Y.PRK. BŞK**., No. 14/18, 1 Safer 1306 as cited in Cabuk, **op. cit.**, pp. 447-50.
[600] **BOA. Y.PRK.BŞK**., No. 14/66, 23 December 1888; **BOA. İ.DH**., No. 1113/87115, 30 December 1888, as cited in Zuhal Özbaş, **XIX. Yüzyıl Osmanlı-İran Sınır Diplomasisinde Caf Aşireti**, (Unpublished Master Dissertation) Marmara University, 2014, p. 90.
[601] **BOA. Y.PRK.BŞK**., No. 14/66; **BOA. MV**., No. 43/21.
[602] Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 188.

governor of Urfa.[603] However, the reason for this change may be due to Mahmud Pasha's rejection of the Porte's order, not the negative reports on him. For the report on Mahmud Pasha's bad performance was sent to the Sultan one month before he decided to assign him as governor and this dismisses Çetinsaya's claim.

Four months after being removed from his position, Mahmud Pasha and his brother Muhammad Ali Beg moved to Istanbul instead of Urfa, where they stayed for about two years.[604] Although Sultan Abdulhamid allocated him a house near the Yıldız Palace in Beshiktash and granted him a salary of 5,000 piastres, Mahmud Pasha insisted that the Sultan allows him to return to his tribe.[605] After his request was denied, he fled Istanbul in August 1891 and the Porte issued him several arrest warrants.[606] According to Karim Beg, Mahmud Pasha entered Iran in disguise via Russia and sent a telegraph from the port of Anzali to his relatives in Gulanbar to meet.[607]

[603] Gökhan Çetinsaya, **The Ottoman Administration of Iraq**, **1890-1908**, Taylor & Francis, 2006, p. 159.
[604] Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 188.
[605] **BOA. Y.A.HUS**., No. 231/16.
[606] **BOA. Y.A.HUS**., No. 251/135.
[607] Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 189.



Figure 3. Mahmud Pasha in disguise, when fleeing from Istanbul to Iran
(Source: Mahmud Pasha Jaf, Kashkoli Mahmud Pasha Jaf, Edit by Hasan Jaf, Beirut 2014, p.67.)

After the news of Mahmud Pasha's arrival in the port of Anzali, 200 cavalrymen from the Jaf tribe, led by Mahmud Pasha's brother; Fatah Beg, went to Ali Reza Khan, the governor of Bijar in Kurdistan province whom Karim Beg describes: *"He was very friendly and loyal to our tribe"*, to assist them in bringing back and protecting Mahmud Pasha.[608] Ali Reza Khan gave Iranian military uniforms to Fatah Beg's men to wear and gave Fatah Beg the robe of Mirpanj (the equivalent of Major) and suggested that he should leave most of his men in Bijar and meet Mahmud Pasha[609] with only a few men to stay in disguise. Although Karim Beg

[608] **Ibid.**, 190.
[609] **Ibid.**, 190. Also see Mahmud Pahsa, **op. cit.**, p. 19.

indicated that Jafs had hidden the news of Mahmud Pasha's escape from his brother Osman Pasha[610], in September 1891 Osman Pasha informed the governor of Sulaymaniyah that his brother had arrived in Iran and with the help of Iranian officials, he planned to return to the Jafs. Osman Pasha requested the dispatch of a military regiment to prevent Mahmud Pasha from causing chaos among the tribe. Meanwhile, the Ottoman ambassador in Tehran warned his respective country that after fleeing from Istanbul through the rulers of Bijar and Kurdistan, Mahmud Pasha had informed his brother Osman Pasha and his son Khasraw Beg that he wanted to return to his tribe.[611]

The return of Mahmud Pasha caused great anxiety among the Ottoman authorities. Especially due to the fact that though Osman Pasha was supported by the Porte, Mahmud Pasha was more dominant and supervised the nomadic migratory part of his tribe and preferred the nomadic life. Therefore, to prevent the return of Mahmud Pasha's hegemony, the Porte called on the provinces of Mosul and Baghdad to take the necessary measures to arrest him. It also asked the Iranian ambassador to notify his country to arrest him in Iran.[612] However, Karim Beg points out that contrary to Istanbul's wishes, Naser al-Din Shah ordered Ali Reza Khan, the governor of Bijar, to respect Mahmud Pasha. In obedience to this order, Ali Reza Khan welcomed Mahmud Pasha who stayed at Ali Reza's house for four days before he returned back to Halabja and joined his tribe, [613]where he was accompanied by thousands of Jafs and Hawramis.[614] In early October, Baghdad ordered the governor of Sulaymaniyah to send troops to arrest Mahmud Pasha in Gulanber.[615] A few days later, a large Ottoman force moved to the town. Mediated by the Jaf nobles, they entered the town without fight.[616] However, Mahmud Pasha did not surrender and moved to the Zimnako Mountains west of Halabja on the Iranian border with some of the Jaf tribesmen.[617] From December 1891 to May 1892, officials in Mosul and

[610] Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 190.
[611] **BOA. Y.A.HUS.**, No. 251/148.
[612] **BOA. Y.A.HUS**., No. 252 /113, 29 Rebîülevvel 1309.
[613] **Ibid.**, 191.
[614] **Ibid.**, pp. 191-192.
[615] **BOA. DH. SFR**., No. 153/12, 29 Safer 1309.
[616] Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 192.
[617] **Ibid.**, 195.

Baghdad tried to convince Mahmud Pasha to return to Istanbul. For this task, the Fourth Ottoman Army instructed Sayyid Abdulhamid; one of the sheikhs of Salahiya to convince Mahmud Pasha to visit Istanbul. However, along with the negotiations, the news of the Ottoman troops being sent to arrest Mahmud Pasha caused him anxiety and he refused to go to Istanbul alone.[618] After a series of conversations and exchanges of letters between Sayyid Abdulhamid and Mahmud Pasha, Sayyid Abdulhamid warned the commander of the Fourth Army that Mahmud Pasha might want to kill time until spring and the migration season to go to Iran with his tribe.[619]

Karim Beg also mentions that Mahmud Pasha sent one of his sons to the governor of Baghdad to ask the Sultan for pardon, and allowing him to stay with his tribe and not go to Istanbul.[620] As Sayyid predicted, in the spring of 1892, Mahmud Pasha and three of his sons moved to Pshtmala (the tent of the Jaf's ruling clan families; Begzades) in eastern Gulanbar.[621] From there, he sought asylum in Iran, but his application was rejected. A few days later, orders were issued from the Ottoman side to the Fourth and Sixth Ottoman Armies to arrest him, simultaneously an arrest warrant was issued from Iran.[622] While Mahmud Pasha was under the threat of arrest from both sides, Sayyid Abdulhamid again went to Gulanbar as the representative of the commander of the Ottoman Fourth Army and contacted him through one of Mahmud Pasha's brothers. Mahmud Pasha confirmed to Sayyid Abdulhamid that he was a loyal subject of the Sultan and the Ottoman Empire and expressed his readiness to go to Istanbul.[623] After receiving assurances and withdrawal of the forces, Mahmud Pasha went to Istanbul with his son Ali Beg. There he met the Sultan and after about three years, Sultan Abdulhamid gave him back the decoration and Pasha title that the state had previously taken away from him and allowed him to return to the Jafs with 5,000 piastres as his salary.[624] After his return from Istanbul,

[618] **BOA. Y.A.HUS**., No. 254/16. Also see Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, pp. 193-194.
[619] **BOA. Y.A.HUS**., No. 257/33.
[620] Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 193.
[621] **Ibid.**, 193; **BOA. Y.A.HUS**., No. 257/145.
[622] **BOA. Y.A.HUS**., No. 257/145.
[623] **BOA. Y.A.HUS**., No. 259/27.
[624] **BOA. BEO**., No. 410 /30724. Karim Beg states that after Mahmud Pasha's return from Istanbul, Sultan Abdulhamid gave him 15 pieces of land in the regions of Kifri, Halabja and Sulaymaniyah and 5000 piasters, which was given to him in three years. Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 195. Also see Amin Zeki

Mahmud Pasha's disagreement with his brother Osman Pasha resurfaced, and requests for his re-expulsion from several parties were received by the Porte. Osman Pasha warned the Porte that Mahmud Pasha was trying to establish an emirate-like power on the Iranian-Ottoman frontier.[625] Similarly, from Istanbul, the Grand Vizier and the Council of Ministers suggested to the Sultan that Mahmud Pasha be severely punished and be forced to stay in Mosul and not return to the tribe. However, Sultan Abdulhamid rejected any punitive action against Mahmud Pasha before a full investigation was conducted.[626]

After the second return of Mahmud Pasha from Istanbul, his power and influence increased. While his brother Osman Pasha settled in a small area like Gulanbar and the border of his winter migration extended only to Mariwan, east of Gulanbar, Mahmud Pasha became the leader of the Jaf clans who continued their nomadic life and, in the spring, they moved to a vast geographical area reaching Kermanshah and Kurdistan provinces. At the same time, he increased his influence over the Kurds of Kermanshah and Kurdistan provinces and helped Iranian tribes to migrate to the Ottoman side without consulting the state.[627] Regarding the summer migration of the Jafs under the leadership of Mahmud Pasha in the late 19th century, Ihtisham al-Saltana mentions that the Jaf tribe moved to the vicinity of Sinna for their summer refuge. He adds *"They act as they please and do what they want and no one defies them"*. According to him, even the military forces sent by Iran to the region to prevent violence and destruction, were forced by the Jafs to collect fodder for their sheep and cattle. Then Ihtisham al-Saltana adds to it:

> Of course, the Zafar regiment consisted of 200 or 300 useless men in the face of the Jaf tribe with 18,000 families under the rule of Mahmud Pasha Jaf, who did not obey the Ottoman Empire or Iran, they did nothing but serve and obey the Jafs. [628]

Beg, **Mashahir al-Kurd wa Kurdistan fi Ahd al-Osmani**, Trans. by Aniset Karimatah, Mudr 1947, vol. II, p. 181.

[625] **BOA. BEO**., No. 627/ 46960.

[626] Çetinsaya, **op. cit.**, p. 93.

[627] In 1898, for example, he sent 160 sowars to accompany 600 members of an Iranian tribe into Ottoman territory. **BOA. DH.MKT**., No. 2157/122.

[628] Ihtisham al-Saltana, **op. cit.**, p. 442.

Ihtisham al-Saltana's statement gives a clear picture of the extent of the influence of Mahmud Pasha and the Jafs on the Iranian side, which was a serious concern for Iranian officials. Ihtisham al-Saltana, who could not counter the Jafs through state forces, encouraged the Iranian Kurdish tribes to confront them. In August 1899, as the Jaf tribe returned to their winter quarters on the Ottoman side, Ihtisham al-Saltana informed the Foreign Ministry that a group of Jafs had attacked the Iranian Gamli tribe at the instigation of Mahmud Pasha; they killed and wounded four of them and looted their sheep and cattle. He then mentions that he sent several groups of tribes from the Kurdistan province to the Jafs "*to confront in the same way and retaliate*." Finally, Ihtisham al-Saltana suggested that the Interior Ministry ask the Ottoman Embassy and the Porte to remove Mahmud Pasha from the chieftaincy over the Jaf tribe, which always complicated border affairs and caused chaos. Then he recommended;

> His brother Osman Pasha, who was the former chief of the tribe and is now the governor of Halabja, should be reinstated as the chief of the tribe who, unlike Mahmud Pasha, has a good mind and beautiful manners. He should be reinstated as the chief of the tribe and Mahmud Pasha should be removed from that position.[629]

In August, the Iranian Foreign Ministry entrusted the task to the Iranian ambassador to Istanbul.[630] After the Iranian embassy informed the Porte of the matter, the Ottomans ordered an investigation of the situation.[631] As mentioned above, Ihtisham al-Saltana had instructed some Kurdish tribes to take revenge on the Jafs. Although it is unclear whether it was at his instigation or not, shortly after Ihtisham al-Saltana's letter, the Jafs were attacked and some of their houses and livestock were looted while returning from their summer pastures in Sinna to the Ottoman side by two major tribes in Kurdistan province; Galbaghi and Mandami, who had been at odds with the Jafs in previous years.[632] Then the Ottoman ambassador Shams al-Din Beg, warned Tehran that the Jafs intended to take revenge, and asked them to return the looted properties of the Jafs before they attack those two

[629] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 665, 23 Rebîülevvel 1317.
[630] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 666, 18 Rebîülâhir 1317.
[631] **BOA. DH.MKT**., No. 2270/75, 11 Receb 1317.
[632] **BOA. BEO.**, No. 120/8935, 21 Cemâziyelevvel 1310; **BOA. BEO**., No. 295 /22071, 6 Rebîülâhir 1311.

tribes.[633] In response, the Iranian foreign minister promised to investigate the matter. He also accused the Jaf tribe of entering Iranian territory, he stated; *"If the Iranian tribes did anything, it may have been in self-defense."*[634] Along with the events that took place in Kurdistan province, in Kermanshah the Jaf tribe was also preparing to take revenge on one of the Bajalan tribes in Quratu which was a village belonged to Zahab. Mushir al-Dawla once again asked the Iranian embassy to use military force to prevent the arrival of the Jafs, as such actions would damage relations between the two states.[635]

In 1901, based on the governor of Kermanshah's claims, Mushir-al-Dawla asked the Ottoman ambassador to prevent the Jafs from entering Iran, claiming that some of its clans looted and destroyed the region. For this reason, the Ottoman Embassy in Tehran consulted Mahmud Pasha on the matter, and he dismissed the news as completely false. The Ottoman ambassador conveyed Mahmud Pasha's reply to the Iranian Foreign Ministry and concluded that the Iranians wanted to deprive the Jafs of their pasture by banning their summer migration to Iran and forcing them to settle in Iran permanently.[636] In October 1902, the governor of Kermanshah had entrusted the protection of the area to Mansour al-Mulk, one of the chiefs of the Goran tribe, to prevent two clans of the Jaf from returning to Iran for their wintering pasture. So, Mahmud Pasha informed the governor of Sulaymaniyah of this decision and asked him for help. Through the governor of Mosul, the governor of Sulaymaniyah then asked Istanbul to resolve the issue with the Iranians before further conflict arose.[637] This move from the governor of Kermanshah confirms the Ottoman ambassador's suspicion that part of Iran's prevention of the Jafs from entering Iran may have been to force them to officially seek refuge in Iran and settle there. Especially as will be discussed in the next chapter, simultaneously in the Kurdish areas of Azerbaijan province, some of the Kurdish tribes on the frontier were causing many problems for Iran because of their participation in the Hamidiye

[633] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 668, 2 Cemâziyelâhir 1317.
[634] **GESIO.**, vol., IV No. 669, 8 Cemâziyelâhir 1317.
[635] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 671, 16 Cemâziyelâhir 1317.
[636] **BOA. DH.ŞFR**., No. 256/11 (11 Shubat 1316/24 Shubat 1901), as cited in Özbaş, **op. cit.**, p. 116.
[637] **BOA. DH.MKT**., No. 598/26; **BOA. BEO.**, No. 1938/145344; **BOA. DH.ŞFR**., No. 296/57. **BOA. DH.TMIK.M.**, No. 136/38 as cited in Özbaş, **op. cit.**, p. 117.

cavalry and their military strengthening. So, Iran, while being in chaos with the tribes of Azerbaijan, wanted to attract the Jafs or at least avoid making problems with them too. On October 18, 1902, the Ottoman Interior Ministry was informed that Iran assembled soldiers in Mariwan; located in the east of Gulanbar, and some military officials from Iran met Mahmud Pasha, and his brother Osman Pasha.[638] A few days later, Muzaffar al-Din Shah decorated Mahmud Pasha with a jeweled sword and sent him the following message:

> Because the good intentions of Mahmud Pasha Jaf have reached the headquarters of His Majesty the Shah, the Shah is pleased with his loyalty. So, to show our approval, we honored him by giving him an ornate sword in the second rank to put on his waist and be proud of among his peers and friends.[639]

As mentioned below, despite the conflicts Iranian officials had with the Jaf tribe, they granted decorations to Mahmud and Osman Pashas several times which caused anxiety among the Ottomans. Later Mahmud Pasha's proximity with the Iranian officials made him one of the main characters to assist Prince Salar al-Dawla while he tried to overthrow the rule of Constitutionalism and become the Shah of Iran (chapter V).

3.1.2. State's Favorite Chief, Osman Pasha, and His Suspicious Relations

As mentioned above, in 1888, by a decree from Istanbul, the Porte took back the tribal chieftaincy and the governorship of Gulanbar from Mahmud Pasha and gave it to his brother Osman Pasha who was two years younger. This political change divided the tribe and created a conflict between the two brothers that lasted for the rest of their lives. Unlike Mahmud Pasha, Osman Pasha being inclined to settle down, was preferred by both the Ottoman Empire and Iran. While Mahmud Pasha directly supervised the summer migration of his tribe from the southern tip of

[638] **BOA. DH.TMIK.M**., No. 136/3.
[639] Hasan Beg Jaf, introduction to Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 63. Also see **BOA. Y.A.RES.**, No. 127/2, 2 Cemâziyelevvel 1322.

Qzilrabat to Penjwen and from there to Saqiz in the Kurdistan province of Iran,[640] Osman Pasha did not take his tribe to such a deep extent into the Iranian border.

When Mahmud Pasha was invited to Istanbul, the Ottoman authorities tried to implement the plan to settle the Jaf tribe[641] and Osman Pasha was able to strengthen his power and establish good relations with the Ottoman authorities and Iran. This enabled him to rule for about 20 years, from 1888 to 1908, as the governor of Gulanbar and the head of some of the Jaf clans. From the early years of his chieftaincy, by providing guarantees, he was able to secure the approval of Iranian officials to allow the tribe to move to the pastures of Sinna and Kermanshah in the summer. Osman Pasha was able to make a better administration for the tribe and the district of Gulanbar and initially played an important role in directing and ruling the uncontrollable clans of the tribe which was to the Ottoman government and Iranian officials' satisfaction in the frontier.[642]

However, in June 1891, Osman Pasha, built a nomadic camp in a border area around Mariwan, as he claimed to the Iranians it was with the permission of the Ottoman authorities.[643] The Iranian Foreign Ministry protested the move at the Ottoman ambassador, declaring the area was part of Iran, but despite Iran's protests against Osman Pasha and the Jafs, in October of the same year, the Shah presented Osman Pasha with a jeweled sword. To avoid the Ottomans suspecting his political loyalty, Osman Pasha informed the governor of Mosul of the matter and asked him whether to accept or reject the gift.[644] The following year, the governor of Mariwan, Zafar al-Mulk, stationed a military force in the Mariwan fortress to prevent any riots by the Jafs. As expected, the concentration of military forces along the frontiers by each of the Ottoman Empire and Iran created anxiety in the other state. In this regard,

[640] Soane, **To Mesopotamia**, p. 273.
[641] **BOA. DH.MKT**., No. 1820/63.
[642] **BOA. DH.MKT.**, No. 1754/49.
[643] Mariwan is located east of Qizilja (present-day Penjwen), which was one of the Jaf quarters on the Ottoman side, the distance between them is less than 20 kilometers. In Mariwan there is Zrebar Lake and a plain suitable for annual grazing.
[644] **BOA. İ.DH.**, No. 1252/98189, 6 Rebîülâhir 1309; **BOA. DH.MKT**., No. 1510/109.

the governor of Mosul informed the Ottoman Interior Ministry of the seriousness of the matter.[645]

Despite complaints from the Iranian authorities about the tribe's migration, based on Osman Pasha's guarantees to control the behavior of the Jaf tribe, the Iranians allowed the tribe to move to their summer resorts until 1894.[646] However, in 1895, because Osman Pasha failed to control the tribe and the "plunder and looting" of the tribe continued inside Iranian territory, Tehran ordered the border authorities to stop the Jafs from entering the summer resorts of Kurdistan and Kermanshah provinces.[647] Iran's decision created serious concerns among Ottoman officials. To resolve the issue there were several discussions and exchanges of letters between the Porte, Mosul, Sulaymaniyah, the ambassador in Tehran, the Ottoman Consul in Sinna, and Osman Pasha. The Ottoman ambassador, again insisted that Iran's intention in preventing the Jafs from moving between the two countries was to leave them without pastures and force them to migrate to the Iranian pastures forever.[648] The governor of Mosul warned the Porte that Iran's prevention of Jafs from migrating to Iran could lead to serious problems between the two states. To this end, the governor appointed the mutassarif of Sulaymaniyah to obtain information from Osman Pasha about Iran's claims. Rejecting claims over his behavior, Osman Pasha in return reminded the Ottoman authorities that he had received three letters of appreciation from Iran for his past efforts to control the tribe and prevent trouble.[649]

Based on the above discussions, the Ottoman ambassador in Tehran defended Osman Pasha's approach and insisted that he had entered Iran with the official permission of the Shah and during his chieftaincy, he did not allow the tribe to do anything illegal, and if anything, insignificant happened, it was resolved through the Ottoman consulate in Sinna. The Ottoman ambassador, while pointing out that the summer migration of Jafs to Iran had not been prevented in the past 200 years, called on the Iranian authorities not to prevent them in the future. He added that:

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[645] **BOA. DH.SFR**., No. 155/8.
[646] **BOA. BEO**., No. 576/43169, 14 Shubat 1895.
[647] **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 386, 6 Zilkade 1312.
[648] **BOA. BEO**., No. 576/43169, 14 Shubat 1895. As cited in Özbas, **op. cit.**, pp. 108-109.
[649] **BOA. BEO**., No. 598/44837/12, 20 Shubat 1310; **BOA. BEO**., 598/44837/16, 21 Şubat 1310, as cited in Özbas, **op. cit.**, p. 112.

> The Sublime Porte is very anxiously waiting for a clear order from the authorities to everyone not to prevent the tribe from going to the Kurdistan resorts and to allow them to return to the areas they went to before as in previous years.[650]

In response, the Iranian Foreign Ministry, despite denying that the Jafs had ever entered Iran legally, accepted to allow Jafs to migrate to Iran temporarily in the summer if the Ottoman Empire officially promised to bear all the damages that the Jafs in Iran might cause.[651] In contrast, trying to avoid irritating Iran again, the Porte, warned the Mosul governorate to take necessary measures to prevent unwanted incidents during the migration of Jafs to Iran and their return.[652]

3.1.3. Adila Khanum, a Pro-Iran Lady Among the Ottoman Jaf's Ruling Family

With the return of Mahmud Pasha in 1895, a new challenge arose within the tribe. As mentioned above, with his second return from Istanbul, Mahmud Pasha's power over the Jaf nomadic clans became stronger than ever. This caused a division of power within the tribe between Osman and Mahmud Pashas. While Mahmud Pasha was in charge of the nomadic clans, Osman Pasha took over Gulanbar, Halabja, and Shahrazur. He became wealthy and politically powerful and their brother Muhammad Ali lived in Qizil Rabat where he owned a lot of land and fields.[653] Until then, Osman Pasha was the favorite chief of the Ottoman authorities in the region. However, due to his second marriage to Adila Khanum, the state's power decreased over the part of the tribe, which was administered by Osman Pasha.

Adila Khanum was from an aristocratic family of Ardalan in Sinna who had a strong loyalty to Iran.[654] According to Soane, who spent several months at the palace of Osman Pasha, Osman Pasha's marriage to Adila Khanum upset Ottoman officials in the region.[655] Soane points out that after coming to Gulanbar, Adila Khanum built two palaces in the architectural style of Sinna, which even were better than all the

[650] **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 386, 6 Zilkade 1312.
[651] **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 387, 16 Zilkade 1312.
[652] **BOA. BEO**., No. 598/44836, 15 Şevval 1312.
[653] Soane, **To Mesopotamia**, p. 280.
[654] **Ibid.**, 281.
[655] **Ibid**, p. 275.

buildings in Sulaymaniyah, and she brought craftsmen and workers from Iran. In Halabja (the center of the Gulanbar district) she lived in her palace which was open to all those who came and went from Iran and was in constant contact with Sinna. When Osman Pasha was away, while visiting Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk, and Mosul for official duties, Adila Khanum managed the affairs in his place. She built a new prison, a new court, and a covered Bazaar in Halabja, which made the city an important center and she gradually took control over most of Osman Pasha's power.[656]

According to Zeki Beg, all the servants around Adila Khanum were Iranians and all her transactions were in Persian. Through her intelligence and skill, she was able to dominate Osman Pasha and all his affairs in Shahrazur and control the Jaf tribe in such a way that no government order could be implemented without consulting her. She also had power among the Iranian tribes and the Ardalan region, where some of them regarded her as their chief.[657] During this period, Halabja became an important and prosperous city which made the Ottoman authorities build telegraph wires so they could keep an eye on it as far as Soane considered. However, unsatisfied with the Ottoman interference, Adila Khanum ordered Jafs to cut the telegraph line. [658]At the same time, Adila advised the Ottoman authorities not to repair it, for she too objected to the incursion of Turks upon her territory, and warned them that as fast as they built up telegraph wires her people will cut them down.[659]

Soane also points out that she had a special affection for Iran, her retinues were all Iranians and she never allowed Turkish to be spoken in front of her. She was also in constant contact with the ruling families of Sinna, sending her children to Iran for vacation every year and owning a lot of wealth and land there, which was not acceptable to the Ottoman authorities.[660]

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[656] Soane, **To Mesopotamia**, p. 276.
[657] Zeki Beg, Sulaymaniyah we Anhaiha, p. 184.
[658] Soane, **To Mesopotamia**, p. 274; also see **BOA. DH.MKT.** 2632 62 1326 Ramazan 21.
[659] Soane, **op. cit.**, p. 274
[660] Soane, **Raportêk leser Slêmani**, pp. 130-131. It is worth mentioning that she played a major role in the reconstruction of Halabja. As Soane pointed out: "in a remote corner of the Turkish Empire, which decays and retrogrades, is one little spot, which, under the rule of a Kurdish woman has risen



Figure 4. Adila Kanum, his son Ahmad Beg, Jafer Sultan of Hawraman, and their Men. (Source: Edmonds, op. cit., p.532.)

The great power of Adila Khanum as a person close to Iran, that she had established through Osman Pasha among the Jaf tribe and Gulanbar district urged the Ottoman authorities to consider replacing Osman Pasha as governor of Gulanbar, which he held for nearly 20 years. Zeki Beg considers this to be the only reason why the Ottoman authorities thought about overthrowing Osman Pasha.[661] However, in previous years, there have been several reports about Osman Pasha's weakness in power, poor governance, financial corruption, monopolization of public property, and financial embezzlement.[662] Therefore, all these factors led the Porte to consider appointing a replacement for Osman Pasha as the governor of Gulanbar. In June 1907, a year before his removal from the governorship, he was summoned to Mosul for questioning and was detained there for nine months[663] till he returned to office in February 1908.[664] In August 1908, the governor of Mosul asked Istanbul to replace

from a village to be a town, and one hillside, once barren, now sprinkled with gardens." Soane, **To Mesopotamia**, p. 276.
[661] **BOA. DH.SFR**., No. 312 79; **BOA. DH.SFR**., No. 313/42; **BOA. DH.SFR**., No. 314/84.
[662] **BOA. DH.SFR**., No. 312/79; **BOA. DH.SFR**., No. 313/42; **BOA. DH.SFR**., No. 314/84.
[663] **BOA. DH. ŞFR.**, No. 382/66.
[664] **BOA. DH. ŞFR.**, No. 392/106, 22 Kânunisani 1323.

Osman Pasha with someone who could go in line with the mood of the Jafs.[665] Accordingly, in December 1908, the Porte decided to appoint Abdul Fattah Effendi, a Jaf tribal official who had been a civil servant in Beirut.[666] However, for an unknown reason, this did not work, and in 1908, Ismail Haqi Effendi, governor of Charshanba, was appointed in place of Osman Pasha.[667] Thus for the first time in 40 years, the governorship of Gulanbar, which was the center of the Jafs, was handed over to someone outside the tribe. In response, in March 1909, about 50 prominent figures of the city, some of whom were Jaf Begzades, sent a letter to Grand Vizier demanding the return of Osman Pasha to his position or at least someone from the Jafs to be appointed as the Kaimakam of the district.[668] However, Osman Pasha died in October 1909 and his eldest son Majid Beg officially succeeded him in leading the tribe[669] who was also the governor of Gulanbar for several months.[670] After the death of Osman Pasha, Adila Khanum's role in the Jaf tribe increased. Over the years, through land acquisition and money raising, her family became the owner of a lot of property that has been passed down to their descendants. Adila Khanum, whose sons were officially the heads of part of the tribe, became the de facto authority over that part of the tribe and played a major role in the region until the years after World War I, till the British gave her the title of Bahadur during the new Iraq era.[671]

The Jaf tribe continued as the largest Kurdish tribal confederation until after World War I. Karim Beg, the last chief of the federation states: "*I was appointed as the last chief of the Jaf Federation in 1919 by the British government and the federation continued until 1925 when it ended.*[672] Although the federation lasted until 1925, the Jaf chiefs had lost their influence over the tribe in the years before World War I due to the settlement of the Jafs. The tribe's movement between the Ottoman Empire and Iran decreased. Although the Jaf Begzades had acquired considerable

[665] **BOA. DH. ŞFR**., No. 406/59, 19 Teşrinievvel 1324.
[666] **BOA. DH.MKT**., No. 2677/70, 13 Zilkade 1326.
[667] **BOA. DH.MKT**., No. 2694/10, 4 Zilhicce 1326.
[668] **BOA. DH.MKT**., No. 2768/28, 22 Şevval 1324.
[669] Soane, **To Mesopotamia**, No. 279.
[670] Adil Sdiq, **Çend Lapereyek le Mejui Helebce**, Sulaymaniyah, 2011, p. 176.
[671] Edmonds, **op. cit.**, pp. 201, 448-449, 457-459.
[672] Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 203.

property, they had little power over the nomadic tribes outside of government office duties.[673]

3.2. THE HAMAWAND TRIBE IN THE BORDER CONFLICTS

Hamawand is a Kurdish tribe that lived in the areas between Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk, and Kermanshah. Despite being a small tribe in terms of the number of its families, they had a major impact on the Ottoman-Iranian relations and the instability of the border between the two states. Historical sources in the late 19th century estimated the number of households of the tribe at around 1,000.[674] They lived mainly in Bazian and Chamchamal regions, between Sulaymaniyah and Kirkuk. During the time they migrated to Iran, they stayed in the Zahab region. However, on both sides of the frontier, they were a source of instability for the people, the government, and all the trade caravans that traveled between Mosul, Baghdad, and Kermanshah. In the 1880s, the Chalabi clan of the tribe, which included two prominent figures, Jwamer Agha and Faqe Qadir, played an important role in the border events between the Ottoman Empire and Iran.

The Hamawand consisted of five main clans, which were divided into smaller branches. The main clans were Chalabi, Rashawand, Ramawand, Safarwand, and Setabasar.[675] The dialect of the Hamawand is Gorani, the name of the tribe and its clans prove that the tribe originated in Kermanshah, and from there they migrated to Bazian and Chamchamal.[676] This tribe always supported the Baban emirate in the wars and confrontations with the governor of Baghdad. After the collapse of the

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[673] Edmonds, **op. cit.**, p. 149.

[674] Gerard estimates their households to be around 1000, **BL. IOR/L/PS/20/202**, "M. G. GERARD, **Notes of a journey through Kurdistan in the winter of 1881-82.**' [56/7v], (14), p. 10. However, Tweedie estimates their number to be 500 houses. See Major-General William Tweedie, **The Arabian Horse**, **his country and his people**, **with portraits of typical or famous Arabians and other illustrations**, **also a map of the country of the Arabian horse**, **and a descriptive glossary of Arabic words and proper names**, William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh & London, 1894, vol. I, p. 284.

[675] Zeki Beg, **Tarikh-i Sulaymaniyah**, p. 187.

[676] Major Soane and Zeki Beg, indicate that the tribe's dialect is Kurmanji, (See Soane, **Notes on the Tribes**, p. 12; Zeki Beg, **Tarikh-i Sulaymaniyah**, 188.), but the truth is that the dialect of speaking of the Hamawands is Gorani and the poems of Faqe Qadir Hamawand, who wrote in Gorani, confirms that fact. For Faqih Qadir's poems see Faqih Qadir-i Hamawand, **Komele Shiri-i Faqê Qadiri Hamawand**, (Diwan-i Faqê Qadir-i Hamawand) collected and edited by Malla Abdulkarim Mudarris & Muhammad Mallah Karim, Baghdad, 1980.

emirate, they revolted against Ottoman rule several times in the second half of the 19th century. After the Crimean War, the tribe failed in their confrontation with the government and fled to Iran, where they stayed for seven years. From there, they continued to attack the areas they passed through, as far as the Hamrin Mountains. In 1862, the governor of Baghdad allowed the tribe to return to Bazian and settle there, but soon they revolted again during the reign of Namiq Pasha, the governor of Baghdad, and this time they took refuge in Iran for two years, and resided in Zahab.[677] While Midhat Pasha was the governor of Baghdad, despite taking several security and military measures to prevent the Hamawands from entering the Ottoman territories, the Ottoman authorities instructed Mohammed Pasha Jaf to prevent the Hamwands from crossing the border and entering Kirkuk, Salahiya, and Sulaymaniyah.[678]

During the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, along with the participation of Sheikh Saeed Barzanji and some other tribes, the Hamawand tribe also went with the call of jihad and participated in the war alongside the Ottomans. They served as auxiliary and infantry forces in the Ottoman army and all received Martini weapons.[679] As for the number of participants, Sykes states: "*In 1878, 600 Hamawand horsemen armed only with lances penetrated far into the Caucasus, and brought back immense spoils*".[680] After the war ended, while the region was going through a security vacancy, the Hamawands, who returned with Martini weapons and spoils, gained more power and influence over the region. Journalistic reports and official reports sent to Istanbul in the years following the Russo-Turkish War indicate an increase in the attacks and looting of the Hamawand tribe on the border areas and their neighboring regions.[681] The Times of India in August 1880 reported from Baghdad that the Hamawand had repeatedly looted the area around Kirkuk and

[677] Zeki Beg, **Tarikh-i Sulaymaniyah**, p. 190.
[678] Adem Kormaz, "Midhat Paşa'nin Bağdat Valiliği (1869-1872)." **Tarih Dergisi** 49 (2009): 113-178, pp.150, 165.
[679] **BL. IOR/L/PS/20/202**, "M. G. GERARD, **Notes of a journey through Kurdistan in the winter of 1881-82.**' [56/7v], (14), p.10.
[680] Sykes, **op. cit.**, p. 456.
[681] See Al-Zawra Newspaper No. 787, 22 Shawwal 1296. See a report on the plundering activities by the Hamawands in Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah in, **Friend of India and Statesman** - Wednesday 25 August 1880, p. 6. See details about the siege of Sulaymaniyah by the Hamawands in; **Civil & Military Gazette** (Lahore), Saturday 04 September 1880, p. 4.

Sulaymaniyah. According to the report, the road between Baghdad and Kermanshah was very unsafe because of the Hamawand, and all the efforts of the Ottoman forces to end the insecurity and overcome the Hamawand had been fruitless. The military forces have failed in several previous clashes between them.[682] What made it difficult to deal with the Hamawand, Soane points out, was that the Hamawand practiced guerrilla warfare, which irritated not only the state but also the major surrounding tribes in the region.[683]

Though there is no historical evidence regarding the relationship between Hamawands and Sheikh Ubeidullah, during his rebellion, the Hamawand tribe, led by Jwamer Agha and Faqe Qadir with the Bajalan tribe led by Aziz Bey, moved to Qasr-i Shirin and involved in some conflicts with Iranian tribes.[684] Mulk Niaz Khan, the governor of Qasr-i Shirin, tried to stop Hamawand but he was killed in a clash with them and his force was defeated.[685]

One of the difficulties facing the solution to border instability was that mobilization of forces by one state created sensitivities in the other state. So when Prince Zil al-Sultan who was ruling Kurdistan, Kermanshah, Lurstan, and Hamadan provinces from Isfahan, prepared an army to suppress the Hamawand rebellion, the Porte warned the Iranian embassy in Istanbul, Mu'in al-Mulk, and the Ottoman ambassador in Tehran, Fahri Bey, threatened that if Iran gathered forces on the Kermanshah border, the Ottoman Army would be ready to move toward the border. Later it was only through the mediation of the British embassy in Tehran, Zil al-Sultan assured the Ottomans that the use of force was only to punish and discipline the local tribes. To provide further assurance, Zil al-Sultan also proposed to the Ottomans that an officer with the rank of brigadier general to accompany the Iranian forces and monitor military activities. The Ottoman ambassador gladly accepted the offer and Colonel Ferid Bey joined the Iranian punitive campaign against

[682] **The Times of India**, 20 August 1880, p. 2.
[683] Soane, **Raportêk leser Slêmani**, pp. 136-137.
[684] Masoud Mirza Zil al-Sultan, **Khatirat-e Zil al-Sultan (Serguzesht-e Masudi)**, Intisharat-e Asatir, 1368, vol. II, p. 640.
[685] Sarteep Muhammad Amin, **Hamawand le Sardami Dewleti Osmanida**, Sulaymaniyah, 2008, p. 67.

Hamawands.[686] During the campaign, in addition to arresting the chief of the Bajalan tribe, the Kermanshah army also arrested the chiefs of other major Kurdish tribes such as the Kalhur, Gorani, and Karandi while Sayyid Rostam, one of the Yarsan clerics, fled with his men to the Ottoman side.[687] Jwamer Agha and the Hamawand also fled to the Ottoman side before returning soon after.

When Jwamer Agha fled to the Ottoman side, Sheikh Ubeidullah's revolution had just ended. Mirza Saeed Khan, the foreign minister, instructed his country's embassy in Istanbul to warn the Porte that the harboring of the fugitive chiefs of the Mangor, Shikak, and Hamawand tribes was contrary to the peace agreements that date back to the Safavid period between the two states. Saeed Khan also accused the Ottoman authorities of sheltering Jwamer Agha while he had killed Iranian "colonel and the guardian of the frontier Malik Niaz Khan" and he kept looting and killing Iranian caravans and travelers as far as Saeed was concerned.[688] However, as will be explained below, Jwamer Agha soon returned to Iran and the case was reversed.

3.2.1. Assassinating Muhammad Pasha Jaf and the Fight between Jafs and Hamawands

The conflict between two tribes would not generally have ended as a social problem, but it would have often resulted in bloodshed, occupation, and displacement of some social group that brought the local authorities or sometimes the neighboring state to become involved. When these border riots occurred and one side was forcing the other to move to the frontier or it happened between two tribes each belonging to a different country, in both cases, it would have become a problem between the two countries. The conflicts on the border, in addition to affecting the demarcation of the borderline, also harmed trade and customs convoys. As will be discussed below, the fight between the Jafs and the Hamawand was one of the issues that led to a series of subsequent events between the two states. As it was mentioned in brief in the first section, in 1881 Muhammad Pasha, the chief of the Jaf, was

[686] Zil al-Sultan, **op. cit.**, p. 640-641.
[687] **Ibid.**, 644.
[688] The letter is available in Hama Baqi, **Shorshi Sheikh Ubeidullah**, pp. 159-162.

assassinated by the relatives of the chief of the Shatri clan in revenge for the death of their chief who had previously been imprisoned by Muhammad Pasha until he died in prison under unknown circumstances. Mahmud Pasha, the eldest son of Muhammad Pasha succeeded his father and immediately attacked the Shatris with several other Jaf clans to avenge his father's death. In the absence of state protection, the Shatris sought refuge with two prominent Hamawand chiefs: Faqe Qadir in Chamchamal and Jwamer Agha in Bazian, the latter of whom gave them refuge.[689]

At first, Jwamer Agha refused to hand over the killers to Jafs and defeated them in an encounter near Gil(?).[690] However, Mahmud Pasha then marched with a large army, which according to Karim Beg consisted of 3500 horsemen, toward Darikeli and Baroyi (two villages of Bazian), which were the place of the Hamawands.[691] Before the confrontation between the Jafs and the Hamawands, the Hamawands were in rebellion in the areas around Sulaymaniyah. Earlier in the same year, they had laid siege to Sulaymaniyah for four days, but the government was able to break the siege only after sending three battalions, two of which remained in the area until the next year.[692]

The governor of Baghdad, Takeddin Pasha, who had previously failed to overcome the Hamawand rebellion and plunder completely, took advantage of the conflict between the two tribes and supported the Jaf against the Hamawand. Soane and Karim Beg indicate that he sent an army to support the Jafs.[693] Unable to confront the large force of Jafs, Jwamer Agha moved to Kirkuk with the Shatri tribe and from there fled to Qasr-i Shirin.[694] While, based on political agreements, state forces could not enter the status quo region to follow the Hamawands and Shatris, the Jafs followed them as far as the Dalahou Mount in western Kermanshah, 70 kilometers deep in the Iranian territory, where a battle broke out. According to Sanjabi, despite the skill and expertise of the Hamawand and the difficulty of the

[689] Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 181.
[690] Soane, **Notes on the Tribes**, p. 15.
[691] Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 183.
[692] **BL. IOR/L/PS/20/202**, "M. G. GERARD, **Notes of a journey through Kurdistan in the winter of 1881-82.**', [56/7v] (14), p.38.
[693] Soane, **Notes on the Tribes**, p. 15; According to Karim Beg the troops sent by the Vali were 1000 men. Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 183.
[694] Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 183

Dalahou Mount, the avengers of Muhammad Pasha succeeded and killed about 30 of the Hamawand notables and chiefs and looted their houses.[695] After the battle, the Jafs beheaded the corpses of the brother and cousins of Jwamer Agha, brought them back to Kalar, and handed them over to Colonel Shamsi Beg, the Ottoman commander.[696]

3.2.2. Jwamer Agha Hamawand as the Guardian of the Frontier

While the Ottomans supported the Jafs and chased the Hamawands, on the Iranian side, the governor of Kermanshah, Nasr al-Mulk after hearing the news of the unrest, prepared an army to confront Jwamer Agha and capture him because the Hamawands were previously fugitives and were responsible for the murder of Malik Niaz Khan. If one believes the poet laureate of the governor of Kermanshah, after realizing that he could not face the Iranian army, Jwamer Agha had no choice but to apologize and ask for refuge.[697] Nasr al-Mulk, in return, agreed to give him asylum and allow him to stay in Kermanshah on the condition that he should go to Prince Zil al-Sultan in Isfahan, so, if the prince did not object to Jwamer's stay in Kermanshah, he would allow him too.[698] Meanwhile, according to a report sent to Istanbul by an Ottoman agent in the Iranian army, Nasr al-Mulk, because the Ottomans had sheltered Sheikh Ubeidullah and had not handed him over to Iran, guaranteed the Hamawands they would not be surrendered to the Ottomans.[699]

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[695] Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 21.
[696] Karim Beg, **op. cit.**, p. 184.
[697] One of the sources used in this section is a book of poetry called Fatihname-ye Hisam al-Mulk, written by Mirza Ahmad al-Hami of Kermanshah on the recommendation of Hisam al-Mulk, the governor of Kermanshah. The book consists of 1565 verses and describes the events that took place between the Hamawands and the governor of Kermanshah, which ended with the assassination of Jwamer Agha, the chief of the Hamawand tribe, by Hisam-al-Mulk. Although the book is written in a subjective and biased language and tries to justify the killing of Jwamer Agha, it also contains many details about the events. This study relies on the translated copy of the book reprinted in the appendix of Sarteep Muhammad Ammen, **op. cit.** Mirza Ahmad Elhami, **Fatihname-i Hisamulmulk**, trans by Amir Karim Nazhad, printed as an attachment in Sarteep Muhammad, **op. cit.**, pp. 81-108.
[698] Nafisa al-Sadat Abdul Baqayi, "Nuskhaye Khatiyya Fatihnama-ye Hisamulmulk Asar-e Ahmad Kirmansha-i", **Majmua-e Maqalahay-e Dahomin Homayash-e Beynulmilaliye Tarvij-I Zaban-e Farsi**, 4-6 Shahrivermah 1394, 109.
[699] **BOA. HR.SFR**., No. 7/25.

For this purpose, Jwamer Agha went to Isfahan with 200 horsemen to see Prince Zil al-Sultan, where he met him a few days after his arrival. Later, despite sheltering him, Zil al-Sultan granted him the rank of colonel (*sarhang*) and the title of Khan and appointed him the guardianship of the border in Qasr-i Shirin, which was one of the most important routes of commercial and religious caravans between Kermanshah and Baghdad with 6,000 Nassirian coins as a salary [700] while the Hamawand tribe had been regarded as the biggest threat to the trade routes between Kermanshah, Baghdad, Kirkuk, and Sulaymaniyah for decades. The British Lieutenant Maunsell commented on the granting the Guardianship of the frontier to Jwamir Agha as a paradox "*on the principle of setting a thief to catch a thief*"[701] which worked. Jwamer Agha was able to provide security in the region in a short time. According to Kermanshahi, for the first two years, he was promoted in rank in return for his services and good behavior. Gradually he became the governor of the entire Zahab region and was promoted from Colonel to Brigadier General.[702] At the same time, he built a palace in Qasr-i Shirin, rebuilt the city, and constructed a new market surrounded by stone walls.[703] Because it was not easy for the state to move forces to the frontier due to Ottoman objection, instead Jwamer Agha was able to control the border areas of Zahab and overcame the problems of the tribal opponents of the state. While Jwamer Agha was ruling in Qasr-i Shirin, the Goran tribe rebelled against the state but Jwamer Agha was able to end the uprising, capture their leader, Falamarz Sultan, and hand him over to Prince Zil al-Sultan, who killed him after receiving orders from Naser al-Din Shah.[704] By defeating his neighbouring tribes such as Goran, Jwamer was not only subduing the state's enemies but also removing

[700] Kirmashani, **op. cit.**, p. 87. According to Curzon, Jwamer Agha was hired with 3000 Toman salary. See Curzon, **op. cit.**, p. 276.
[701] **BL. Mss Eur F112/396/2**, "Reconnaissances in Mesopotamia, Kurdistan, North-West Persia, and Luristan from April to October 1888" British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers, Simla: Printed at the Government Central Printing Office. 1890, vol. I; Narrative Report, Description of Larger Towns and Routes Leading from them, p. 67.
[702] Kirmanshahi, **op. cit.**, p. 87.
[703] Maunsell, **op. cit.**, p. 67.
[704] Sarteep Muhammad Amin, **op. cit.**, p. 89. Sanjabi points out that when Zil al-Sultan tried to go to the border with an army to discipline Faramarz Sultan, the Ottoman ambassador, Fahri Bey, strongly protested and threatened that if they sent troops to the border, the Ottomans would do the same. Eventually, through the Britons, Iran was able to get the approval of the Ottoman Empire to send troops to end the border tensions. Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 62. Also see Zil al-Sultan, **op. cit.**, p. 645.

his classic rivals from the political scene until he became the most dominant power in the region. Regarding his increasing power Zil al-Sultan states;

> The Hamawand tribe, whose leaders were Jwamer and Faqe Qadir, had taken over Zahab and the surrounding areas of Kermanshah, which made them to be a genuine capable authority.[705]



Figure 5. Jwamer Agha, his sons, and some of his men in his palace in Qasr-i Shirin.

While Jwamer Agha played a positive role in ensuring peace in the Zahab and Qasr-i Shirin regions on the Iranian side, according to reports sent to Istanbul he continued to loot and plunder on the Ottoman side.[706] In 1882, Gerard noted that the areas around Sulaymaniyah were very unsafe because of the Hamawands and that in mid-March the caravans were looted twice a week. He adds that in March a caravan of 500 strong men which, relying on its numbers, tried to come from Kifri, was completely looted, muleteers even stripped of clothes.[707]

While Jwamer Agha was living on the Iranian side, Faqe Qadir Hamawand, who headed a part of the Hamawands in Chamchamal, replaced him as the most

[705] Zil al-Sultan, **op. cit.**, p. 633.
[706] See **BOA. HR.SYS**., No. 82/71.
[707] Gerard, **op. cit.**, p. 38.

prominent figure of the Hamawand. Faqe Qadir was a Kurdish poet who wrote several books in the fields of theology, Sufism, and nationalism, some of which have been collected in a literary collection.[708] He was a member of the Chamchamal administration[709] council for 15 years but spent several years in prisons in Mosul, Baghdad, and Kirkuk.[710] He wrote some of his writings in prison, as he mentions in some of his poems.[711]

In late 1884, the activities of the Hamawands reached their peak. On December 24, the British consulate in Mosul sent an embarrassing letter to the Ottoman Foreign Ministry. According to the content, the local authorities had not yet been able to control the Hamawand tribe, which continued to rebel despite the presence of military forces. Caravans were constantly looted and stripped naked. The roads between Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk, and Salahiya were not safe. In return, the Porte sent the same letter to the Interior Ministry to take the necessary measures to resolve the situation.[712] Because it was impossible and non-practical for the states to arrest all members of the tribe, Ottoman and Iranian officials blamed the tribal chiefs for the looting and attacks on the trade caravans. The Ottomans, for their part, launched a new campaign to arrest the Hamawands. At the same time, they accused the Iranians of harboring Jwamer Agha and treating him well, while he would loot from time to time from the Ottoman side.[713] Meanwhile, Britain's growing influence and interests in the region led them to give political advice to the Ottomans to confront the Hamawands. Especially, in the following years, the Britons discovered oil for the first time near Qasr-i Shirin, which was an area of Hamawand influence. According to Farhang newspaper, in 1885 the Britons helped the Ottomans by giving them political advice to control the Hamawands and chase them to the Iranian border.[714] With the tightening of the Ottoman policy toward the Hamawand, Iran’s

[708] **Komele Shiri-i Faqê Qadiri Hamawand**, (Diwan-i Faqê Qadir-i Hamawand) collected and edited by Mullah Abdulkarim Mudarris & Muhammad Mallah Karim, Baghdad, 1980.
[709] **BOA. HR.TO**., No. 392/40, as cited in Hemin Omer Khoshnaw, **Faqe Qadri Hamawand le Belgenamay Osmani w Qajarda**, Erbil & Soran, 2012, p. 16.
[710] Khoshnaw, **op. cit.**, p. 90; **Komele Shiri-i Faqê Qadiri Hamawand**, p. 20.
[711] **Komele Shiri-i Faqê Qadiri Hamawand**, passim.
[712] **BOA. HR.TO**., No. 261/114.
[713] **BOA. Y.A.HUS**., No. 184/106.
[714] **Farhang** (Kermanshah), No. 384, 31 August 1886, pp. 2-3.

policy toward the Kurdish tribes on the Iranian side also entered a new stage. In 1885, Hisam al-Mulk was appointed governor of Kermanshah. His time in office was not a good period for the Kurdish tribes. During this period, many Kurdish tribal chiefs were arrested or killed, and their property was confiscated.[715]

3.2.3. The Divide and Rule Policy: The Expulsion of Faqe Qadir by Jawamer Agha

As mentioned above, Faqe Qadir was the most prominent figure of the Hamawand who remained in the Ottoman territory. However, as a result of pressures from the Ottoman authorities, in August 1886, Faqe Qadir with a group of the hamawand cavalrymen and their families crossed the Iranian border and settled in the Zahab region but Iran refused to accept them.[716] In the following October, the Ottoman Embassy in Tehran pressured the Iranians to hand over Faqe Qadir and his companions to the Ottoman authorities.[717] From the beginning of his governance, as Hisam al-Mulk admits, he tried to create conflict between Jwamer Agha, Faqe Qadir, and two other Hamawand tribes (Rashwand and Setabasar).[718] Accordingly, at the request of Hisam al-Mulk, Jwamer Agha banished Faqe Qadir and his men to the border areas. Two months later, however, rumors reached the Iranians that Faqe Qadir and Hama Sulaiman, also one of Hamawand's nobles, was still in Iran.[719] Previously, Hisam al-Mulk had adopted a harsh policy toward the tribes around Kermanshah, and the growing power of Jwamer Agha was also troublesome to him. Therefore, through his reports to Isfahan and Tehran, he questioned the sincerity and seriousness of Jwamer Agha in expelling Faqe Qadir and the Hamawands who accompanied him. So, he formed a force from the other Kurdish tribes such as Zangana, Sanjabi, Kalhur, Gorani, and Kuliani to expel Faqe Qadir and the Hamawands from Iran. However, Jwamer Agha told the governor that he did not

[715] Mutalib Mutalibi, "Masalah-e Ahmadvandha der Devre-ye Hukumat-e Zil al-Sultan ber Kirmanshah", **National Library & Archives of I. R. Iran**, Archival Research Institute, Vol. XXVIII, No. 2, Summer 2018, p. 111.
[716] **Farhang** (Kermanshah), No. 384, 31 August 1886, pp. 2-3, as cited in Mutalibi, **op. cit.**, p. 67.
[717] **BOA. DH.MKT**., No. 1370/59.
[718] **SAKMA**. No. 466, byutat; Gozarish-e Hisam al-Mulk Hukmran-e Kirmanshah, der Sal-e 1304, as cited in Ismail Shams, **il-e Hamawand Takiya ber Asnad-e Monteshirneshoda** (Hemawend Tribe According to Unpublished Documents), Nubihar Akademi, 4(16), p. 226.
[719] Mutalibi, **op. cit.**, p. 110.

need any additional forces and that his forces would expel Faqe Qadir and his men from Iran.[720] Further, Jwamer Agha interpreted the arrival of Faqe Qadir and his companions in the Zahab region as an attempt by the Ottomans to create instability in the region and oppose his rule. In a letter to Hisam al-Mulk, Jwamer Agha claimed that the Ottomans met with Faqe Qadir, Hama Sulaiman, and some Jaf chiefs, equipping each man with 200 bullets to come to Zahab and destroy the castle built by him.[721] However, as will become clear below, contrary to Jwamer Agha's claim, the Ottomans were eager to arrest Faqe Qadir and his men.

According to a letter sent from Jwamer Agha to Zil al-Sultan, which Tehran later forwarded to the Ottoman Foreign Ministry, in the clash between the forces of Jwamer Agha and Faqe Qadir, the former managed to defeat Faqe Qadir's force, several people were killed and Faqe Qadir with several persons close to him were wounded and fled to Ottoman side, while the Ottoman forces, despite having prepared 12,000 troops to prevent the Hamawands, took no practical steps.[722] After fleeing to the Ottoman side, Faqe Qadir and 200 of his men sought refuge in the governorate of Mosul. Despite Hamawands being fugitives, because *"Rejecting the refugees is far from the dignity of the Ottoman Empire*", it was proposed to accept anyone who wanted to surrender. However, accepting Faqe Qadir and other Hamawand chiefs was postponed for a while.[723] During this time, as Jwamer Agha claimed, Faqe Qadir met the Ottoman Commander of Musil Muhammad Fazil Pasha in the border areas.[724] However, according to a letter sent from Mosul to the Grand Vizier by the Ottoman Commander Ismail Haqi, Faqe Qadir and Hama Sulaiman were still in the caves on the border until early April 1887. Earlier that month, the Ottoman Empire launched an arrest campaign against the Hamawands, captured as many as 425 of them in Shahrazur, and sent some of the detainees to Mosul prison due to a lack of space.[725] Later Ismail Haqi sent most of them to remote parts of Anatolia (Konya, Adana, Ankara, and Sivas) and others to the Balkans, Tripoli, and

[720] **Farhang** (Kermanshah), 12 Muharram 1304, p. 2, as cited in Mutalibi, **op. cit.**, p. 68.
[721] **SAKMA**. File 7926/295, p. 91, as cited in Xoshnaw, **op. cit.**, p. 165.
[722] **BOA. HR.TO**., No. 104/65.
[723] Xoshnaw, **op. cit.**, p. 67.
[724] According to Jwamer Agha he had received the news through one of his spies that he was present at the meeting. See **SAKMA**, 7866/295, p. 158, as cited in Xoshnaw, **op. cit.**, p. 144.
[725] **BOA. Y.A.HUS**., No. 202/17.

Benghazi.[726] One of those who were sent to Benghazi was Faqe Qadir.[727] Nevertheless, most of them returned to their homeland after being exiled. Dixon claims that he met one of Hamawand's leaders who had been exiled to Tripoli, and he told him that they had returned to the Iranian border from those remote areas only three weeks after being exiled.[728]

After the exile of the Hamawands on the Ottoman side, the property and land they left behind were sold by the state. Apart from agricultural lands, those belonging to Faqe Qadir and another Hamawand chief, and were not used for agriculture were worth 58,450 piastres.[729] Leaving a lot of livestock and agricultural land behind by the Hamawands refutes the view that they were only a plundering group, and contrary to the narrations of the official sources of the Ottoman Empire and Iran about Faqe Qadir, he criticizes the Ottoman Empire and Iran, especially the Ottoman authorities in his poems for the way they treated him. In a poem he wrote before he escaped to Zahab in 1883, describing his three years of "unjust" imprisonment by the Ottoman commander as follows:

(On the Day of Resurrection) it will be said to my adversary: Oh commander!

You unjustly imprisoned him for three years

Why didn't you do any inquiry into my situation?

For your false reputation, you sealed my arrest.[730]

[726] Süleyman Demirci and Fehminaz Çabuk, "Hemavend Kürt aşireti'nin Musul Vilâyeti Ve Osmanlı-İran Sınır, Boylarındaki Eşkıyalık Faaliyetlerine Dair Bir Değerlendirme" (1863-1916), **History Studies** Vol. VII, Issue 3, pp. 39-59, September 2015, P. 41. Also see Xoshnaw, **op. cit.**, p. 73.
[727] Khoshnaw, **op. cit.**, p. 74.
[728] Dickson, Bertram. "Journeys in Kurdistan." **The Geographical Journal**, vol. XXXV, No. 4, 1910, p. 376.
[729] Xoshnaw, **op. cit.**, p. 69.
[730] Faqe Qadir, **op. cit.**, p. 21.

3.2.3. The End of Jwamer Agha: The Ottoman-Iranian Cooperation Against the Hamawands

While Hisam al-Mulk and the Iranian authorities were holding talks with Jwamer Agha to chase Faqe Qadir and his group to the Ottoman side, the governor of Kermanshah proposed a joint plan to be conducted by the Ottoman Empire and Iran to end the influence of the Hamawand tribe. Hisam al-Mulk's plan dates back to the beginning of his appointment as the governor of Kermanshah and consisted of two parts. The first, was to create hostility between Jwamer Agha and Faqe Qadir, as mentioned above. The second was military cooperation between the Ottoman Empire and Iran to end the rule of Jwamer Agha and the Hamawand. According to the plan, the creation of enmity between Jwamer Agha, Faqe Qadir, the Rashavand, and Setabsar tribes would force Faqe Qadir to take refuge on the Ottoman side. After these different parties separated, the Iranians would cooperate with the Ottomans to destroy Jwamer Agha and the remnants of the Hamawands.[731] However, because Jwamer Agha had shown his competence in the face of the arrival of Ottoman tribes, the Iranians were hesitant about whether keep him or remove him from the region especially after he was able to end the threat of Faqe Qadir. He took an oath in a letter he sent to the prime and interior ministers of Iran accompanied by the news of "his victory": "*As long as there is blood in the soul of this worthless man, I will not hesitate to kill my brothers and my sons if they have the slightest treachery in their hearts*."[732] Thus, he was able to please the Iranian authorities for a while. Additionally, on 16 November 1888, in recognition of his role in protecting the borders and areas under his control, the Shah sent him, his brother, his son, and relatives several special garments.[733]

While Jwamer Agha was establishing his position on the Iranian side, the Ottomans, who had exiled the Hamawands, also asked Iran to distance Jwamer Agha from the Ottoman borders, hand him over to the Ottomans, or cooperate to capture

[731] For Hisam al-Mulk's letter, see, Shams, **op. cit.**, pp. 226-227.
[732] The letter available in Mutalibi, **op. cit.**, p. 230.
[733] Farhang (Kermanshah), 18 Safar 1304, as cited in Mutalibi, **op. cit.**, p. 68.

and exile him.[734] For the Ottomans, if Jwamer Agha stayed in the border areas of Zahab and Qasr Shirin, it would create a safe refuge for other Hamawands who might flee the Ottoman side in the future. In the 113th letter exchanged between the Ottoman ambassador and the Iranian Foreign Ministry regarding the Hamawand issue, while asking Tehran to remove Jwamer Agha, Ambassador demonstrated that

> Politically speaking, Jwamer doesn't matter, but the continuous aggression of him and his followers between the two states is becoming a serious issue, and the high officials of the Ottoman Empire are completely disappointed in the border security.[735]

Despite the Ottoman's demands to remove Jwamer Agha from the border, Iran believed that he and his group were the best to protect the border and confront the Ottoman army or their tribes. Regarding the advantages and disadvantages of keeping or removing Jawamer Agha, Hisam al-Mulk believed that one of his advantages is that

> A hundred cavalry of the Hamawands on the border in the eyes of the Ottomans are more than a thousand riders. They intimidated the Ottomans in such a way that they would carry out whatever Hamawands ordered their soldiers or subjects. If 100 Ottoman cavalry saw ten Hamawand men, they would surrender immediately. Thieves and robbers cannot transgress with their presence.[736]

Yet, according to Hisam al-Mulk, despite Hmawand's promise to be servants of the state, because they were "naturally evil", they would cause damage to the surroundings even in small groups and would soon start wrongdoing again.[737]

While the Iranians were reluctant to deal with the fate of Jwamer Agha, a convoy from Iran to visit the Shiite holy cities were looted in the areas around Zahab. For the misfortune of Jwamer, one of the daughters of Naser al-Din Shah was present inside the caravan, which caused a big reaction and Jwamer Agha was blamed for the looting. Hence, Tehran became determined to remove Jwamer Agha with no

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[734] **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 376, 8 December 1886. **BOA. DH.MKT**., No. 1353/4.
[735] **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 377, 13 Rebîülevvel 1304.
[736] "Notes from Hisam al-Mulk to Amin Sultan" cited in Shams, **op. cit.**, p. 234.
[737] **SAKMA**., byutat; Gozarish-e Hisam al-Mulk Hukmran-e Kirmanshah, der Sal-e 1304, 21 Cemâziyelâhir 1304, as cited in Shams, **op. cit.**, p. 234.

hesitation.[738] However, Hisam al-Mulk believed that to confront the Hamwands they had to cooperate with the Ottomans otherwise "*if 20,000 soldiers are deployed on one side and the other side does not participate, they cannot put an end to the Hamawands.*"[739] Therefore, as the Ottomans had proposed earlier, they agreed to end the hegemony of the Hamawands in the region. To this end, Hisam al-Mulk invited the Ottoman commander Mohammad Fazil Pasha to Kermanshah to draw up a joint plan.[740] According to Kermashani, Fazil Pasha and Hisam al-Mulk were together in Kermanshah for several days, and then Fazil Pasha returned to Baghdad.[741] In 1887 Hisam al-Mulk launched a military force consisting of artillery and cavalry, along with the entire forces of the Kalhur, Sanjabi, and Goran Kurdish tribes.[742] He headed near Qasr-i Shirin while on the Ottoman side, Ismail Haqi, the governor of Diyarbakir and a force from Baghdad, was sent to the border.[743] To implement the plan, Hisam al-Mulk notified Jwamer Agha that he had come to discipline some of the tribes in the area. Unaware of the governor's plan, Jwamer Agha prepared to welcome him. However, Hisam al-Mulk stopped his forces near Qasr-i Shirin and invited Jwamer Agha to his tent for an interview, where he instructed the chief of the Iranian Beyhuti clan of the Hamawand to stab him from behind and he did.[744] After the death of Jwamer, although his followers defended his fort determinedly, the troops of Hisam al-Mulk attacked it and managed to kill some of Jwamer's men and enter the fort.[745] Some of those arrested were handed over to the Ottomans and others were sent to Kermanshah including a son of Jwamer Agha. Then the heads of

[738] Sarteep Muhammad Amin, **op. cit.**, p. 118; Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 65.
[739] **SAKMA**. No. 466, byutat; Gozarish-e Hisam al-Mulk Hukmran-e Kirmanshah, der Sal-e 1304, as cited in Motallebi, **op. cit.**, p. 70.
[740] Kirmanshahi, **op. cit.**, p. 103.
[741] **Ibid.**, pp. 103-4. In 1900s, Mohammad Fazil Pasha played a more active role in the border disputes between Iran and the Ottoman Empire. He was also one of the main participants with the Kurdish tribes of Mukri region in the capturing of some Kurdish areas of Azerbaijan province (chapter IV).
[742] Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 66.
[743] Maunsell, **op. cit.**, p. 67; Zeki Beg, **Tarikh-i Sulaymaniyah**, p. 194; Edmonds, **op. cit.**, p. 68.
[744] Sarteep Muhammad, **op. cit.**, p. 117. Also see Baron Eduard Nolde, **Gashtek be Arabistan w Kurdistan w Armenistanda**, Trans. by Hamid Aziz, Erbil 2004, 114; Soane, **Notes on the Tribes**, p. 16. While the above is the narrative of the state. Sinjiabi, who participated in the battle with his father and uncle, states that the reason for the killing was because Hism al-Mulk wanted to end the presence of the Ottoman soldiers on the border, which remained under the pretext of preventing the Hamawands from looting and plundering. Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 66.
[745] Sarteep Hama Amin, **op. cit.**, p. 118.

Jwamer Agha and some of his men were cut and sent to Kermanshah and then to Isfahan for Zil al-Sultan.[746]



Figure 6. The heads of Jwamer Agha and his associates were impaled on pikes by Iranian soldiers.[747]

After the assassination of Jwamer Agha, some of the Hamawands took refuge in the Ottoman Empire. While some of them were wanted by the Ottoman Empire, including Hama Beg, the son of Jwamer Agha, the Iranian prime minister warned the governor of Kermanshah not to hand over any of the Hamawands to the Ottomans and to keep them in Kermanshah with Jwamer's son.[748] Those who were handed over to the Ottomans and those who took refuge in the Ottoman Empire were sent to

[746] Kermanshahi, **op. cit.**, p. 107.
[747] Sarteep Muhammad Amin, **op. cit.**, p. 138.
[748] **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 378, 1887. In the following years, Hama Beg Jwamer Agha returned to his tribe in the Ottoman side. Soane, **To Mesopotamia**, p. 228.

Mardin, Hakkari, and Mosul. However, on the one hand, the news of sending the Hamawands to Mosul created chaos among the people of the city,[749] on the other hand, Iran has called on Istanbul not to allow the settlement of Hamawands in Mosul and Sulaymaniyah.[750] Therefore, Ismail Haqi supported the request and suggested that they be sent to Tripoli.[751] Later, according to Soane, Muhammad Fazil Pasha launched an arrest campaign and exiled all but 20 cavalrymen who were stationed with their families on the Zahab border. However, as Lorimer had expressed it: *"There are a million ways by which the Hamawand can enter the country*".[752] Thus the exiled families in Tripoli were able to come back in a mass in 1896 with the help of the Shwan tribe, and the Zahab branch of the tribem, also returned and settled in Bazian, their former place. A few months later, 150 cavalrymen returned from Adana, and the Ottomans let 400 Hamawand families from Adana to return at their insistence.[753] In the years before World War I, they returned to the political scene of the region and played a major role in the revolution of Sheikh Saeed Hafeed against the rule of the Committee of Union and Progress.

3.3. THE SANJABI TRIBE IN THE BORDER DISPUTES

The Kalhur, Goran and Sanjabi tribes played an important role in the removal of Jwamer Agha and the destruction of the Hamawands. The tribes had previously been in a constant struggle to assert their hegemony and provide pasture for their livestock. Participation in any state campaign against any of the neighboring tribes, in addition to removing a tribal opponent, also ensured the state's support for the tribe. In this context, after the participation of these tribes against Jwamer Agha, they inherited the areas that were previously occupied by the Hamawand. In particular, the Goran and Sanjabi tribes gained influence in Qasr-i Shirin. Hussain Khan Goran was made the governor of Qasr-i Shirin and the Sanjabis were given some places

[749] **BOA. MM**., No. 3888/4; **SAKMA**, No. 312/466, as cited in Motalibi, **op. cit.**, p. 72.
[750] **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 378, 1887.
[751] **BOA. MM**., No. 3888, 4 August 1887.
[752] **BL. IOR/L/PS/20/61 "**John Gordon Lorimer, **Report on a Tour in Turkish Arabia and Kurdistan April-May 1910** by J. G. Lorimer, Esq., C.i.e., I.c.s., British Political Resident in Turkish Arabia and His Britannic Majesty's Consul-general at Baghdad.", Government Monotype Print 1913, p. 10.
[753] Soane, **Notes on the Tribes**, p. 16.

around Qasr-i Shirin.[754] Naturally, the tribes of Qasr-i Shirin, despite their pastures being in the area, were responsible for protecting their frontiers against the Ottoman tribes. Especially the small Sanjabi tribe, which, were only about several thousand families, because their winter camps were located in the frontier areas, they were at the forefront of the border conflicts between the two states.[755]

Unlike other tribes in Kermanshah, the Sanjabi tribe did not have their summer pastures and winter tents tied together. While they were spending their winters between Khanaqin and Qasr-i Shirin, in the early spring, they used to migrate about 100 kilometers through the Kalhur and Goran tribes' areas to their summer pastures in the Mahidasht region on the west of Kermanshah. During the tribe's migration, when their winter quarters were empty, they were being used by Ottoman subjects for agriculture which later led both countries to claim ownership of these areas.

The Sanjabis consisted of several disconnected clans within the Zangana tribe,[756] before they separated from it in the early 19th century, as a result of internal conflict. Initially, they did not have a specific location but they found pastures around Kermanshah with the help of other tribes or they could get it according to their abundance.[757] In 1820 When Muhammad Ali Mirza, son of Fateh Ali Shah, captured Khanaqin and Mandali and laid siege to Baghdad, he offered the plains around Khanaqin and Mandali, which were agricultural areas, to the Sanjabis as a winter refuge. From then until the beginning of World War I, they were wintering between Qasr-i Shirin and Khanaqin without paying any taxes to the governor of Baghdad. The Sanjabis regarded much of the region as their property, even though it was within the Ottoman border, as the British representative in the border negotiations, G. Luther has noted.[758] These areas became increasingly important in the coming years due to the discovery of oil. The most important areas were Quratu,

[754] Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 104.
[755] Sanjabi indicates that the number of families in the tribe was about 5, 000 in the early 20th century. Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 25.
[756] For furthe details see Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, pp. 49-53.
[757] Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 32.
[758] **BL. IOR/L/PS/10/267** "File 1356/1912 Pt 2 'Turco-Persian Frontier:- negotiations at Constantinople. (Mohammerah Boundary)" Sir G. Luther to Sir Edward Gray" No. 247, 27 May 1913, (p. 7); also see Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 32.

Qala Sabzi, and Kani Baz which were located between the south and north of Khanaqin and Qasr-i Shirin, and both the Ottoman Empire and Iran considered them as their own.

The Kani Baz was one of the most controversial areas. The problem began when it was cultivated by subjects of the Ottoman Empire in the 1870s. From the very beginning, however, the governor of Kermanshah ordered the tribes to destroy Ottoman buildings and agriculture in the area.[759] The province of Baghdad later gave the area to a Jewish landlord who left it to his creditors after declaring bankruptcy. Eventually, by the 1880s, the area had 100 households and 50 Ottoman officers.[760]

While the area was called Kani Baz by the Ottomans, it was called Nazar Ali Beg by the Iranians. Nazar Ali Beg was originally the name of one of the chiefs of the Sanjabi tribe. Iran interpreted this as evidence of Iranian ownership of the region.[761] From 1887 until before World War I, there were frequent negotiations and exchanges of letters between the two states over ownership of the area. The talks between the officials of both powers in some cases reached the point of using threatening language against each other.[762]

While the use of military force might have caused serious reactions, Iran sought to impose its hegemony over the region through the tribes. In January 1891, the Ottoman Embassy in Tehran informed Iran that Ali Akbar Khan, chief of the Sanjabi tribe, was preparing in Qasr-i Shirin to attack Khanaqin with 500 cavalry and soldiers to destroy the agriculture of the Kani Baz sector and loot its sheep and cattle. The Ottoman Ambassador, Khalil Beg informed Tehran that Porte had ordered the army commander of Baghdad to respond to any Iranian aggression.[763]

In 1894, while Iran viewed the Sanjabi tribe's ownership of the region as evidence of Iranian ownership of it, ironically Ali Akbar Khan, the chief of the tribe,

[759] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 674, 23 Şaban 1317.
[760] **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 239, 18 Muharram 1304.
[761] **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 244, 1308.
[762] **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 241, 1306; **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 243, 21 Cemâziyelâhir 1308.
[763] **GESIO.**, vol. II, No380, 16 Cemâziyelâhir 1308.

took refuge in the Ottoman Empire with 300 men and moved to Khanaqin.[764] At that time Amir Nizam Garusi, was the governor of Kermanshah when Ali Akbar Khan and the Sanjabis arrived in Khanaqin. Iḥtisham-al-Salṭana who was Iran's consul general in Baghdad went to Khanaqin and gathered the tribal chiefs. After several hours of discussions and assurances, he was able to convince the tribal members to return to Iran as he claimed. According to him, the tribe migrated to the Ottoman Empire because of a dispute with Emir Nizam.[765] Even if the claim of Iḥtisham-al-Salṭana was true, then Ali Akbar Khan in the following years, again sought refuge with the Ottoman Empire and attacked some local Iranian tribes from Khanaqin with the help of other Ottoman tribes. Ali Akbar Sanjabi's recourse to the Ottoman side was the result of conflicts with other wings of the Sanjabi tribe on the Iranian side, especially with the accession of Salar al-Dawla as governor of Kermanshah in 1897, another branch of the tribe, led by Sher Muhammad Khan Sanjabi, took over the chieftaincy of the tribe and officially became the governor of Qasr-i Shirin and the guardian of the frontier of the region.[766]

In response to the invasion of Ali Akbar al-Sanjabi and his followers into Iran, in a letter to the Ottoman ambassador, Iranian Foreign Minister Mushir al-Dawla accused Baghdad officials of protecting fugitives. "*They are free to invade Iranian territory, burn people's houses, shed blood, and loot in a way that is suspected to be encouraged by the Ottoman authorities*,"[767] he added. In the same year, Iran demanded the extradition of Ali Akbar Khan and the return of the looted goods.[768]

While Ali Akbar Khan had been granted asylum by the Ottoman authorities, in March of the following year, apart from notifying the Ottoman ambassador in Tehran, the Iranian foreign minister again instructed his country's ambassador in Istanbul to brief the Porte that despite Iran's repeated requests for the extradition of Ali Akbar Khan, nothing has been done. Mushir al-Dawla threatened that Iranian

[764] **BOA. MV.D**., No. 81/119.
[765] Ihtisham al-Saltana, **op. cit.**, p. 257.
[766] Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, pp. 107-111.
[767] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 688, 18 Ramazan 1318.
[768] **BOA. BEO.D**., No. 1600/119991.

tribes had declared if the attack of the Ottoman tribes was not prevented, they would respond in the same way.[769] During the time that Ali Akbar Khan was in the Ottoman territory with the help of the Kalhur tribe, he continued his conflict with the branch of Sher Muhammad Khan Sanjabi but he was finally defeated in a fierce confrontation and was a refugee for a while among the Kalhur tribe and for a while in the Ottoman territory.[770]

3.3.1. Sher Khan Sanjabi as the Guardian of the Border

Previously, the Sanjabi tribe used to leave the border areas for the summer and move to their resorts in Mahidasht. However, during the reign of Salar al-Dawla, they were asked to stay as the guardian of the border in the summer too. From then on, Sher Khan who was given the title of Samsam al-Mamalik by the Shah ruled as the strongest guardian of the border in Qasr-i Shirin until World War I. The family's strength began when Salar al-Dawla asked the tribe to send troops to defeat two other tribes in the region. Looking for such an opportunity to prove their loyalty and presence, they enthusiastically accepted Salar al-Dawla's request. After they showed skills in tampering with these tribes, despite the loot they collected, they were given the supervision of the frontier point of Qala Sabzi and then the governor of Qasr-i Shirin by the state.[771] During his rule, Sher Khan several times attacked areas that the Ottoman Empire considered its territory with the knowledge of the governor of Kermanshah as will be discussed below.

From 1899-1902, Iqbal al-Dawla succeeded Salar al-Dawla as governor of Kermanshah, and because of his disputes with the growing power of the Kalhur chief Daud Khan, he became more friendly with Sher Khan; Daud Khan's rival.[772] During

[769] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 689.
[770] Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 115.
[771] Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 107-115.
[772] During his rule in Kermanshah, which lasted until 1903, Iqbal al-Dawla launched several campaigns against Daud Khan Kalhor. However, this did not prevent the increasing of Daud Khan's power, so that under pressure from Daud Khan's lobbyists, Iqbal-al-Dawla was removed from office and was replaced by Ala al-Dawla. Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, pp. 25, 37-37. During the governance of Ala al-Dawla, Daud Khan was officially made the chief of all the Kalhor clans and was given the title of Salar-e Muzaffar by the governor. Ali Raza Godarzi, **Êli Kalhur le Sardami Mashrutiyatda**, Trans by Muhsin Bani Wayis, Sulaymaniyah 2013, p. 24.

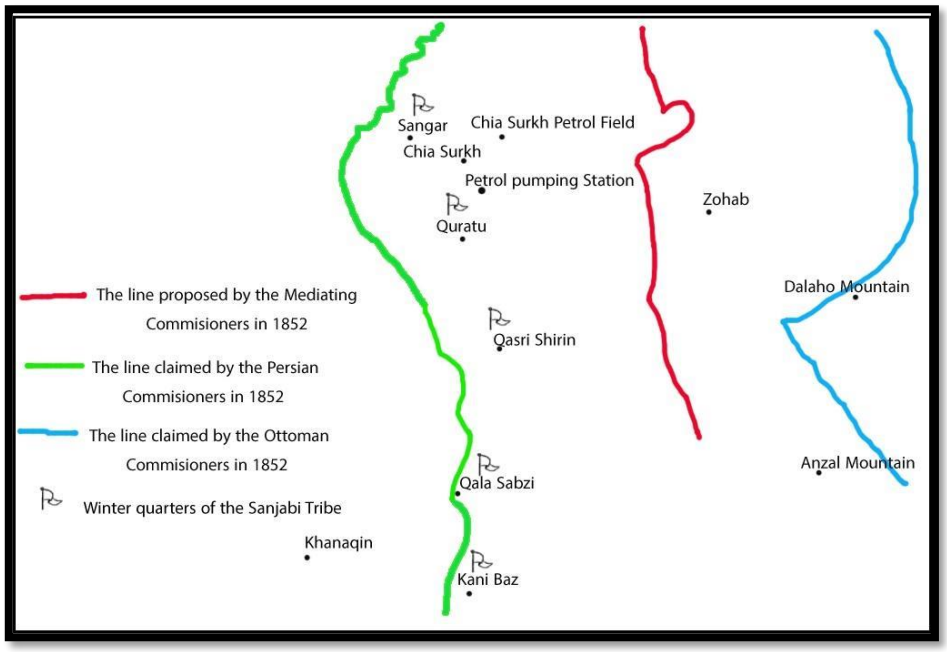
his guardianship of the border, Sher Khan was involved in fighting with the Ottoman tribes several times. Sanjabi (son of Sher Khan) mentions several attacks, plundering, and killing of Ottoman tribesmen and officers that he and his men carried out on the Ottoman side. He describes plundering as a major part of the livelihood of the nomadic tribes. In a plunder campaign against several villages in Gelan, after looting villages' property and 12,000 sheep and cattle, he admits to the following:

> "I feel ashamed to write the word 'looting'. It is an ignorant and destructive behavior, which is unfortunately one of the traditions of tribal life. For the tribes, plunder was not only the gain of war but also the goal and justification of war."[773]

He describes several incidents that occurred during his father's rule when they attacked areas that both the Ottoman Empire and Iran considered their own. Oftentimes they killed Ottoman subjects that lived there.[774] During his tenure as the governor of Kermanshah, Iqbal al-Dawla made it easy for the Sanjabis to take control over disputed areas between the two states which was based on Tehran's guidance. In October 1899, Iranian Foreign Minister Mushir al-Dawla ordered Iqbal al-Dawla to warn the guardians of the border not to allow Ottoman subjects to cultivate in areas considered Iranian and if they already had farmed, not allow them to reap the harvest.[775] In accordance with this policy, Ali Akbar Khan Sanjabi (not to be confused with the mentioned Ali Akbar Khan), son of Sher Khan, ordered his men to attack the fields of Qala Sabzi, which had been used for agriculture by the Ottoman soldiers, burning and looting the fields. Sanjabi indicates he was first afraid of the government's reaction when he informed Iqbal al-Dawla about the incident, but his response was "extreme appreciation". Iqbal al-Dawla's attitude seems to have given the Sanjabis more courage. In the next few months, an Ottoman force led by Captain Yunus Effendi tried to punish some Sanjabis for crossing the border. Ali Akbar Khan Sanjabi and some of his men attacked them and after capturing them, they killed Yunus Effendi and three of his soldiers.[776] After the attack on Qala Sabzi,

[773] Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, p. 124.
[774] **Ibid.**, 118.
[775] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 672, 20 Cemâziyelâhir 1317.
[776] Sanjabi, **op. cit.**, pp. 119-120.

the Sanjabis attacked the government fort at Kani Baz and opened fire.[777] When the Ottoman Embassy protested the incident to the Iranian Foreign Ministry, despite denying the incident, Mushir al-Dawla notified the Ottoman embassy that there was no restriction on Sanjabi's visit to Kani baz as it was part of Iran and was the winter quarter of the tribe.[778]



Map *7.* The winter quarters of the Sanjabi tribe in the disputed areas.

3.3.2. Oil Discovery and Intensification of Conflict

One of the issues that caused the escalation of the border disputes between the Ottoman Empire and Iran in the Zahab region was the discovery of oil and the start of drilling oil wells in these areas. In 1891, French archaeologist Jacques de Morgan published an article about the possibility of oil in Iran. He wrote: "There is a hole in Chia Surkh that is seven meters deep". They extract oil from it and sell one

[777] **BOA. BEO. D**., No. 1686/126436, as cited in Fahime Cabuk, **II. Abdülhamit Dönemi Osmanli – İran İlişkilerinde Kürt aşiretleri Meselesi** (unpublished Master dissertation) 2013 Kayseri University p. 72.
[778] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 699, 21 Shawal 1319.

bucket of oil for one Toman in Qasr-i Shirin. [779] After reading Morgan's writing, in 1900, British businessman William Knox D'Arcy agreed to fund a team to explore oil and natural resources in Iran. After investigating, Darcy's team gave him a report on the assumption of abundant oil in Qasr-i Shirin and Shushtar. After receiving the report, in 1901, Darcy, through a representative, managed to obtain oil exploration and extraction concessions throughout Iran, except for several northern provinces, for 60 years. A few months after the signing, a drilling team began working in Chia Surkh, northwest of Qasr-i Shirin, and in 1903 reached two wells that produced 157 barrels of oil per day. Albeit the amount of oil was not attractive to Darcy's team, it still increased the importance of the area. In 1908, the British team discovered oil in Masjid Suleiman, and Iran became an oil-rich country. After the discovery of oil, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC) was established to extract and sell oil.

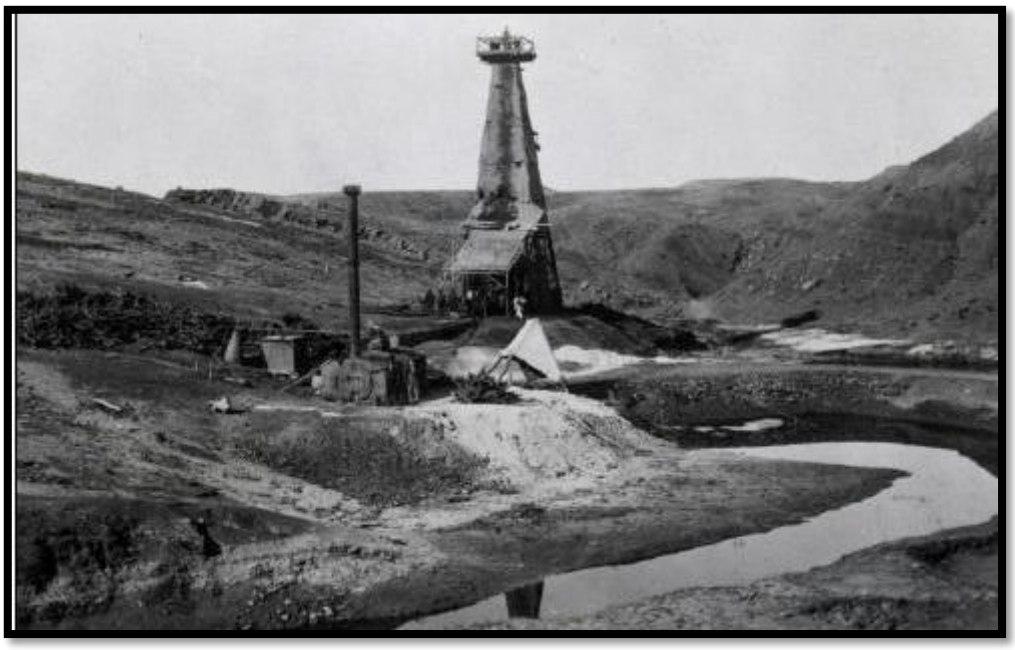


Figure 7. Chia Surkh oil well circa 1904

With the discovery of oil in Chia Surkh, the Ottoman Empire attempted to explore oil in the areas of Mandalij, located south of Khanaqin and Qasr-i Shirin. In

[779] Muhammad Hasan Nia, "Ikhtilafat-e Marziya Iran-u Turkiye ber Sar-e Menatiq-e Neftkhiz-u Tasir an der Amalkard-e Shirket-e Naft", **Payam-e Baharstan**, 3rd year, No. 11, p. 594.

May 1901, the Iranian consul in Baghdad informed the Interior Ministry that someone named Abdul Latif was trying to obtain oil concessions on the Mandalij-Aywan frontiers, from the Ottoman Empire, which contained common oil resources. He warned his country that "*the Ottomans will certainly act in such a way as to take Iran's oil resources for themselves*".[780] On the other hand, Iranian Kurdish tribes were assisting the British oil exploration team which worried the Ottomans. In early 1903, a member of the British oil exploration team together with a group of Sher Khan's sowars visited Kani Baz and Qatar Hill and then independently set up stones as boundary markers as the Ottoman authority claimed. After the incident, the Ottoman consul in Kermanshah first protested the incident to the governor of Kermanshah, and the Ottoman ambassador in Tehran later informed the Iranian Foreign Ministry and asked them not to allow a similar incident to happen again.[781] In response to the Ottoman claims, the governor of Kermanshah, despite denying the establishment of boundary stones by the Sanjabis, asked his country's foreign ministry to inform the Ottomans that the Sanjabis' movement to these areas did not break any border lines for the area was the tribe's winter quarter.[782]

Although the strengthening of the Sanjabi influence in and around Qasr-i Shirin was in line with the Iranian policy, the independent and provocative movements of the tribes may have produced a negative reaction from the Ottomans. Iran, therefore, warned its tribes to refrain from any behavior that would give the Ottomans an excuse for any advance. In this regard, the new governor of Kermanshah, Ala al-Dawla, conveyed the complaints of the governor of Baghdad to Sher Khan Sanjabi and ordered him to refrain from anything that would complicate relations and justify the Ottomans. In response, Sher Khan rejected the Ottoman claims with a long report, telling Ala al-Dawla that "*these claims have no basis in fact and the Ottoman officers are thinking of creating lies day and night. They do not*

[780] Asnad-e Payganiya Vazarat-e Umur-e Kharija, No. 1329/11/75/6, as cited in Hasan Niya, **op. cit.**, p. 603. Iran, meanwhile, he took stricter measures to prevent the Ottoman Kurdish tribes from entering the resorts of Zahab and Kermanshah. In 1902, the governor of Kermanshah ordered Mansour al-Mulki, the chief of the Gorani tribe, to prevent the Jafs from entering their resorts in Kermanshah. See **BOA. DH.MKT**., No. 598/26, 29 Eylül 1316.
[781] Asnad-e Bayganiya Vazarat-e Umur-e Kharija, No. 2/13/18/1321.
[782] **Ibid.**

want peace on the border."[783] In response to the Iranians' attempts to use the Kurdish tribes, the Ottomans tried to use the influence of the Jaf, and Bajalan tribes and Naqshbandi sheikhs to strengthen their hegemony.[784] In the following years, new problems arose between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, which further complicated relations between the two powers. As a result, the Ottomans occupied parts of northwestern Iran in 1905 (Chapter IV).

[783] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 704, 1320.

[784] For example, the Ottoman Empire relied heavily on Sheikh Najmuddin and Sheikh Nizamuddin, sons of Sheikh Omar Naqshbandi, whose father lived in Biara and they lived in Zahab and Pushtako, to advocate for Ottomans' rule in the region\. G.B.PSD. **File 1356/1912 Pt 2 'Turco-Persian Frontier:- negotiations at Constantinople. No. 1/2,"** Captain Scott to Sir G. Lowther." 27 January 1913, p. 2.

CHAPTER 4

POLITICAL INSTABILITY IN THE KURDISH REGIONS OF AZERBAIJAN AND THE OTTOMAN INTERVENTION

4.1. THE RESURGENCE OF BORDER TENSIONS

The end of Sheikh Ubeidullah marked the beginning of a new era for the Kurdish tribes of the Azerbaijan Province. The great defeat of the Kurdish tribes during the rebellion of Sheikh Ubeidullah and the destruction that followed in the region silenced the Kurds for several years. In Chapter II, some of the policies of the subjugation of the Kurdish tribes and nobles by government officials were explained. According to Afshar, after the horrific murder of Hamza Agha by Amir Nizam, no tribe dared to disobey and all the subjects and tribes remained silent.[785] This policy intimidated the Kurds so that for several years the tension in the region subsided and the Kurdish tribes became submissive to the authorities and gave repentance and promises of loyalty to the government.[786] However, the continuance of this policy could have alienated the Kurdish tribes from Iran, which would have harmed Iran's position in its border disputes with the Ottoman Empire. Especially after the rebellion, when the two powers resumed their efforts to define the border.[787] In the coming years, Iran took steps to calm the situation and secure Kurdish support. In

[785] Afshar, **op. cit.**, p. 215.

[786] The following example provides a clear picture of the state's violence against the Kurdish Tribes after the end of Sheikh Ubaidullah's revolution. Once Amir Nizam sent for Mohammad Agha of Mamsh to visit him. According to Amir Nizam, Mohammad Agha responded by expressing his "slavery and service" adding that "the soul is a lovely thing. After the killing of Khan Baba Khan, I am so afraid that I do not dare to come to your service. Assign me something to do, so that after I have done it for you, I will have no fear in my heart and come to you." So, Amir Nizam ordered him to join Izzatullah in the punitive expedition against the Mangor tribe. **Fitne-i Sheikh Ubeidullahi Kurd**, p. 506.

[787] During the early 1880s, three important border areas in the Mukri region became the subject of a fresh controversy. These included the villages around Qutur, Bradost and Wazna. Although the Ottoman Empire had officially ceded Qutur to Iran, it was trying to regain ownership of some of the villages that belonged to Qutur. In September 1883, Iran submitted a request to Fahri Bey to establish a new commission to determine the Ottoman- Iranian border in the Qutur region but due to snow, Fahri Bey, asked the Iranians to postpone the commission's work until next year. However, the issue remained unresolved until the years before World War I. **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 204. Similarly, in the Bradost region, the villages of Siro and Sardik, which were evacuated after the rebellion of Sheikh Ubaidullah, became the subject of dispute between the two sides. In 1883, several letters were exchanged between officials of both states regarding ownership of the two villages. **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 205.

1883, after being successful in disciplining the Kurd, Amir Nizam was appointed the governor of Tabriz by the Shah while Saif al-Din Khan Mukri, a descendant of Aziz Khan, a chieftain of Mukri, was appointed the governor of Sauj Bulaq. The appointment of Amir Nizam as a Kurdish figure (or, in the words of Ihtisham al-Saltana, half-Kurdish)[788] as governor of Azerbaijan and Saif al-Din Khan as governor of Sauj Bulaq, were parts of a new policy to deal with the uncontrollable tribes of the region.[789] According to Burzuyi, the restoration of credibility to some Kurdish official families, especially the Mukri ruling families, instead of Azeri officials, in the administration of Urmia had been a reason for establishing peace in the region. Nevertheless, it soon became clear that the government's administrative measures could not solve problems that had deeper social, cultural, and religious roots. Amir Nizam was the son of a ruling family in Bijar and his father; Mohammad Sadiq Khan, was the ruler of Garus and one of the courtiers of Fateh Ali Shah Qajar. He held many high positions in the state.[790] His appointment as governor of Azerbaijan was an attempt by the state to find a solution, but there was a huge socio-cultural gap between Amir Nizam and the Kurdish tribes in the region. Even in the later years, when Amir Nizam and his son Salar al-Mulk, who succeeded him as governor of Kurdistan, left behind a bad reputation (See Chapter V).[791]

On the Ottoman side, the state's policy toward the Kurds entered a new phase too. According to Khalfin, following the death of Sheikh Ubeidullah, Sultan Abdulhamid II began using the Kurdish tribes as an important force. This approach reduced some of the economic and political oppression in the Kurdish regions of the Ottoman Empire.[792] After Sheikh Ubeidullah, the reputation of his family once again could establish a new political center in the region. So, the Porte soon tried to take advantage of his family's position. The sons of the sheikh were in exile, but Nurullah

[788] The above expression of Ihtisham al-Saltana may be because Amir Nizam's mother was Armenian and his father was Kurdish. Ihtisham al-Saltana, **op. cit.**, p. 444.
[789] Curzon states that Saif al-Din Khan was an educated man with some knowledge of French, he ruled Sauj Bulaq, the local capital of the Kurds of Azerbaijan, which had a population of 15, 000 at the time. Curzon, **op. cit.**, vol. I, p. 556.
[790] A. Amanat, Amir Nizam Garusi, **Encyclopædia Iranica**, I/9, pp. 966-969. Available at: http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/amir-e-nezam-garrusi (Accessed: 25 Nisan 2022)
[791] Ihtisham al-Satana, **op. cit.**, p. 444.
[792] **Ibid.**, 209.

Beg, a relative of Sheikh Ubeidullah, was in Hakkari. In 1884, at the suggestion of Adam Pasha, the governor of Hakkari, Nurullah Beg was appointed as head of the Kurds of Hakkari and the director of the school they had decided to open in Bashkala. Khalfin, based on Russian archives, points out that the governor of Hakkari also made secret agreements with Kurdish tribal chiefs and gave them a lot of weapons.[793] The Ottoman Empire then tried to restore the hegemony of the Nehri sheikhs in Iran. In 1887 the Ottoman ambassador in Tehran repeatedly asked the Iranian Foreign Ministry to allow the return of Sheikh Nur al-Din Naqshbandi;[794] brother of Sheikh Ubeidullah, to their lands and villages in Targawar, Margawar, and the plain of Urmia, which belonged to their father; Sheikh Taha. However, Iran refused the offer on the grounds that only Iranian citizens could own property in Iran while Sheikh Nur al-Din was an Ottoman citizen.[795]

After a few years of political stability, the unrest has resurfaced in the Kurdish regions of Azerbaijan again. Khalfin notes that Kurdish rebellions against state officials intensified in 1886-1887. In 1887, the Gawirk tribe in the Dasht region (near Urmia) revolted against the governor of the city; Ezzatullah Khan, refusing to pay the high taxes demanded by the state. As a result, Ezzatullah Khan left the city and moved to Sauj Bulaq. Under pressure from the people of Sardsht, Saif al-Din Khan also appointed a new Kurdish governor named Ahmad Beg Mukri to them. In the same year, the Kurdish uprising forced the government to replace the governor of Urmia with a Kurd.[796] Averyanov indicates that from the late 1880s, the Mukri ruler's authority over the nomadic tribes remained nominal. Therefore, all his attempts to collect taxes from the Mukri tribes failed. If he could extort some money from them, the tribes would enter the Ottoman territory and plunder the area in revenge. Some of these tribes even continued to have ties with the Ottomans, and provided soldiers for them.[797]

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[793] Khalfin, **op. cit.**, p. 210.
[794] It is possible that the "Sheikh Nurullah" mentioned by Khalfin is the same Sheikh Nur al-Din, brother of Sheikh Ubeidullah.
[795] **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 610, 28 Rebiulevvel 1304.
[796] Khalfin, **op. cit.**, pp. 211-212.
[797] Averyanov, **op. cit.**, p. 325.

In general, in the literature of Qajar authors such as Kasravi, Afshar, and Amir Nizam, the main motive of the conflicts between the Kurdish tribes and Qajar officials in the regions of Azerbaijan province were either the wrongdoing and transgression of the Kurdish tribes or the Ottoman encouragement of these tribes. This view, which originated from the state's perspective, was one of the main reasons that prevented Tehran from understanding the real causes behind the Kurdish tribes' rebellion against the state. Such as ignoring the position and role of the Kurdish tribes and their chiefs, interfering in tribal affairs, and inciting some tribes against others. This, as will be explained in this chapter, became the main motivation for several rebellions that continued into the years following World War I.

Between 1889 and 1890, several political events and changes occurred at the international and regional levels that had a major impact on the future of the relations between the Ottoman Empire and Iran on the one hand and the relationship of each of the two states with the Kurdish tribes, on the other hand. During this period, because of the concessions that Iran gave them, Russian and British political hegemony dramatically increased in Iran.

During the reign of Naser al-Din Shah and after his costly trips to Russia and Europe, Iran gradually fell into debt and political and diplomatic domination of Russia and Britain increased. Both these countries were interfering in Iran's foreign and internal affairs through their embassies, consulates, and commercial companies that received several important concessions in terms of banking, maritime, road, trade, oil, and customs.[798] Thus, Russia, as a classic rival of the Ottoman Empire and the triggering force behind some of the Ottoman's internal problems by supporting Armenians, gained influence over Iran's regions neighboring the Ottoman border. In 1889, before Naser al-Din Shah's third trip to Europe, he granted several capitulations to Britain for 60 years. These included the shipping franchise in the Karun Lake, the establishment of the Royal Bank, publishing and distributing currency along with the right to extract all minerals. Unpleasant with the capitulations given to Britain, the Russian ambassador threatened the invasion of Iran

[798] Mahdevi, **op. cit.**, pp. 286-306.

unless Russia was granted some concessions too. In response to the threat, Naser al-Din Shah signed an agreement to allow Russia to build a road and railway from Anzali on the Caspian Sea to Tehran and from Julfa to Tabriz, this way permitting Russia to sail in Lake Anzali and all the rivers that estuary into the Caspian Sea. Tehran, also reassured Russia that Iran will not make any agreements with any other country without pre-informing Russia.[799] Later In 1890, Tehran signed an agreement with the Russian ambassador preventing countries from building railways in Iran, other than Russia. After this, Russia imposed its hegemony over the regions of Azerbaijan province bordering Erzurum and eastern Anatolia. Russia's presence in the region was a serious threat to the Ottoman Empire and could easily send troops in case the war broke out.

Regarding the local situation, several important events took place in three frontier areas between Azerbaijan province and the Ottoman Empire, which further complicated the relations between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. The most important of these events were the following; (1) The dispute between the Jalali and Haideran tribes over the pastures of the Abagha region. (2) Increasing Armenian and missionary activities in the regions of Urmia, Salmasl, and Khoy. (3) The dispute between the two states over the ownership of the Vazneh and Lahijan regions. These events coincided with (or caused) two important changes on the Ottoman side: the creation of the Hamidiye cavalry near the Iranian border and the Porte's permission to Sheikh Ubeidullah's sons to return to Nehri. Each of these events and their impact on the Kurdish tribes and political relations between the Ottoman Empire and Iran will be discussed below.

4.1.1. The Problem of the Haideran and Jalali Tribes

One of the most important problems that became a major diplomatic issue between the Ottoman Empire and Iran in the late 19th century was the dispute between the Jalali and Haideran tribes over the Abagha region which began in

[799] **Ibid.**, 289-290.

1889[800] and lasted until 1896.[801] The Abagha region is located in the far north within a square surrounded by Maku, Bayazit, Avajik, and Bargri (present-day Muradiye). According to Dervish Pasha, Abagha was a large area with about 366 villages.[802] The area had abundant water and the pastures were suitable for livestock. It was formerly the settlement of the Yazidis[803] who, due to the oppression and plunder of the nomadic tribes left the region. Both the Ottoman Empire and Iran considered this region as their own. Dervish Pasha insists that Abagha belonged to the Mahmudi district and was sometimes called Mahmudi Plain, so Iran had no rights over the area except that some Iranian tribes migrated to Abagha in the spring and summer.[804] As it is evident from the writings of Hurshid and Dervish Pashas, the area was used by tribes on both sides. Since the late 19th century, both two large tribes of Iranian Jalali and Ottoman Haideran have used the area as pasture. However, the tension began when the son of the Jalali tribal chief was killed by the Haideran tribe's members. In response, the Jalali tribe tried to take revenge, accordingly until the summer of 1890, there were several clashes between the two tribes.[805] In one of the attacks launched by the Jalali tribe from Maku against the Haideran tribe in the Ottoman territory nine men were killed, seven of them belonged to the Haideran and the other two belonged to the Jalali tribes. In the following days, some of those injured passed away thereby increasing the death toll to 21 from Haideran and six from the Jalali tribes.[806] What made the issue even more sensitive was that the Jalali tribe belonged to Iran and the Haidaran tribe belonged to the Ottoman Empire which led both states to defend their tribes more determinedly. The Jalali tribe was under the domination of Khan Maku; Taimur Pasha Khan,[807] even as mentioned in the second chapter, this tribe played a major role in the defeat of Sheikh Ubeidullah and looting the villages of the Mukri region. In contrast, the Haideran tribe, because of their location and distribution, was

[800] **BOA. DH.TMIK.M**., No. 58/3, 1 Rebîülâhir 1316.
[801] **BOA. MVL.**, No. 574/93.
[802] Dervish Pash, **op. cit.**, p. 137.
[803] Mushir al-Dawla, **op. cit.**, p. 182; Dervish Pasha, .**op. cit.**, p. 137.
[804] Dervish Pasha, **op. cit.**, p. 137.
[805] **BOA. Y. A.RES**., No. 54-10.
[806] **HCPP. Turkey. No. 1 (1890-91), Document No.** 93.
[807] The Maku Khanate, of the Azeri Bayat tribe, ruled Maku semi-independently during the 19th century and continued to rule until 1924. Ismail Bey Zardabli, **Ethnic and Political History of Azerbaijan**, Rossendale Books, USA, 2018, p. 383.

closer to the Ottoman Empire and in later years became a serious participant in the Hamidiye cavalry. Colonel Stewart indicates that during the confrontation between the two tribes, Taimur Pasha Khan encamped in Avajik on the road of Bayazit's caravan with 5,000 cavalries. On the Ottoman side, the Haideran tribe, with the help of several other Kurdish tribes, was standing on the border to defend. Therefore, from the very beginning, officials of both Ottoman and Iranian authorities tried to resolve the problems. While Taimur Pasha Khan had prepared a large force to support the Jalali tribe, Ottoman officials sent several men from Bayazit to negotiate with Taimur Pasha to resolve the matter. [808] Meanwhile, from Tabriz, Amir Nizam sent orders to Taimur Pasha Khan to control the Jalali tribe and prevent further complications.[809]

The following year, both sides, the Ottomans and the Iranians, agreed to form a peace committee in the region where first the attacks started and later met in Bayazit.[810] The Porte prepared a proposal for his representatives in the negotiations written by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of War, and the Grand Vizier Secretary. The plan consisted of 11 articles on issues that were important for the Ottoman delegates to discuss and those rules the delegates should follow at the meetings.[811] According to Çiftçi's observation, Ottoman officials tried to convey their messages in a way that could prove Ottoman ownership of the region during negotiations with Iranian officials.[812] This was the condition for several years until Taimur Pasha Khan, who was part of the conflict, distributed Martini weapons to the Jalali tribe in 1890. According to Ottoman documents, he encouraged 1,000 members of the Jalali tribe to attack during the negotiations, killing six civilians and two Ottoman officers.[813]

The conflict between the Haideran and Jalali tribes coincided with the Porte's efforts to incorporate the Ottoman tribes into the military system of the Empire. So,

[808] **HCPP. Turkey. No. 1 (1890-91), Document No.** 94.
[809] **HCPP. Turkey. No. 1 (1890-91), Document No.** 93.
[810] **BOA. Y.A.RES**., No. 54/10.
[811] **BOA. Y.A.REP.**, No. 54/10.
[812] Çiftçi, **op. cit.**, p. 14.
[813] **BOA. Y.PRK. SRN**., No. 2/79, 22 Zilkade 1307 as cited in Süleyman Demirci, & Fehminaz Çabuk, **op. cit.**, p. 82.

any chaos and disorder would be a blow to that goal, especially regarding dealing with both the Jalali and Haideran tribes. Although the Haideran tribe belonged to the Ottoman Empire and participated largely in the Hamidiye Cavalry, some clans of the Jalali tribe were also located in Bayazit and had two military units.[814] In contrast, some of the Haideran clans sided with and belonged to Iran. Dealing with the tribal case was a complicated matter, as seven years of diplomatic efforts by state officials from both sides yielded little result. Finally, both Ottoman and Iran officials agreed to resolve the issue within the framework of tribal traditions and that the Jalali tribe should pay 600 goats and 450 sheep in exchange for the killing of six people from the Haideran tribe, three of whom were nobles.[815]

4.1.2. Tensions in the West of Lake Urmia

After the Berlin Treaty of 1878, when international support for the Armenians increased and the Ottoman Empire was obliged to protect Armenians, conflict and sensitivities between Kurds and Armenians escalated especially in eastern Anatolia. As Curzon pointed out, while the contacts that the Kurds had with the Shiites in Iran were responsible for creating a fanatic model of Sunni Kurds there, the conflict between Kurds and Armenians in the Ottoman Empire was responsible for creating an Islamic fanaticism among the Kurds in the Ottoman Territory.[816] Therefore, the Kurdish question in Iran became the conflict between Sunni Kurds and Shiites, and in the Ottoman Empire, the Kurdish question became the conflict between Muslim Kurds and Armenians. However, when Curzon had visited Iran in 1889,[817] the Kurds in Iran had problems only with the Shiites, but since then sensitivities on the Iranian side have gradually developed between Kurds, Armenians, and other Christian groups as well. Especially after Iran settled

[814] Ertekin, **op. cit.**, 347.
[815] **BOA. BEO**., No. 568/42543; Çiftçi, **op. cit.**, p. 13.
[816] Curzon, **op. cit.**, p. 551. The Kurdish-Armenian conflict had a negative impact on the Kurdish reputation among European and Russian public opinion that supported Armenia. This increased the pressure of European countries on the Porte to prevent the Kurdish Tribes' activities. However, according to Browne's report in 1887, the Kurdish tribes continued to report to Istanbul about Armenian attacks, see "Memorandum by the Rev. TV. H. Browne", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 32 (1887)**, Document No. 4.
[817] **London Evening Standard**, Thursday 10 January 1907, p. 8.

Armenians, who had migrated from the Ottoman Empire, in the western frontier areas of Lake Urmia where the Kurdish tribes lived. Thus, the presence of a large number of Armenians in Azerbaijan province transferred part of the Kurdish-Armenian conflict to these areas. Meanwhile, with the strengthening of British hegemony in the region, missionary work increased unprecedentedly with Tehran's permission which increased religious sensitivities between Christians and Muslims in the region (including Sunnis and Shiites).[818] In addition to the political and economic privileges given to Britain, Shah permitted them to publish the Bible in Kurdish and Persian. Consequently, in the mid-1890s, numerous copies of the Bible were sent to Iran to propagate Christianity and convert Kurds and Nestorians to "Christianity".[819] The dense increase in missionary activities in the Kurdish regions of Azerbaijan brought the Kurds and the Ottomans close together. Especially some of the Armenians were using Urmia, Khuy, and Salmas as bases for reorganization and attacks on the Kurdish tribes on the Ottoman side which was very critical for the Ottoman Empire. [820]

4.1.3. Shepherds Between Identity and Pasture: The Ownership of Vazneh and Lahijan Between the Ottoman Empire and Iran

Another issue that arose during this period was the dispute over the ownership of Vazneh and Lahijan which were two fertile areas at the foot of Mount Qandil that both the Ottoman Empire and Iran considered their own. However, because the Lahijan Plain was located east of Qandil, it was mostly under Iranian influence. The nomadic clans of the Bilbas tribe, despite being Sunni, because their summer pastures were under Iranian domination, naturally would choose Iran to live in when determining the border.

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[818] The British consul in Tehran, Wratislaw states that the Iranian Azeris, unlike the Persians, were so religiously fanatic that they viewed Christians as unclean. Similarly, the Kurds viewed Armenians and Christians as enemies and there was hostility between them. Especially with the increase in missionary activity. Albert Charles Wratislaw, **Konsuli der Shargh**, Trans. by Dr. Recebali Kavani, Tehran, 1386, p. 220.

[819] **Asheville Daily Citizen**, 28 May 1890, p. 2; **The Morning Astorian**, 23 February 1900, p. 4.

[820] According to the Ottomans, some of the Armenians involved in the killings had fled to Iran from the Ottoman Empire. **BOA. Y.PRK.ESA.**, No. 18/53, 1311 Safer 23.

After Sheikh Ubeidullah, Iran was able to attract branches of the Bilbas tribe and prevent the entry of the Ottoman tribes into the region. In 1889, Piran, a clan of the Bilbas tribe, which comprised about 1,000 households headed by Amin Agha asked the Ottoman Empire couple of times to persuade Iran to allow them to return to Lahijan.[821] In July 1890, the Ottoman Serasker informed the Grand Vizier that it was not yet clear whether Lahijan belonged to Iran or the Ottoman Empire but according to *uti possidetis*, Lahijan was on the Ottoman side.[822] This was at a time when the area was used by the tribes that were paying taxes to the Iranian authorities. Along with the dispute over the Lahijan region, the dispute over the ownership of Vazneh became the subject of argument between the two countries. As of the 1890s, Iran tried to make the Kurdish tribes the guardians of the border. In this regard, Bayiz Agha was one of the chiefs of Mangor who was given the area of Vazneh officially by Iran. To investigate the ownership of Vazneh, the Ottoman Empire asked Iran to oblige Bayiz Agha to vacate the region first and then send a committee of inquiry to Vazneh, but this request was rejected by Iran. Later the Iranian ambassador in Istanbul made the following advice to the foreign ministry on the matter, which may paint a clear picture of the nature of the diplomatic conflict between the two countries:

> I think it is necessary to remind you again that, according to my experience, with the Ottomans, we must always be the defendant party, not the plaintiff one. Because if we complain about something, they will create a thousand problems with their policy of killing time and making excuses, but if they complain to us about something, we can explain it to them and reach an agreement.[823]

This technique has been adopted by both countries. Therefore, diplomatic efforts were usually fruitless. The dispute between the Ottoman Empire and Iran had not yet been resolved when the Ottoman Empire formally merged Vazneh, Marga,

[821] **BOA. İ.DH.**, No. 1295/5, 1 May 1889, as cited in Melahat Findik, **Between Order and Disorder: The Problem of Nationality Among Ottoman-iranian Tribes In the Hamidian Era**, Master Dissertation Sabanci University 2012, p. 65.
[822] **BOA. İ.MMS.**, No. 114/4884, 17 July 1890, as cited in Melahat Findik, **op. cit.**, p. 65.
[823] **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 208.

and Pishdar into one administrative unit and renamed it Ma'muratulhamidiye. [824] Later, when the Ottoman Empire took over the region by force, the situation reversed. The Iranians demanded that the area be evacuated by Ottoman troops to be investigated (Chapter V).[825]

4.2. THE NEW OTTOMAN POLICY TOWARD BORDER DISPUTES

With the changes that occurred in the frontiers between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, on the Ottoman side, some changes in the state's treatment of the Kurdish society and Kurdish tribes occurred. The most important manifestation of these changes was the creation of the Hamidiye cavalry and the allowance of the sons of Sheikh Ubeidullah to return to Hakkari. Each of these two issues and their impact on border conflicts in the coming years will be discussed below.

4.2.1. The Hamidiye Cavalry, the Reorganization of the Kurdish Tribes Within the Political and Military System of The State

When Sultan Abdulhamid II accessed power, the Ottoman Empire was in a major political and economic crisis. This coincided with a series of defeats of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans. In the framework of the policy of Pan-Slavism, which was backed by Russia, national uprisings erupted in the Balkans that resulted in the Russo-Turkish War, which eventually led to the abandonment of parts of the Balkan by the Ottoman Empire according to the Treaty of Berlin 1878. Accordingly, Russia's victories in the Balkans gave more hope to the Armenian national movement in eastern Anatolia which again was supported and sympathized with by Russia and the Western countries. Hence, this situation increased the sympathy between the Kurds and the Ottoman Empire and became a major motivation for the Kurds to play an active role during the Russo-Turkish War.

Regarding the Ottoman Empire, after the expulsion and then the death of Sheikh Ubeidullah, his dream of establishing a Kurdish state under his administration

[824] Ikdam (Newspaper) 1890, as cited in **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 210. According to Sezen, Pishdar became a *nahiya* within Mamûretülhamid town, between 1889-1912. Sezen, **op. cit.**, p. 546.,
[825] **GESIO.**, 0.4, p. 363.

and at the same time belonging to the caliphate ended but it proved the Kurdish tribes could be a source of strength or a major threat to the state. This led the Porte to pursue a new policy toward the Kurds, incorporating disorderly disconnected groups of the Kurdish tribes into the state's military system by creating a new force called the Hamidiye Cavalry, which was similar to the Russian Cossacks.[826]

The Hamidiye organization, as its name suggests, was named after Sultan Abdulhamid II and was directly linked to him. Although, according to the Hamidiye cavalry project plan, it consisted of Arabs, Kurds, Turkmens, and Karakalpaks, most of those who participated in this organization were from the Kurdish tribes.[827] Two Kurdish tribal chiefs became high-ranking members of the Hamidiye cavalry; Mustafa Pasha Miran and Ibrahim Pasha Milli. Trying to degrade the Hamidiye cavalry leaders, Mikdad Midhat Badir Khan 1890 wrote in the Kurdistan newspaper that 15 years ago, Mustafa Pasha was a shepherd and was called bald Mustafa but now he is Pasha because of the Hamidiye cavalry and oppresses people.[828] Mustafa Pasha ruled in the Botan region replacing Badir Khan's ancestors, this might be the motivation behind Mikdad Badir Khan's statement regarding Mustafa. However, Mustafa Pasha had gained the trust of the Sultan and had thousands of cavalry under his command.[829] Bruinessen states that Mustafa Pasha came to power and built a small kingdom around Cizre where he lived and had complete power in the region instead of the state.[830] Istanbul paid great attention to the Hamidiye cavalry which was directly linked to Zeki Pasha and they did not consider the local authorities. In Averyanov's words:

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[826] The owner of the idea and the most prominent participants in the implementation phase of the project were: The general inspector of the Anatolian reforms and the aide-de-camp to the Sultan, Ahmed Shakir Pasha, Inspection Commission's member Colonel Ibrahim Bey, and Mushir Zeki Pasha. Cezmi Eraslan, "Hamidiye Alayları", **TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi**, available at; Https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/hamidiye-alaylari (accessed; 27.05.2022). Mushir (Marshal) Zeki Pasha was Sultan's in-law and the commander of the Fourth Ottoman Army. After being tasked with implementing the project, he went across the area of his control to consult the Kurdish tribal chiefs. Averyanov, **op. cit.**, p. 261. The Fourth Ottoman Army, also known as the Russian Front was spread between the areas of Ararat, Erzincan, and Cizre. Janet Klein, **Hamidiye Alaylari İmpratorluğun Sınır Boyları ve Kürt Aşiretleri**, Trans. by Renan Akam, İstanbul, İletişim, 2020, p. 18.
[827] Ertekin, **op. cit.**, p. 97
[828] Kurdistan (Newspaper), No. 26, p. 2.
[829] Osman Ali, **op. cit.**, p. 129.
[830] Bruinessen, **op. cit.**, p. 82.

> In practice, it seems even ordinary Kurdish members of the Hamidiye recognized the authority of only one person, Mushir (Zeki Pasha), and the governors of the states were inferior to them. He adds that the reputation of the governors was of little value to the Hamidiye officers.[831]

Although these have been expressed from a rival point of view, they reflect the fact that the Hamidiye cavalry was of particular importance.

The Hamidiye organization was an attractive model for the Kurdish tribes. For the first time, the tribes transitioned from uncontrolled social groups to being part of the political and military system of the state. They were able to secure political, military, and social privileges for their groups and gain the support of the state. Therefore, the Kurdish tribes competed to participate in this new organization, so that in 1891 the number of regiments was 40, reached 56 in 1893, and then 63 regiments in 1899.[832]

Apart from being a military and administrative organization, Hamidiye cavalry also had a social, cultural, and economic impact on Kurdish society. In this regard, one of the other important steps taken by the Porte was the opening of a school called tribal schools (in Turkish "*Aşiret Mektebleri*").[833] This project aimed to raise a new literate generation among the ruling families of the tribes. In these schools, students were educated within the framework of Pan-Islamism and the official policy of the Empire.[834] Accordingly, as Sunar indicates, Sultan Abdulhamid's policy managed to integrate Kurdish tribal chiefs and sheikhs into the Empire to a large extent.[835] Osman Ali also emphasizes that the influence of these schools was the reason for the rebellion of the Kurdish tribes to support the caliphate

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[831] Averyanov, **op. cit.**, p. 287.
[832] Majid Muhammad Younus Zaxoyi, **Alfursanul Hamidiye 1891-1923**, Duhok, 2008, p. 80.
[833] Basically, the tribal schools were established to educate the generations of the Arab tribes, but later the children of Kurdish tribal chiefs also participated in this project. For more details see Ertekin, **op. cit.**, pp. 187-188. The construction of these schools was of particular importance for the Kurdish society, which was characterized by illiteracy and lack of education. The first tribal schools were opened in Istanbul and Baghdad, accepting students between the ages of 12-16. Aliyawayi, **op. cit.**, p. 148.
[834] **Ibid**, p. 92
[835] Sunar, **op. cit.**, p. 124.

against the coup of the Committee of Union and Progress such as the uprising of Ibrahim Pasha Milli, Sheikh Saeed Barzanji and Mullah Salim Khizan.[836]

4.2.2. The Hamidiye Cavalry Activities on the Iranian Border

Although, there is a vast literature concerning the role of the Hamidiye cavalry against Russian influence and little attention has been given to its role in the relations between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, the major role of the cavalry in strengthening the Ottoman hegemony in the Kurdish regions of Iran was obvious in the events that happened in the years following its creation.

The organization was based on a sectarian religious basis. For this reason, only Sunni Muslim tribes were incorporated, whereas the Alawite and Yazidi Kurdish tribes within the Ottoman Empire were excluded. With the creation of the Hamidiye cavalry, many Kurdish tribes bordering Iran in eastern Anatolia joined the organization. The most prominent tribes who had significant participation were Haidarn, Hasanan, Jalali, Sabki, and Adaman tribes. Two years after the creation of the Hamidiye cavalry, the Shikak tribe who lived mostly in Iran sought refuge in the Ottoman Empire, and its chief Mohammed Pasha submitted a request to the Porte to participate in the Cavalry. So, the Porte conducted a thorough investigation into the Shikak tribe and its chief which concluded that the Shikak was a tribe whose

[836] Osman Ali, **op. cit.**, p. 130. However, the Hamidiye cavalry had some negative aspects. One of the motivations of the Kurdish Tribes was that the state's support could give them more strength in their internal competition. From the outset, the rush of some tribal chiefs to gain more hegemony within the Hamidiye cavalry had negative consequences. After the creation of the Hamidiye regiments, there were disputes among some of the tribes over the chieftaincy. For example, after the tribal chiefs returned from meeting the Sultan, the Jalali tribe became involved in a dispute, killing 18 people, also six people were killed in clashes within the Haiderandan Tribe. Abdusselam Ertekin, **Hamidiye Alayları ve Sosyo-Politik Etkileri (1890-1908)**, Doktora Tezi, Mardin Artuklu Üniversitesi, 2019, p. 233. The tribes that participated in the Hamidiye cavalry had great hegemony and sometimes abused it. For example, Ibrahim Pasha Milli, who was armed by the state and became the most powerful man in the region, repeatedly attacked the Arab tribes of Abu Asaf and Shammar, who were traditional rivals and whose hostility predated the formation of the Hamidiye cavalry. Lazarev states that Ibrahim Pasha, in response to the complaint of the Abu Asaf tribe to the Porte, attacked them, killed the tribal chief and his son and set their corps on fire. This led many Arab tribes to unite to confront the Milli tribe. These were not normal. The Times of India called the incident a racial conflict that could shake the Ottoman Empire. Kurds and Arabs the Conflict in Asia Minor, **The Times of India**, 6 August 1901, p. 5. Also see Sunar, **op. cit.**, pp. 125-126.

members are all Kurds and Sunnis and had nothing to do with Shiites so they were accepted as part of the Hamidiye cavalry regiments.[837]

Later, the Ottoman Empire tried to attract some other Sunni Kurdish tribes from Iran and then were admitted into the Hamidiye cavalry. The Armenian threat was an important factor that led Iranian Kurdish tribes to participate in the Hamidiye cavalry as it was no longer confined to eastern Anatolia, but the western regions of Lake Urmia on the Iranian side had become the base for the restructuring of Armenian organizations and they were attacking the Ottoman territories from these regions. In the late 19th century, the conflicts between Ottoman Kurds and the Armenians in the region escalated. There were several clashes between them which coincided with a renewed dispute over the ownership of Qutur between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. Mirza Musa Khan, who was Iran's consul in Van between 1884-88, demonstrates that the Ottomans constantly tried to take back Qutur. To this end, the Ottomans encouraged the Kurds of Qutur to rebel against Iran. So under the constant Kurdish protests, Tehran was forced to change the governor of Qutur five times after the Berlin Agreement until 1888.[838]

In 1895, Dervish Pasha indicated in a letter to the Iranian border demarcation commission that he had reviewed both the Ottoman and the Van annual record books (*Salname*) and after investigating with the state officials, he came to the conclusion that Qutur and all its villages belonged to the Mahmudi district which was part of the Van province. Then after the completion of the investigation, Dervish Pasha sent the state officials to install new border markers in the eastern areas of Qutur.[839]

Dervish Pasha's step, predictably, sparked strong Iranian protests. Once again, through the British and Russian embassies in Istanbul, Iran put pressure on the Porte to stop the attempts of Dervish Pasha. Although temporarily the issue of ownership of Qutur was abandoned by the Porte under pressure from the Russians and the Britons, at the same time the Kurdish tribes of Hamidiye cavalry continued to

[837] **BOA. Y.A.REP.**, No. 63/46, 3 Mart 1309, as cited in Ertekin, **op. cit.**, p. 42.
[838] Mirza Musa Khan Tababayi Ansari, **Zubdet al-waqay-i Tarikh-u Goghrafya-ye Van**, Ed. Hasan Hazrati and Shahla Yousuf Zade, Tehran, 1396, pp. 31, 37.
[839] **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 212, 1313.

attack the villages of Qutur. In 1895, there were several clashes between Hamidiye cavalry and patriotic Armenians in the border areas near Qutur. According to the Sun newspaper, Hamidiye cavalry and Ottoman forces attacked several villages of Qutur which had Armenians' presence on the Iranian side but were repelled by the Iranian forces.[840]

One of the privileges that the Kurdish tribes, who joined the Cavalry on the Iranian border enjoyed was the state's backing. The Porte supported them in the face of both local authorities and international parties. For instance, following a clash between two Ottoman tribes with some Armenians from Iran, the head of the Iranian Border Commission criticized the Ottoman tribes in a strong language calling two chieftains; Sharaf Beg and Omer Beg impolite (*bi adab*).[841] In response to his Iranian counterpart, the head of the Ottoman Border Commission wrote the following;

> Regarding what you have stated about the Honorable Sharaf Beg, while he is one of the Hamidiye leaders and Omar Agha is a Lieutenant with a military rank and they have not committed any crime. Using the term "impolite" for them is against diplomatic principles and international law. Your removal of the phrase is considered a gesture of friendship and good intentions.[842]

The support of the Porte encouraged Sharaf Beg and other tribal chiefs more. In the following years, Sharaf Beg and his Hamidiye cavalry regiment attacked the Armenians of Khuy and Salmas several times. Iran repeatedly asked the Ottoman Empire to remove him from the border but to no avail.[843]

After the Hamidiye cavalry model succeeded on the Ottoman side, especially for its ability to control the Kurdish tribes to some extent within the state's military system, Iran considered a similar move and wanted to create a government-affiliated military team of the Kurdish tribes.[844] However, this was not an easy task for Iran especially in the western regions of Lake Urmia, which was the hotbed of the Ottoman-Iranian border disputes as religious bigotry was at its peak among the Kurds in the region. According to Averyanov, their religious bigotry made them hate

[840] **The Sun**, 30 November 1895, p. 7.
[841] **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 305, 2, Zilhice, 1312.
[842] **GESIO.**, vol. II, p. 531 5, Zilhice, 1312.
[843] **GESIO.**, vol. IV p. 154 Rebiülevvel, 1317.
[844] Ertekin, **op. cit.**, p. 42.

the Persian, Turkish, Azeri, and even Alawite Shiites of Dersim and Kozan, and they were unlikely to defend Iran in times of war.[845] Iran, not being able to recruit troops from its Kurdish tribes, according to Ottoman intelligence reports, organized Armenians who had fled to Iran to form a military brigade similar to the Hamidiye cavalry.[846]

In addition, Iran supported the Armenians in their conflicts with the Hamidiye cavalry, especially in the areas around Qutur. For example, when Sharaf Beg Merziki, entered Qutur with 400 horsemen to arrest four Armenians, the Iranian officials of Qutur confronted him. Then Naser al-Din Shah, along with ordering the foreign ministry to convey this incident to the Porte and protest, demanded that those whom Sharaf Beg wanted shall be taken to Khuy, Salmas, or Tabriz for protection.[847] Correspondingly, some Armenians who had migrated to Iran from the Ottoman Empire attacked the Kurdish tribes from the border areas. In the late 19th century, there were several bloody clashes between Armenians and Kurds in the border areas. In early September 1897, for example, there were several clashes between Armenians in the border areas of Azerbaijan and the Kurdish tribes on the Ottoman side, in which hundreds of people were killed. In mid-August of the same year, the Ottoman Kurds, in retaliation for an earlier Armenian raid, attacked two Armenian villages around Salmas, killing about 200 people.[848] After investigating the incident, Tehran accused the Ottoman forces of conniving with the Kurds during their attack. It, therefore, asked the Ottoman Empire to compensate for the damages.[849] In late 1897 the situation was getting worse, when a group of Armenian patriots from the Iranian side made a night raid on a Kurdish tribe in Başkale, killing several hundred

[845] Averyanov, **op. cit.**, pp. 326-327.
[846] **BOA. Y.PRK.ML.**, No. 12/9, 1308 Safer 19. There is not much information available about the truthfulness of this news. However, even if it was true, it does not seem to have been anything serious and long-lasting.
[847] **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 213, 16 Cemaziyelahir 1313.
[848] **The San Francisco Call**, August 20, 1897, p. 1; **The sun**, August 20, 1897, P. 3; **Willmar Tribune**, August 24, 1897; **The Hope pioneer**, August 26, 1897.
[849] **The Austin Weekly Statesman**, September 30, 1897; **The Evening Journal**, September 29, 1897.

people. As expected, after this incident, the Kurds attacked the Armenian villages around Urmia several times.[850]

In the clashes between Kurds and Armenians in general, press reports and diplomatic accounts from the Russian and British consulates describe the Hamidiye cavalry and Kurds as brutal, lawless, and bloodthirsty, and less mentioning of the Armenian military activities while as Stanford Shaw and Ezel Shaw point out, Armenian nationalist groups became increasingly active and used terror and violence not only against Muslims but also against Armenians who did not think like them. These groups forced the wealthy Armenians to cooperate and incited Muslims to retaliate to encourage Russia and Britain to intervene. They further indicate that:

> The Muslims were kept from responding in kind, though the sporadic Armenian raids increasingly poisoned the atmosphere and made it more and more difficult for Armenians and Muslims to live side by side as they had for generations.[851]

It is worth mentioning that Tehran had several objectives in defending the Armenians. The first was to gain international support and present itself as the advocate of Christians. Secondly, Iran feared that the conflict within the Ottoman Empire between the Kurdish tribes and Armenians would be transferred to Iran, so Russia, under the pretext of protecting the Armenians, would take over these areas. Last but not least was that the Armenians in the regions of Khuy, Salmas, and Qutur became Iranian agents in order to confront the Hamidiye cavalry, and the Ottoman tribes, just as the Kurds of the Hamidiye cavalry, had become the Ottoman agents to take over the villages of Qutur.

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[850] The Penn's Grove record., October 29, 1897; **BOA. Y.PRK.PT**., No. 15/ 75 1315 Rebîülevvel 11. However, according to the New York Times, 300-600 Kurds were killed. **New York Times**, 1 July 1897.

[851] Stanford J Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, **History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey**: Vol. II, Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey 1808-1975. Vol. 11. Cambridge University Press, 1977, pp. 202-203.

4.2.3. The Return of Sheikh Ubeidullah's Sons to Nehri

While preparing to create the Hamidiye cavalry regiments, the Porte allowed Sheikh Muhammad Sadiq, son of Sheikh Ubeidullah, to return to the border areas.[852] Just as the creation of the Hamidiye cavalry on the frontier was partly related to the increased Armenian activities on the Iranian side, so was the return of Sheikh Sadiq to the political scene. Especially the conflict between Kurds, Armenians, and Nestorians escalated in the Tiyari region near Hakkari. In these conflicts, while the Porte accused Iran of encouraging the Armenians and Nestorians, Iran accused the Ottomans of inciting the Kurdish tribes against the Nestorians and Armenians.[853] In this situation, the return of Sheikh Ubeidullah's sons to Hakkari caused great fear among the Iranians, who interpreted it as a sign of the Ottomans' desire to create chaos. Concerning Sheikh Sadiq's return, Qajarian royal court clerk Etimad al-Saltana states;

> Apparently, the Ottomans have sent Sheikh Ubeidullah's sons to go to the border and gather cavalry'. Because of the oppression of the poor people by the

[852] According to a letter sent by Amir Nizam to the Iranian Foreign Ministry, there were rumors of Sheikh Abdul Qadir's return to Nawchia. He also asked the Foreign Ministry to contact the Ottoman Empire to remove him from the border. See **GESIO.**, vol. III, No. 611. Jalil et al., also point out that the Ottoman Empire returned the sons of Sheikh Ubaidullah to the border with the creation of the Hamidiye cavalry to confront Iran through them. See, Jalil-i Jalil, M.P. Lazarev, M.A. Hasratiyan, Şakro Mhoyan, Cigaline Org, **Şorşekani Kurd le serdemi Nwêda**, Trans. by Behadin Jalal Mustafa, Erbil, 2015, p176. However, according to William Wigram, and Edgar Wigram, the Ottoman Empire, along with Sheikh Ubeidullah, exiled only Sheikh Abdul Qadir and allowed Sheikh Sadiq to stay in Nehri. William Ainger Wigram, and Edgar Thomas Ainger Wigram, **The cradle of mankind: life in eastern Kurdistan**. A. & C. Black, Limited, 1922. Nonetheless, after the rebellion of Sheikh Ubeidullah, the name of Sheikh Sadiq is missing from the relations between Iran and the Ottoman Empire and only by the late 1880s, he had gradually reestablished his power on the Iranian side.

[853] In 1889, in response to Armenian protests, the Kurdish tribes attacked Armenians in the Tyari region near Hakkari. The British Foreign Secretary protested to the Ottoman ambassador. However, the Ottoman ambassador blamed the Iranian Kurdish tribes. When the British Foreign Minister delivered the Ottoman response to Iran, the Iranian Ambassador in London Mirza Malkom Kahn, who was Armenian by origin, expressed his surprise and replied that Tehran has not been informed that Turkish Armenians have filed any complaints about the attacks from our borders. To find the real perpetrators of these atrocities, we only have to refer to the evidence of the victims themselves. Mirza Malkom, also accused the Porte and the Ottoman ambassador of making "propaganda", "Prince Malkom Khan to the marquis of Salisbury", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 1 (1889),** Document No. 73, 14 mays 1889. The confrontation between the Kurds and the Armenians had caused great embarrassment to the Porte. The Armenians were accusing the Kurds while the Kurds constantly sent letters to Istanbul accusing Armenians. "Correspondence respecting the condition of the populations in Asiatic Turkey, and the proceedings in the case of Moussa Bey", **HCPP. Turkey. No. 1 (1890)**, passim.

Iranian rulers, most of these subjects, especially Sunnis, will join him, enter the Ottoman Empire and serve it.[854]

In these circumstances, the return of Sheikh Ubeidullah's sons and the creation of the Hamidiye cavalry could have put the Ottoman resistance in a strong and organized framework against the Armenian separatist activities and the Russian invasion. Relying on Russian archives, Jalil et al., point out that upon his return by order of the Ottoman authorities, Sheikh Sadiq launched a widespread campaign in Iran to rally support for the Ottoman Empire and promote Sunnite which created chaos on the Iranian side and further complicated relations between the Ottoman Empire and Iran.[855] Thus in a short time, Sheikh Sadiq was able to gain influence among his father's murids and rebuild the position of their family. Regarding his growing influence among the Iranian Kurds, the governor of Khuy informed Tehran that Sheikh Sadiq's power and inspiration among the Kurds have reached a level that exceeded obedience and they were ready to sacrifice their lives for him and he had everything under his control.[856] Despite his religious hegemony, according to Soane and Nikitine, Sheikh Sadiq had the Harki and Gardi tribes and the two branches of Shamdinan (Zarza and Homaro - probably referring to Oramar) with about 13,000 people under his direct command.[857]

Soon after Shaikh Sadiq's return to the border, the four major tribes of the region revolted against the new governor of Sauj Bulaq. After the new governor arrested and tortured one of the Kurdish tribal chiefs, all but one Kurdish tribe protested and demanded the governor's removal. Instead of granting their demands, Tehran appointed Samad Khan as the new ruler, who was previously known for being strict. Unhappy with the state’s decision, Kurdish chieftains, and notables went to Tabriz and submitted a 16-point proposal to the government, demanding autonomy for the Kurds and to be allowed to appoint their own rulers whom the Shah would approve and set a budget for. However, the state removed only Samad Khan

[854] İtmadu-Seltene, **Ruzname-u Hatirat**, Ed. Eraj Afshar, 1345, p. 975, as cited in Burzuyi, **op. cit.**, p. 121.
[855] Jalil et al., **op. cit.**, p. 77.
[856] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 805. 19 Muharrem 1317.
[857] Basile Nikitine, and Ely B. Soane. "The tale of Suto and Tato: Kurdish text with translation and notep." **Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies**, No. 3.1 (1923); 69-106.

and did not meet the other demands of the Kurdish tribes. The uprising reached such a point that, as on previous occasions, Russia threatened to send troops to Azerbaijan if Iran failed to quell the revolution.[858] With the ongoing unrest in Sauj Bulaq, Iranian forces laid siege to Sauj Bulaq in the summer of 1891.[859]

To overcome the problems in Sauj Bulaq, Iranian authorities were in talks with the Ottoman consulate in Tabriz which suggests that most likely the events were related to Sheikh Sadiq's return to the border and the activities of Hamidiye cavalry.[860] After the further enhancement of Sheikh Sadiq's hegemony in Iran and the continued unrest on the border, in 1893 Iran asked the Porte through the Istanbul consulate to remove Sheikh Sadiq from the border.[861] At the same time, Naser al-Din Shah telegraphed the Russian Emperor Alexander III, asking him to put pressure on the Porte to distance Sheikh Ubeidullah's sons from the border. So, Russia instructed its embassy in Istanbul to help the Iranians in this regard, but the Ottomans insisted they did not participate in Sheikh Sadiq's attacks on Iranian territory.[862]

Though Russian and Iranian documents indicate that Sheikh Sadiq was expanding his power in Iran within the Ottoman political agenda and with the Ottomans' support, in Ottoman documents, there is no clear evidence to support this claim, at least from the center. For example, after Iran's demand for the extradition of Sheikh Sadiq, the Porte ordered the governor of Van to investigate whether the Sheikh had made any excess into Iran.[863] This suggests that until then, some of Sheikh Sadiq's actions were independent and not within the agenda of the Porte.

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[858] **Daily Inter Mountain**, February 22, 1900, p. 1; **The Indianapolis journal**, February 23, 1900, p. 5; **The Morning Astorian**, February 23, 1900, p. 4; **The Topeka state journal**, February 22, 1900, p. 6; Averyanov also provides some information on this subject, see Averyanov, **op. cit.**, p. 325. Curzon notes that the state has collected taxes to prepare the military forces to suppress the Kurdish insurgency in the lower regions of Tabriz at that time. However, he gives no details about the nature of the insurgency. Curzon, **op. cit.**, vol. II. p. 478

[859] Lazarev, **op. cit.**, p. 120.

[860] Lazarev, **op. cit.**, p. 121.

[861] **BOA. BEO**., No. 746/55938, 17 Ramazan 1310.

[862] Lazarev, **op. cit.**, p. 121.

[863] **BOA. BEO**., No. 746/55938.



Figure 8. From left to right Dr. Cochran, Sheikh Muhammad Sadiq (Most likely), and his men. The photo was taken in front of Dr. Kochar's house in Urmia.[864]

Sheikh Sadiq's close awareness of the problems of the Kurdish tribes helped to increase his influence among them. With his religious and political position, he was able to solve the internal problems of some tribes, something that neither the Iranian nor the Ottoman rulers could do. Such as putting an end to the long-lasting enmity between the two clans of Piran (from the Bilbas tribe) and Kardar (from the Shikak tribe) and reconciling them.[865] He also sometimes helped the Kurdish tribes against the state officials. For instance, during 1889-1894, the Piran clan was not allowed to return to their summer pastures in the Lahijan region by the Iranian

[864] **Pearl Digital Collections**, Shedd family--Archivep., Presbyterian Church in the U.P. A. West Persia Mission., Cochran, Joseph Plumb, 1855-1905, Creation 1905. (Copyright Undetermined; http://rightsstatementp. org/vocab/UND/1.0/); Speer, **op. cit.**, p. 151. Dr. Cochran graduated from New York University and died in 1905 after 27 years of working as a doctor in Iran. During his stay in Urmia, he built one of the first modern hospitals in Iran. he was well known for playing an important role in protecting Urmia from the Kurdish attack during Sheikh Ubeidullah's rebellion, whereupon the Shah, conferred upon him the Order of the Lion and the Sun (Nishan-e Shir-u Hurshid). Until then, it had been awarded only to two other non-Iranians in the country's history. **The Sun** (newspaper), August 21, 1905, p. 9.

[865] **BOA. DH.SFR.**, No. 684/186, 28 Safer 1321; **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 820, 18 Jamadi Awwal 1321.

authorities. The clan repeatedly asked the Porte for help in resolving this issue, however, not only they were not helped, but, as Abdullah Pasha, commander of the Fourth Ottoman Army pointed out, the tribe was treated inhumanely by the Ottoman local authorities. Disappointed with the Ottoman help in 1894, they tried to return to Lahijan on their own but were pushed back to the Qandil Mountains by the Mamash clan, which was strongly supported by Iran.[866]

In the following year, the Ottoman consul in Tabriz asked the governor of Azerbaijan, Muzaffar al-Din Mirza (later Shah), to allow the comeback of the Piran, but he refused. What increased the enmity between these two clans was that Iran had granted the pastures of Piran to the loyal Mamash.[867] For the following summer, Sheikh Sadiq gathered a large force consisting of about 6,000 men,[868] on the border of the Vazneh and Lahijan regions and forces from the Piran, Mangor, and other tribes accompanied Sheikh Sadiq. Iran, for its part, prepared the Mamash and Karapapak tribes for resistance and preventing Sheikh Sadiq from entering Iran.[869]

By the end of the 19th century, as the power of the local authorities of the Ottoman Empire had weakened, the Kurdish tribes became militarily stronger. According to Averyanov, state power in remote areas was close to nothing. Most of the districts of Hakkari were without official administrators. Even Hakkari where Sheikh Sadiq was residing had no *Kaymakam* until the late 19th century[870] and the newly appointed *Kaymakam* with the agent of Reji; the government's special company for the tobacco trade, were given accommodation by Sheikh Sadiq in an apartment in his palace.[871] The weakening of the power of the Ottoman local authorities also led to the increase of the dominance of Sheikh Sadiq over the Kurdish tribes, including the Hamidiye cavalry. As Shaikh Sadiq's influence grew on the Ottoman side, he also expanded his influence in Iran, which frightened the

[866] **BOA. Y.EE.**, No. 158/53, 28 Rebiülevvel 1312.
[867] **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 388, 6 Rabiulahir 1313; **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 389, 6 Rabiulahir 1313.
[868] **BOA. BEO**., No. 2121/159008, 22 Rebîülevvel 1321.
[869] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 659, 16 Safer 1314.
[870] Avaryanov, **op. cit.**, p. 296.
[871] Bertram Dickson, "Journeys in Kurdistan", **The Geographical Journal**, vol. XXXV, No. 4, 1910; 357–78, p. 371.

Iranians. By 1900 Sheikh's influence increased in such a manner that the head of foreign relations local office in Urmia briefed its ministry that;

> The biggest and most painful problem is that the Iranian tribes along the frontier consider the Sheikh as the center of religious guidance and they believe that his obedience is obligatory.

This increased the fear and anxiety among the people of the region. After receiving this letter, the Shah instructed Iran's embassy in Istanbul to notify the Ottomans that "*it is not what we agreed upon*".[872]

Sheikh Sadiq's strong dominance over Iran's Kurdish tribes made the Iranian authorities suspicious of the nomadic tribes. To dispel these doubts, they wanted to ensure the tribes' allegiance to Iran as soon as possible. One of the ways the government used to confirm the tribes' loyalty was that the chieftains had to go to Tabriz on a certain day and appear at the government headquarters before the governor. Whenever a tribe deviated from this tradition, the state was displeased with it and tried to explain the cause of its rebellion.[873] An example of this was the case of the Piran, when its chief Mohammad Amin Agha in 1900, was able to return to some surrounding areas of Lahijan, but he refused to visit Tabriz at the appointed time. Nizam al-Saltana who was then the governor of Tabriz issued an arrest warrant for him and decided to assign Mohammad Agha, the chief of the Mamash tribe, to take back the areas of Lahijan.[874] The actions of the Qajar authorities, as will be explained below, once again pushed the Piran clan toward the Ottoman Empire. Instructing Mohammad Agha Mamash to control the area and expel the Piran, which had previously been at odds with each other, deepened the enmity between the two clans.

[872] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 805, 19 Muharram 1317.
[873] Burzuyi, **op. cit.**, p. 119.
[874] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 683, 2 Safer 1318.



Figure 9. Muhammad Amin Agha Piran (seated left) with Bayiz Agha Mangor's Men.[875]

As an expected result, the pressure on the Kurdish tribes in Azerbaijan had a negative consequence for the Iranian authorities. Lazarev points out that even though the Kurds faced oppression as a racial minority, ordinary Kurdish people in Iran, both farmers and nomadic tribes, faced severe oppression from landowners and Iranian officials. At the same time, the Qajars were unable to attract noble Kurds and tribal chiefs, as Ottomans had done.[876] The behavior of the Iranian authorities was also noticed by the Ottoman authorities who would not miss the opportunity to attract the Kurdish tribes who had been forced to leave Iran. An example of this was the joining of the Piran and Haidaran tribes and parts of Mangor and Mamash to the Ottoman Empire.

For example, in 1903, a part of the Haideran tribe, numbering 700 families, decided to migrate from Chalderan to the Ottoman side because of the mistreatment they were receiving. While still in Iranian territory, several tribal chiefs filed a complaint with the Foreign Ministry against Iqbal al-Saltana, the governor of Maku

[875] **"Alexander Iyas Collection", Physical Location; The Finnish Museum of Photography, Helsinki, John Tchalenko, Alexander Iyas and Vladimir Minorsky in Persian Kurdistan 1912–1914, 2006, p. 26.**

[876] Lazarev, **op. cit.**, p. 180.

and chief of the Bayat tribe, but Tehran did not take them into account. "*Their demands are not worth listening to,*" Shah wrote in the margin of the report.[877] A few days later, regarding the tribe's migration, the ruler of Khuy notified the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the migration of the Haideran tribe wass not in the interest of the state and asked him to show them mercy and remove the oppression practiced against them so that they would not leave the country.[878]

In return, the Ottoman Empire tried to take advantage of the conflict between the government and the Kurdish tribes in the region and encourage them to migrate to the Ottoman Empire so it would consolidate its control over the areas of northwestern Iran that historically considered them its own. Thus sometimes, after securing the support of the tribes and the inhabitants of a disputed area, the Ottomans sent troops to strengthen their foothold. For example, the two villages of Saro and Sardik in Bradost, which Iran considered to be a part of itself so much that Naser al-Din Shah stated in the mid-1880s, "*I will crush the mouth of anyone who says it does not belong to Iran*", in 1893, however, Sheikh Sadiq, through his murids was able to take over the villages and build a roadside inn (*caravanserai)* there. The Ottomans then sent a military contingent to the area to establish their foothold, which caused strong Iranian protests.[879] However, despite this, Ottomans gradually gained control of more frontier areas. Lazarev and the Iranian ambassador in Istanbul claim that in 1904, Sheikh Sadiq was given weapons, ammunition, and money by the governor of Van to distribute amongst the Iranian Kurdish tribes that were pro-Ottomans. Thus, he distributed some weapons to the Margawar tribes and built a fortress in Soma, which was an important strategic and military location.[880] When the Iranian foreign minister protested the actions of the Sheikh to the Ottoman ambassador Shams al-Din Bey, the latter proposed to the Iranian foreign minister that Iran should pay for Sheikh Sadiq's property annually and make an agreement with him so that they would avoid his trouble. However, the minister rejected the idea of a dignified state

[877] **Ibid.**, 263
[878] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 714, 18 Safer 1321.
[879] **GESIO.**, vol. IV No. 618, 23 Cemadiahar 1318; **BOA. BEO**., No. 2122/159140, 10 Temuz 1319; **BOA. BEO**., No. 2164/162232;16 Cemâziyelevvel 1321.
[880] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 821, 26 Zilhicce 1321; Lzarev, **op. cit.**, p. 180.

making an agreement with a figure like Sheikh Sadiq, calling it a shame for the state.[881]

The Ottoman defendants of Sheikh Sadiq's rights were because the strengthening of his hegemony as an Ottoman sheikh was equivalent to the strengthening of the Ottoman hegemony in the region. As it was evident in the following years, when the Ottomans took over the areas of Targawar, Margawar, and Bradost, one of the excuses for their stay was that these areas belonged to the Ottoman Sheikhs of Nehri.[882] However, Sheikh Sadiq was able to accumulate a large capital during those years thanks to the connivance of the Ottoman authorities. One of the good aspects of Sheikh Sadiq regarding the Ottomans was that unlike his brother Abdul Qadir,[883] he was not involved in national organizations and movements. Economically, despite collecting taxes from the villages that belonged to him,[884] Sheikh Sadiq was able to make a fortune by using his political hegemony. In the years to come, during the Ottoman expansion into western Iran, the Sheikh was able to establish a thriving market for his goods in the Kurdish regions of Iran. According to William Wigram, and Edgar Wigram, Sheikh Sadiq worked smarter than his father and accepted the political reality, taking advantage of the Ottoman local authorities' connive to bring weapons from Russia, and sent them to Iran. At the same time, he took over the cultivation and trade of tobacco in the region and exported it to Iran.[885] Dixon notes that often his convoys to Iran have reached 100

[881] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 825.
[882] **The Evining Mail**, Wednesday 25 September 1907, p. 8.
[883] In 1896, Sheikh Abdul Qadir was accused of participating in the assassination attempt of Sultan Abdulhamid and was exiled with his family to Medina, where he remained until the establishment of the Committee of Union and Progress. After his return, he settled in Istanbul and became the president of the Kurdish Cooperation and Social Development Organization. He later became a member of the Senate of the Ottoman Empire (*Meclis-i Âyan*) and in 1919 became the chairman of the Council of State (*Şûrâ-yı Devlet*) in the Ottoman Empire. However, in 1925, he was executed in Istanbul with his son for participating in the uprising of Sheikh Saeed Piran. See Hogr Tahir Tofiq, "Şeyh Abdulkadir al-Nehri 1851-1925, al-Wacihet-u al-Siyasiyetul al-Kurdiyetu al-Ula fi Istanbul, fi Rub'ul Ewwel min al-Qernil Eşrin", **Mujelet Jamiyet Zakho**, vol. I No. 1, 2013;359-382, p. 363; Martin Van Bruinessen "The Sâdatê Nehrî or Gîlânîzâde of Central Kurdistan" **Journal of the History of Sufism**, 2000;1(2), pp. 79-91.
[884] Mark Sykes, points out that even on the Ottoman side, Sheikh Sadiq collected taxes. In one incident, he sent 15 of his men to collect tax from his lands in the Zebar region, but they were arrested by state officials as thieves and obstructers. They then burned about eight miles, demolished the houses and looted them. Mark Sykes, **The Caliphs' Last Heritage: A Short History of the Turkish Empire.** Macmillan and Company, limited, 1915, p. 431.
[885] Wigram & Wigram, **op. cit.**, p. 163.

mules. As Dixon claims He made about £10,000 annually from trading in Iran.[886]

4.3. THE OTTOMAN EXPANSION IN NORTH-EASTERN IRAN DURING SULTAN ABDULHAMID II'S REIGN

After nearly two decades of deepening border disputes between the Ottoman Empire and Iran and several fruitless border negotiations, in 1905, with the help of some Kurdish tribes, the Ottoman Empire began expanding into the Kurdish regions of north-eastern Iran, which were located in both Azerbaijan and Kurdistan provinces and remained there until the end of 1912. This step of the Ottoman Empire was within the framework of the new policy of Pan-Islamism that tried to redefine the state's identity on a new basis and give more attention to Muslim citizens of the Empire and fully attach the Sunni Kurds to it. At the regional and international levels, some issues became factors or facilitators to make the Ottomans think about taking over these areas. Some of these factors were related to Iran and others to the Ottoman Empire as we discuss below.

4.3.1. Indirect Factors to the Ottoman Occupation of North-Western Iran

4.3.1.1. Factors Related to Iran

The Treaty of Erzurum II marked the beginning of a new round of political negotiations on the border demarcation between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. During this period, despite continuous conflicts, both countries were willing to resolve border disputes through diplomatic and peaceful dialogues. Especially Iran was very cautious in doing any provocative actions that might trigger Ottomans to control the disputed areas without a prior agreement for two reasons: the first reason was Iran's inability for any military confrontations with any surrounding forces due to the difficult internal situation the country was going through at that time. The second reason was that Iran would diplomatically gain more and with the help from

[886], Bertram Dickson, "Journeys in Kurdistan", **The Geographical Journal**, vol. XXXV, No. 4, 1910; 357–78. p. 371.

Russia and Britain, was able to claim ownership over some of those areas, most importantly the Qutur region.

Nevertheless, the constant border instabilities were threatening Iran's ownership over these areas. As mentioned in previous sections, following Sheikh Ubeidullah's rebellion, a new set of events began in the frontier regions between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. In the following years, Iran's relationship with the Kurdish tribes started complicating further. The Haideran, Shikak, Ako, and Bilbas tribes engaged in several clashes with the state authorities, and the tension between them reached its peak in early 1905. This was one of the most important factors in the Ottoman expansionism eastward. However, the factor mentioned above was not the only factor. To understand the motives that eventually led to the Ottoman invasion one should consider the whole picture with many internal and external dimensions.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Iran was dealing with difficult economic and political conditions which led to the rise of public protests and the emergence of the Constitutional Revolution (in Persian; *Inqilab-e Mashrotah*) starting in 1905 and continuing until 1911. Kesrevi, the author of the *Tarikh-e Marshruta-ye Iran* (History of the Iranian Constitutional Revolution) and a witness of the time, asserts the deterioration of the political and economic conditions of that period. He describes how the monopoly of grain by merchants and warehouse akhunds increased the price of wheat to such an extent that not only no one could afford to buy the bread but also it was not available even in the bakeries. It was especially worse in the regions of Azerbaijan province because Mohammad Ali Mirza (later Shah) and ruler of Azerbaijan owned wheat warehouses and directly benefited from the high prices. Despite this difficult situation the Shah and his companions were on a trip to Europe which cost a large amount of money and sparked lots of protests. According to Kesrevi, the behaviors of Mohammad Ali Mirza, who was first in the line to the throne, made people hopeless about the future of the country.[887] Following Azerbaijan's bad circumstances, a new problem emerged in Tehran which caused unrest in the city that eventually led to a constitutional revolution. When the

[887] Ahmadi Kasrevi, **Tarih-i Meşruteye İran**, Tehran, 1363, p. 140

government punished some traders and shop owners on the pretext of increasing the price of sugar, many shop owners closed their shops in protest. In response, Ayn al-Dawla,[888] the governor of Tehran, ordered the looting of the shops of those who participated in the strike. In addition to workers, ordinary people, approximately 2,000 akhunds, preachers, and religious students joined the protests, but Ayn al-Dawla ignored the demands of the protesters. So, they reached out to the Ottoman ambassador to deliver their demands to the state. Thus through the foreign minister, Mushir al-Dawla, the Ottoman ambassador suggested to the Shah establishing a justice court to sort out the issues, and Muzaffar al-Din Shah agreed to establish a new court called *adaletkhane* (the justice house).[889] Further, the continuing demands of people and protests of religious scholars forced the Shah to order the establishment of a national council that included representatives from all cities including princes, scholars, Qajar nobles, landowners, traders, and craftsmen.[890]

In the following years, despite these changes, several new conflicts erupted between constitutionalists and the Qajar loyalists that weakened Iran's position on the political scale and eased foreign interventions from neighboring countries, especially Russia, Britain, and the Ottoman Empire. The geographical location of some parts of Iran that shared borders with the Ottoman Empire motivated the Russians to apply their hegemony over these palaces and tried to strengthen their grip around Lake Urmia, which had become a place under their influence and a strong marketplace for their businesses to flourish. So, they tried to prevent Ottomans from controlling these areas. For this reason, they insisted on Iran's ownership of the Qutur region and because of their support, Iran had succeeded in obtaining international recognition of its ownership over Qutur in the Treaty of Berlin.

[888] Ayn al-Dawla was a prince of Qajar and grandson of Fath Ali Shah. he was known as toughest opponents of constitutionalism in Iran. See J. Calmard, "Ayn ad-Dawla, Abd al-Majīd" **Encyclopaedia Iranica**, vol. III, pp. 137-140 Available at; https://iranicaonline.org/articles/ayn-al-dawla-soltan-abd-al-majid-mirza, Accessed; 23 January 2022.
[889] Nawshirwan Mustafa, **op. cit.**, p. 398.
[890] **Ibid.**, 397.

4.3.1.2. Factors Related to the Ottoman Empire

4.3.1.2.1. The Strategic Importance of the Region for the Ottoman Empire in Relation to Russia

The plains of Azerbaijan province divide the Zagros Mountains in a column from north to south into two parts. In addition to the fertile soil, both parts of the mountains were an important traffic route between eastern Anatolia-Baghdad and Basra, as well as Russia-Baghdad and Basra. As the British consul in Van, Dixon pointed out, if any railway was to be built from Russia to Baghdad and Shat-al-Arab, it must pass through Vazneh and Lahijan and if any railway was to be built from Bayazit to Baghdad, it must pass through the same route.[891] However, because of Russia's strong hegemony in north-western Iran, it was almost impossible for the Ottomans to make these areas their railway routes. In 1905, Russia's heavy defeat against Japan and the death of thousands of Russian soldiers sparked domestic protests and the Russian Constitutional Revolution. This situation weakened Russia's position in the region and made the Ottomans think about taking complete control, before Russia could revive again. Thus, together with many Kurdish tribes, the Ottoman Empire took over much of the territory known as the status quo, which was disputed between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. On the other hand, the Ottoman defeat in the Balkans gradually reduced the number of non-Muslims within the Ottoman Empire. This caused the Ottoman Empire to shift its focus toward the Muslim subjects and the East.

4.3.1.2.2. The Ottoman Empire's Relationship with the Kurds

Alongside the international challenges facing the Porte, a Kurdish nationalist movement was gradually emerging within the Ottoman Empire. In the 1890s, the Ottoman Empire faced a strong wave of modernization calling for political change and constitutional rule. The most obvious of which was the creation of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), which was formed by four people, two of whom were Kurds; Abdullah Cevdet and Ishak Sükuti.

[891] Ateş, **op. cit.**, pp. 239-240.

Along with the formation of the CUP, a group of Kurdish elites, mostly from the tribal ruling families and sheikhs, began to work in the name of reformism and modernism. One of them was Sheikh Abdul Qadir Nehri, who was arrested in 1896 on charges of participating in an assassination attempt on Sultan Abdulhamid and was sent to Medina with his family.[892] In 1898-1902, the Kurdistan newspaper was published by Mikdad Midhat Bedir Khan in Turkish and Kurdish. In 1902, Abdurrahman Badir Khan and Hikmat Baban participated in the first meeting of the CUP in Paris.[893] In the following years, as the activities of the Young Turks and the CUP increased, the Kurdish and Armenian elites too relied on organizations that opposed the rule of the Sultan. Particularly in 1905, with the victory of the Russian Constitutional Revolution and the rise of the Constitutional Revolution in Iran, alongside the advocacy of reform and modernism by the opposition groups inside the Ottoman Empire, Kurdish cultural and nationalist organizations were also growing. Therefore, with these political changes, the Ottoman expansion to the Kurdish regions of Azerbaijan could achieve several goals for the Porte, including:

1. The Porte could bring Kurds closer to the state and to some extent slow down the newly emerged wave of nationalism, so, if it showed its support for Sunni Kurds in Iran and declared its will to protect them and defend their religious rights.

2. According to Lazarev, one of the aims of the Ottoman expansion was to contain all Kurdish regions within its border and leave no room for any external forces influencing the Kurdish national mindset and provoking them against the Ottoman Empire.[894] The presence of Russia in the region was particularly sensitive since they had the potential to influence and incite Kurds against the Ottomans.

3. Kurds were divided into two groups; supporters of constitutionalism and reformists on the one hand and pro-Sultans on the other hand. With invading Kurdish regions in Iran, Sultan backed the latter group which included traditional leaders such as sheikhs, Kurdish chieftains, and Hamidiye cavalry regiments. Meanwhile, the

[892] Tofiq, **op. cit.**, p. 363.
[893] Chris Kutschera, **Mêjui Kurd le Sedey Nozde û Bistda**, Trans. by Muhammad Riyani, Çapxaney Karun, Tehran, 1369, p. 53.
[894] Lazarev, **op. cit.**, p. 186.

Kurds of Azerbaijan province due to the religious discrimination they were facing, especially supported Sultan and considered him their savior. In return, the Porte trusted Iranian Kurds in these areas more than it did with Kurds inside the Empire including the Hamidiye cavalry regiments, Jalil et al., assert.[895]

4.3.1.3. The Tribal Structure in the Azerbaijan Province

For many reasons, the tribal structure remained strong among the Kurds of Azerbaijan and its Kurdish tribes were still following the tribal leaders. The Ottoman Empire took advantage of this social structure in these regions by giving tribal chiefs privileges as it had given the Hamidiye cavalry chiefs to attain their support. For this reason, the Ottomans could not attract the attention of the Kurds in Kurdistan province the same as they did in Azerbaijan due to the shallower tribal structure and the presence of smaller Shiite communities.

Tribes of the Azerbaijan province were in constant conflicts over pasture, settlements, and over the leadership of the tribe. This was even happening within The Kurdish tribes themselves in addition to the intertribal fights over the tribe's chieftaincy. For example, the long-standing enmity between Mamash and Mangor, the fights of Mangor-Nuradini, Piran-Mamash, and Jalali-Haideran. However, when conflicts occurred between Kurdish and Azeri tribes such as Afshar, Beyat, and Karapapak, the conflict took on a religious-ethnic form in which the state supported the Azeris who were part of the state authority, or sometimes the officials of the region were mostly members of those Azeri tribes. Abrahamian emphasizes that the Qajar Shahs based their entire policy on two pillars: First, their retreat in the wake of serious popular protests, especially by religious leaders and clerics. Secondly through the interfering and provoking conflict between various groups in Iran's divided society.[896] The same author points out that the Qajar dynasty took advantage of disputes between different groups (and when it was necessary, created disputes) so they could impose their rule on different parts of the country and appoint their relatives as rulers. In this context, they managed to maintain their presence in the

[895] Jalil et al., **op. cit.**, p. 94.
[896] Ervand Abrahamian, **İran Beyne Du İnghlab**, Trans. by Ahmad Gul Muhammadi, Muhammad İbrahim Fatahi ve Leylayi, Tehran 1377, p. 53.

remote areas by creating hostility between the Shahsevens, Afshars, Kurds, Turkmens, Persians, and Lurs.[897]

The Qajar Shahs often had numerous children and practiced polygamy by marrying women from powerful tribes and authoritarian families in an attempt to gain their loyalty. As Abrahamian states, any tribe or group that could not reach the center of power at the imperial court always lost against those who did.[898] However, at the end of the 19th century, the social structure in the Azerbaijan province changed in some aspects in favor of the Kurdish tribes over their neighbors. This happened due to advancements in trading and the provision of agricultural lands by the state to Azari tribes. Consequently, large Azari tribes such as Afshar, Shahseven, and Karapapak abolished their nomadic life and settled in by the end of the 19th century.[899] This change was partly due to improvements in trading, an influx of finances, and foreign commercial projects, and partly related to the state's policy to settle the tribes. To encourage nomads to settle, the state granted the title of Emir-Toman to any tribal leader who owned 100 villages or more.[900]

The modification shifted the balance of tribal power towards the Kurds. While the loyal Azeri tribes settled, the Kurdish tribes maintained their nomadic lifestyle, remaining prepared to launch attacks, engage in battles, and migrate in groups. For example, the Karapapak, one of the strongest pro-state tribes, was settled in about 100 villages in the fertile soil of Sulduz and their chief was granted the rank of Amir-Toman.[901] Above that, the state did not charge them any taxes or annuities. However, all these concessions weakened Karapapak against the Kurdish tribes to such an extent that Ihtisham al-Saltana describes them as an unskilled useless tribe who cannot even defend their villages and properties against Ottomans and Kurdish invaders. He adds that "*it is meaningless to rely on them for protecting the country's borders when necessary*".[902] The Kurdish tribes were reinforced more when they

[897] **Ibid.**, 54-55.
[898] **Ibid.**, p. 62-63
[899] Curzon, **op. cit.**, p. 270; Razavi, **op. cit.**, p. 40.
[900] Razavi, **op. cit.**, p. 41.
[901] **Ibid.**, 40-41. Also see Mosiyob Nikitine, **Khaterat ve Sefername**, Trans. by Alimuhammad Frevşi, Marifet, Terhran, 1336, p. 208.
[902] İhtişam al-Saltana, **op. cit.**, p. 543.

obtained smuggled guns through the British, Russians, and Ottomans. Abrahamian confirms that since the 1870s, the import of smuggled weapons through the Britons made these groups own large military forces that empowered them to challenge the government.[903] In the following years, both Kurds and Armenians imported weaponry into Iran through different channels.[904] All these factors helped Ottomans to gain control over the frontier regions of Azerbaijan and Kurdistan provinces through the Kurdish warrior tribes.

4.3.2. Eruption of Disputes in the Frontiers

A series of important events that happened in 1904-1905 directly led to the outbreak of border disputes and Ottomans used these factors as justification for their expansion toward Iran. These were:

1- The murder of Jafar Agha Shikak.

2- The case of Sheikh Kamal Naqshbandi and the setting up of an Iranian customs base in Lahijan.

3- Case of Bayiz Pasha and seizure of Vazneh by the Ottomans.

4. Clashes between Ottoman and Iranian forces in the aftermath of the killing of an American missionary.

While discussing the four mentioned incidents, we try to analyze the policies of the Ottoman Empire and Iran in relation to the Kurdish tribes.

4.3.2.1. The Murder of Jafar Agha Shikak

The geographical location and distribution of the Shikak tribe over areas surrounding Qutur gave them a significant status to such extent that it was very difficult for the Ottoman Empire and Iran to entirely control Qutur without securing the support of this tribe. For this reason, Iran, Ottoman Empire, and Russia tried to

[903] **Ibid.**, 51. This situation continued until 1920s. Razavi States that after World War I, due to continuous attacks by the Kurds, Karapapak completely evacuated Sulduz, and the Kurds looted the entire area and they even took the ruins of houses. Razavi, **op. cit.**, p. 85.
[904] One way was hiding guns inside oil barrels and exporting it to Iran. See **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 781.

attract this tribe toward them for their political agenda. During the late 19th century, Russians made great efforts to bring Kurdish figures and tribal chiefs closer to them. Eagleton denotes that Jafar Agha, Abdul Razzaq Badir Khan, and Sayyid Taha, son of Sheikh Sadiq, were invited to Russia by Nicholas II, the Russian Tsar in 1889. Upon their return, they were given valuable gifts with encouraging promises about the tribe's status and aspirations.[905] Whether this narrative is true or not, it is clear that in the following years, Russia tried to attract the Shikak tribe through promises and threats.[906]

[905] William Eagleton Jr., **The Kurdish Republic of 1946**, Oxford University Press, London New York Toronto, 1963, p. 7. It seems that Eagleton is the first one to mention this and other authors quoted him, although Russian authors like Lazarev, Minorsky, Khalfin and Averyanov did not mention the above information.

[906] Aghasi indicates that after coming to Iran, the Russians supported the opponents of the constitution everywhere and Ismail Agha (Simko) was one of them and had become the focus of Russian attention. However, because Simko was a rebellious and free man, he couldn't easily submit to the Russians. So, the Russians decided to calm him down a little bit and arrested him then took him to Tiflis. After a while they released him and attracted him with threats, promises and bribes. He adds that Simko promised not to oppose them and settled in Khoy after returning from Tbiflis. See Mehdi Aghasi, **Tarih-i Khuy**, Muesseseye Tarih-u Ferhengi İran, Tebriz, 1350, p. 353.



Map 8. The map shows the location of Qutur as the most important gateway between Anatolia and Iran in the middle of the Zagros Mountains.

Qutur region was also of special importance to the Ottoman Empire. Ottoman officials tried to obtain the support of the Kurdish tribes in that region. Hamidiye commander Sharaf Beg Marzeki, who had been attacking Khuy and Salmas, caused further tensions between the Ottoman Empire and Iran for several years, was strongly supported by the Ottoman authorities and had a kinship with Shikak leaders through marriage. With the establishment of Hamidiye cavalry, on the Iranian side, Mohammad Agha Shikak was among the first Iranian Kurdish tribal chiefs to request the Ottoman Empire to accept them joining the Hamidiye cavalry regiments and Istanbul agreed to their request after investigation.[907]

[907] **BOA. Y.A.RES**., No. 63/46 as cited in Ertekin, **op. cit.**, p. 42. Even though there are Ottoman documents that prove the joining of Muhammad Agha in the Hamidiye cavalry, there is no solid information on the actual role of him and his sons within the cavalry and they generally remained an independent tribe.

According to the governor of Azerbaijan, after being enrolled in the Hamidiye regiments, Jafar Agha the elder son of Muhammad Agha Shikak attacked and plundered regions of Khuy and Salmas under the name of the Ottomans several times.[908] Safayi mentions in his memoirs that Jafar and Simko and their father Muhammad Agha had taken refuge in the Ottoman territory and lived there for several years. As far as Safayi is concerned, they made Khuy, Salmas, and Urmia their targets for insult and returned to Ottoman territory after killing people and looting their homes.[909]

Mirza Musa Beg, the head of the Iranian border determination commission, asserts in a report the adverse role of the Ottoman consul in encouraging Kurds around Qutur, Salmas, and Khuy against Iranian authorities. Further, he acknowledges that Tehran secretly had ordered the assassination of Mohammed Agha, however, he was able to reach Muzaffar al-Din Shah while preparing for his trip to Europe and the Shah pardoned him and allowed him to return to Chehriq. Mirza Musa recommended that in order to control the tribe, the government should take two of Mohammad Agha's sons as permanent hostages at the Qajar court.[910]

Mohammed Agha Shikak was still alive when his eldest son, Jafar Agha gained such a good reputation that he actually was leading the tribe. According to Minorsky, Kurds from low economic status adored Jafar Agha because he took money from the rich and distributed it to the poor and needy in the difficult living conditions of the early years of constitutionalism.[911] Also, he was building a great political status for himself. If the news of his visit to Russia can be considered true, he likewise tried to establish strong ties as a competent political figure with Ottoman and Iranian officials. He had connections with Imam Quli Khani, the governor of Urmia, and Ottoman authority as well.[912]

Iran’s ambassador in Istanbul informed Tehran of the cooperation of Jawad Beg, the governor of Mahmudi, with Jafar and Simko Aghas. The ambassador states

[908] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 699, 10 Cemaziyelevvel 1319.
[909] Ibrahim Safayi, **Panjah Xatira az Panjah Sal**, Çapxaneye İlmi, w.place, 1371, p. 53.
[910] **Ibid.**
[911] Minorsky, **op. cit.**, p. 140.
[912] Burzuyi, **op. cit.**, p. 187

that he repeatedly asked the Porte and the Grand Vizier to put an end to Shikak's transgressions but without any outcome. So, he suggested that Iranian authorities should take serious actions to discipline them.[913] While Tehran diplomatically was trying to persuade Istanbul to control Shikaks, in 1904 Muhammad Ali Mirza, the Governor of Tabriz, sent a troop to arrest them, but Jafar Agha hid in the Chehriq fort. Then the fort was besieged by the state forces until the evening when they reached an agreement by which Jafar Agha agreed to surrender, but he managed to escape and fled to the Ottoman territory[914] where, according to a report published by a German newspaper, Jafar Agha was granted the rank of major general with the title of Pasha by the Sultan. Then he was sent back to Iranian territory and there he resumed his actions on the border with cooperation from pro-Ottoman leaders.[915] Although this was not mentioned in other sources, it is obvious that the chiefs of Shikak had close ties with the governor of Mahmudi and Sharaf Beg commander of Hamidiye.

Therefore, the Shikak chiefs were no longer under the control of the Iranian authorities. In 1905, Muhammad Ali Mirza (meanwhile he was running the state in place of Muzaffar al-Din Shah who was on a trip to Europe) appointed Nizam al-Saltana as Governor of Azerbaijan and instructed him to kill Jafar Agha. Then, through the mediation of Qarani Agha Mamash and Khasrav Khan, the chief of Karapapak, Nizam al-Saltana invited Jafar Agha to Tabriz. The mediation of the neighboring tribal chiefs was necessary due to the lack of Shikak's trust in the State's intention because Ismail Agha I, the grandfather of Mohammad Agha, and his father, Ali Agha, were already killed by Qajar authorities respectively, while they were invited for agreements with the state officials.[916] To reassure Jafar Agha of his good intentions, Nizam al-Saltana sent him a copy of the Holy Qur'an with his seal and signature on it and guaranteed his safety.[917] In addition to that, the governor let

[913] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 766.
[914] Safayi, **op. cit.**, p. 53.
[915] Lazarev, **op. cit.**, p. 186.
[916] Hawar, **op. cit.**, s. 224-226 ; Muhammad Naib Pur, Alireza Ali Sofi, Muhammad Amir Şeyh Nuri, Sirwan Husruzade "Vakavi Zemineha u Avamili Muasir ber Ağaze Şorşi Sımko 1906-1918", **Pejuhişhaye Tarihi**, vol. VII, No. 3 1394;1-18, p. 5.
[917] Ahmadi Kesrevi, **Tarih-i Meşruteye İran**, Tehran, Emir Kebir, 1363, p. 143-144; Safayi, **op. cit.**, p. 55.

Jafar's family take Haji Pasha Khan, one of the prominent figures of Karapapak, as a hostage in their house.[918]

Nizam al-Saltana had informed Jafar Agha that he would be assigned as the Ilkhan of all Shikaks by Muzaffar al-Din Shah and that government would provide him with all the support he needed. Nonetheless, Nizam al-Saltana planned to kill him by stationing one of the chiefs of Karadagh cavalry with his men in the palace, until Jafar Agha came and left his men below in the courtyard then he was guided to a small room waiting for the governor to come. While he was sitting down, they killed him from the skylight of the room. [919] Wratislaw who was in Tebriz at the time indicates that Nizam al-Saltana had vowed in a public meeting that he would not harm Jafar Agha as long as he was on earth. To avoid breaking his oath, a hole was dug in his tent and he ordered killing him from inside the hole not "on earth".[920] Then the corps of Jafar Agha and two of his relatives were hanged upside down from the main door of the palace (See figure No.10).[921]

[918] Razayi, **op. cit.**, p. 77.
[919] Kesrevi, **op. cit.**, p. 144.
[920] Wratislaw, **op. cit.**, p. 242.
[921] Kesrevi, **op. cit.**, p. 144; Wratislaw, **op. cit.**, p. 242.

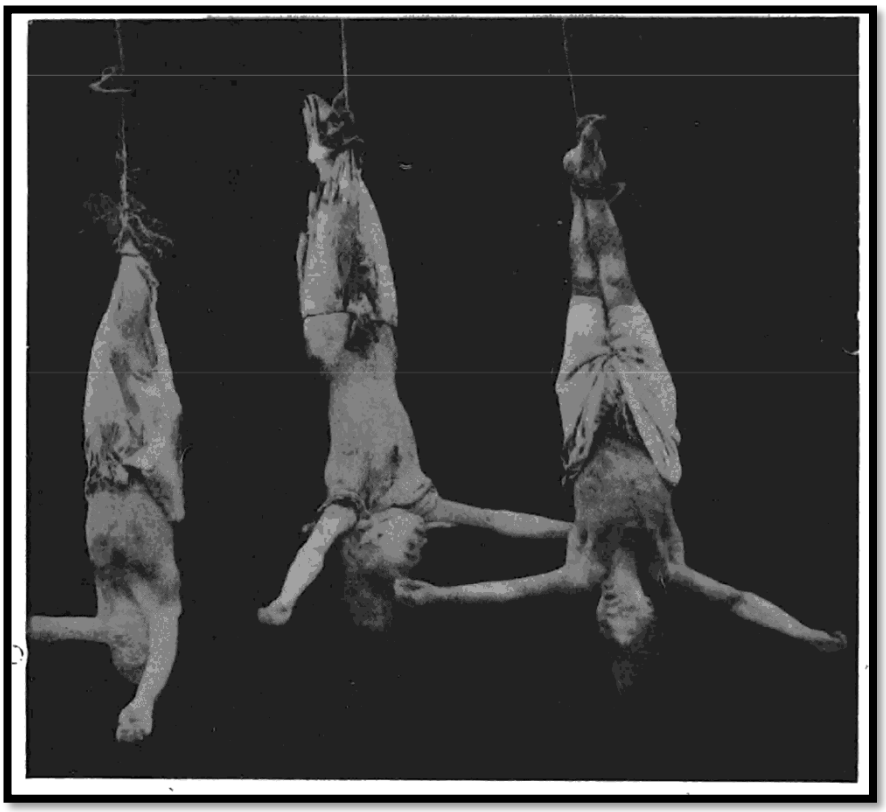


Figure 10. Jafar Agha and his associates were hanged upside down by the Azerbaijan ruler Nizam al- Saltana after their execution.[922]

The assassination scenario of Jafar Agha was very similar to that of Hamza Agha Mangor but this time it was not passed easily for the state as compared to previous murders of Hamza Agha and other leaders of Shikak. Over the next 25 years, this incident pushed Jafar Agha's brother Simko to set foot on the political scene with eagerness and become the most prominent Kurdish tribal and national leader in the region. Until he was assassinated in 1930 by the Iranian authorities in the same way as his ancestors.

Kasravi states that the killing of Jafar Agha was scandalous for the state for breaking their vows and was a cowardly action while Jafar Agha's men defended themselves bravely until they managed to escape.[923] Also, Wratislaw mentions with

[922] Alphonse Nicolas, **"**Les Kurdes persans et l'invasion ottoman", **Revue du Monde Musulman**, 1908, vol. VI, p. 3.
[923] Kesrevi, **op. cit.**, 140.

sorrow that after 10-15 minutes of gun fighting, 16 of Jafar Agha's men managed to escape while killing and wounding several people.[924] After the incident, however, the public perspective was that Kurds would retaliate for the blood of Jafar Agha.[925]

The selection of Mamash and Qarapapak leaders as mediators was another policy of the state to clash the tribes with each other but the tribes were aware of that. According to Razavi, when Jafar Agha's mother received the news of her son's death, she immediately freed Karapapak's hostage and asked him to run away before her sons come back.[926] The Shikak tribe thereafter became an enemy of the state and local authorities, and from the very beginning, Simko decided to take revenge on behalf of his brother.[927] Meanwhile, Jafar Agha's parents went to Istanbul to complain to Sultan Abdulhamid II. The Iranian ambassador in Istanbul, Arfa al-Dawla describes these events in detail. According to him Jafar Agha's parents and relatives arrived in Istanbul and after Friday prayers they were taken to Yildiz Palace. Jafar Agha's mother held the Holy Qur'an that was sealed by Nizam al-Saltana in one hand and Jafar Agha's bloodstained shirt in the other hand and while weeping stated:

> We have come all this way to tell you that; Nizam al-Saltana, the governor of Tabriz did not respect God's words and has invited my son to Tabriz on false promises. Look at the bloody shirt of my son who was killed for believing in God's words and I am asking you to take revenge for him.[928]

The Liverpool Daily Post reporter also mentioned that Jafar Agha's relatives told Sultan they consider Jafar Agha a martyr of Islam and demanded his revenge.[929] Arfa al-Dawla claims that Sultan Abdulhamid initially welcomed Mohammed Agha warmly, granted him the rank of pasha, and promised to equip him with weaponry, but later the ambassador convinced the Porte to renounce the rank they had given

[924] Wratislaw, **op. cit.**, p. 242.
[925] Kesrevi, **op. cit.**, 140.
[926] Razavi, **op. cit.**, p. 77
[927] According to Safayi, a Qajar writer, after the killing of his brother, Ismail Agha gradually gathered Kurds around him and attacked Salmas, Khuy, and Urmia several times, looting all the valuables in the government's finance department and accuses him of killing people and kidnapping women and girls. He adds that whenever the government tried to stop him, he was fleeing to the Ottoman side and took refuge in the Ottoman Empire. Safayi, **op. cit.**, p. 55.
[928] Arfa' al-Dawla, **Khaterat-e Prens Arfa' al-Dawla**, Ed. Ali Aehbashi, Tehran 1378, pp. 433-435.
[929] **The Liverpool Daily Post and Murcury**, 18 April 1906, p. 6.

Mohammed Agha and arrest him.[930] Contrary to Arfa al-Dawla's doubtful claims, Jalil et al., denote that Muhammad Agha after meeting the Sultan, returned to the border and launched several attacks on Khuy and Salmas to avenge the blood of his son. Jafar Agha's murder led to Kurdish uprisings in several Kurdish regions of the Azerbaijan province and Mohammed Agha and his son Simko, became the strongest enemies of the Shah's government. [931] In addition to that, this incident was one of the main reasons for the Ottoman invasion of Iran. [932]

4.3.2.2. Sheikh Kamal Naqshbandi and Lahijan Customs

Years before the Iranian Constitutional Revolution, Mirza Ali Khan Amin al-Dawla who served for a short period as the Prime Minister for regulation of Iran's customs affairs which was in a bad situation at the time had invited a team of Belgian experts headed by Josef Naus. As Mahdavi states, Naus was receiving orders from the Russian embassy and had good relations with Russians, [933]and through their assistance, he soon became head of all Iranian customs. Gradually he subtracted all customs revenue affairs from state control after an agreement with Iranian authorities and he ran it directly. So, Iran's customs affairs were largely run by Belgians.[934] Later, Russia was able to reduce tariffs on its exports to Iran from 5% to 1.5% with a new contract through Naus.[935]

During that period, Belgians started charging a fee for stamping the passports of people departing Iran. In 1905, a Belgian employee named Monsieur Leleu, who

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[930] Referring to his diplomatic skills, Arfa al-Dawla mentions in his autobiography that he was able to uncover that Mohammed Agha had exploited Sultan's reception by introducing himself as Pasha and giving ranks to his relatives. Then Arfa al-Dawla claims that he conveyed the news to Sultan and convinced him to arrest Mohammed Agha. Arfa al-Dawla, **op. cit.**, p. 713. However, according to the official account, Mohammed Agha was stripped of his rank because he was not efficient enough in confronting the Armenians. **BOA. Y.PRK.BSK**., No. 76/2, 3 Safer 1324.

[931] Jalil et al., **op. cit.**, pp. 88-89.

[932] **GESIO.**, vol. VI., No. 1019, 10 Şaban 1325; Jalil, **op. cit.**, pp. 88-89; Lazarev, **op. cit.**, p. 186; **The Liverpool Daily Post and Murcury,** 18 April 1906, p. 6.

[933]Mehdevi, **op. cit.**, p. 295.

[934] Joseph Naus's presence at the top of Iran's customs affairs has sparked strong protests among Iranian people, especially mullahs. This was one of the causes of constitutional Revolution and Naus was forced to resign and leave Iran. In the following years, he went to Russia for business and was appointed as the advisor on Iranian affairs to the Russian government. See Seyyid Mohammad Hussien Mohammadi, "Pishderamedi ber Nehzeti Meshrute", **ISC**, **Marifat**, 1387, No. 129, p. 159-168.

[935] Mehdevi, **op. cit.**, p. 297.

worked in the directorate of the customs department of Sauj Bulaq, visited Lahijan and recognized the importance of the region. So, he decided to build a custom point there which was still a disputed area inside the status quo territory.[936] Meanwhile, Sheikh Kamal Naqshbandi, who was originally from Iran and was one of the main figures of Sheikh Ubeidullah's rebellion and a close murid to him. Sheikh Kamal was also arrested for a while in Kirkuk after the exile of Sheikh Ubeidullah. After his release, he did not go back to Iran and lived in Erbil. Later on, he became a Sheikh with murids and settled in a village called Zinwa bordering Iran near Choman.[937]

Each year Sheikh Kamal's Murids from Iran were crossing the border into the Ottoman territory to visit him, and Iran was making a good amount of money by stamping their passports from Tamarchin (a village in Lahijan) border crossing. Sheikh Kamal did not want his followers to pay such a heavy fee so he traveled to Iran, settled in Tamarchin,[938] and issued Iranian citizenship. After Sheikh Kamal settled in Tamarchin as an Iranian citizen, Iran considered this area its territory and established a customs building there which caused a strong response from the Ottoman Empire.[939] Because previously both sides had agreed on the demarcation of status quo zones, according to which neither side was allowed to build facilities in these areas and these regions had to remain neutral. Initially, the Ottoman ambassador in Tehran objected to this move several times, but customs administrative works continued.[940] After the Ottoman demands were rejected, the governor of Rawanduz announced he would destroy the customs building, and in September 1905, an Ottoman force seized the Tamarchin customs point and arrested its manager,[941] Nicholas. The French consul in Tabriz believed that the matter of

[936] Alphonse Nicolas, **"**Les Kurdes Persans et l'Invasion Ottomane", **Revue du Monde Musulman**, A.L.M. 2[em]. Annee, Ekim 1908, N10, p. 202, as cited in Burzuyi, **op. cit.**, p. 123; **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1019, 10 Şaban 1325.
[937] After the movement of Sheikh Ubeidullah, Sheikh Kamal was exiled to Kirkuk for a while until he returned to Zinwa on the border and later became the founder of a new branch of Naqshbandi called Kamal-i Naqshbandi Tariqa. See Mehran İlahi Miyavak, "Muhtasari ez Zindegiye Sadati Nakişbandi Kamali", **Kamalat**, available at; http://kamaal.blogfa.com/post/6 (accessed; 22 June 2022).
[938] Tamarchin is still an important border points between Iran and Iraq, which is known as Tamarchin on the Iranian side and Haji Omeran on the Iraqi side.
[939] Burzuyi, **op. cit.**, p. 123.
[940] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1019.
[941] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 742, 1 Jamad al-Akhar 1323.

Belgian staff and the case of Sheikh Kamal[942] was the main excuse for invading Iran by the Ottomans. Additionally, as it will be discussed in the sections to come since Iran did not show any military response barring verbal protest when the Ottomans invaded Lahijan, Ottoman forces gradually controlled vast areas of more than 30 Kurdish towns and hundreds of Kurdish villages aided by Hamidiye cavalry, men of Sheikh Muhammad Sadiq, and other Kurdish tribes.

4.3.2.3. The Murder of an American missionary by Kurds

Clashes between Armenians and Ottoman Kurds in Anatolia in the early 20th century, along with clashes between Caucasian Azeris and Armenians in and around Baku, had fueled hatred among Kurdish-Azeris against Armenians. As a result, several fights, mass killings, and assassinations took place between Armenians and Muslims (Azeris and Kurds) in Azerbaijan province. Many innocent people were killed and both parties' houses and warehouses were set on fire.[943] In 1903, in areas around Urmia, Kurds attacked Christians and burned several villages in protest for increased missionary work.[944] On the Ottoman side, Sheikh Sadiq with the conniving of the local Ottoman authorities played a negative role in fueling sectarian fights.[945]

In March 1904, the Russian consulate informed the Iranian Foreign Ministry that Sheikh Sadiq with the assistance of the governor of Van, acquired a lot of firearms and intends to build a castle in Bradost to make it his base and he has given weapons to the Kurds of Sosanabad village in Margawar in order to attack the Christians of Targawar and Margawar.[946] A few days later, an American missionary named W. Labaree was murdered by a man named Sayyid Ghaffar along with a

[942] Alphonse Nicolas, "Les Kurdes Persans et l'Invasion Ottoman", **RMM** 5, 1908, S. 193-210, as cited in, Burzuyi, **op. cit.**, p. 123, see Nicolas biography at Nader Nasiri-Moghaddam, "Alphones Nicolas", **Encyclopaedia Iranica**, Trustees of Columbia University in the City of New York. Available at https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-iranica-online/nicolas-alphonse-COM_336453 (Accessed; 20 March 2022).
[943] Kesrevi, **op. cit.**, pp. 145-144.
[944] Wratislaw, **op. cit.**, p. 225.
[945] Jalil et al., **op. cit.**, p. 88.
[946] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 821, 26 Zilhicce 1321.

group of Begzade tribe,[947] at the instigation of one of the Muslim scholars of Urmia who had given the missionary's whereabouts to Kurds.[948]

Labaree was one of the active missionaries around Urmia who, 23 years earlier, together with Dr. Cochran convinced Sheikh Ubeidullah to postpone his attack on Urmia. [949] He was one of Dr. Cochran's closest friends for more than two decades.[950] Labree's murder caused a stir internationally and was interpreted as religious hatred in dozens of American and British newspapers.[951] When news of the murder reached Tehran, sparked a strong reaction from the American and British embassies, calling for the arrest of the perpetrators. Wratislaw claims that at his insistence, the governor of Urmia arrested Sayyid Ghaffar and sent him to Tehran.[952] To arrest other suspects, an Iranian military force proceeded into the Ottoman territory and clashed with Ottoman military forces.[953]

Iran was aware that the killing of Sayyid in revenge for the blood of a Christian would flare a strong religious reaction and would trigger Begzade and push them more toward Ottomans as they were living on the border. So, they were satisfied by arresting and sentencing Sayyid Ghaffar to life in prison who died shortly after his arrest in jail.[954] The impact of the death of the American missionary lasted for two years. Although in 1905 Iran paid the American embassy in Tehran

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[947] Begzade was originally a clan of the Jaf tribe. For the past three centuries until the dissolution of the Jaf Federation in 1925, leaders of this clan also headed the Jaf tribe. However, it seems from the beginning of 19th century a part of Begzade clan separated from the Jaf ruling family, migrated to Margawar, and settled in an area called Dasht, 20 kilometers south of Urmia. They numbered about 3,000 men and had 500 armed men. **The Evening Mail**, 25 September 1907, p. 8.

[948] Wratislaw, **op. cit.**, p. 225; **The Evening Star**, 17 May 1904, p. 14; Speer, **op. cit.**, p. 260.

[949] Speer, **op. cit.**, p. 85.

[950] Speer, **op. cit.**, passim.

[951] **Croydon's Weekly Standard**, 30 April 1904, p. 3; **Berks and Oxon Advertiser**, 29 April 1904; **East & South Devon Advertiser**, 30 April 1904; **Dundee Evening Telegraph**, 21 April 1904; **Edinburgh Evening News**, 16 April 1904; **Mid Sussex Times**, 26 April 1904; **Portadown News**, 30 April 1904; **Londonderry Sentinel**, 16 April 1904; **Globe**, 16 April 1904; **The Evening Post (New York)** 15 November 1904; **Daily Kennebec Journal**, 18 May 1904; **Sheffield Daily Telegraph**, 16 April 1904, p. 9.

[952] Wratislaw, **op. cit.**, p. 225.

[953] Najati Abdullah, **op. cit.**, p. 372; Ateş, **op. cit.**, p. 246; Sinan Kuneralp, **The Ottoman Drang Nach Osten: The Turco-Persian border problem in Azerbaican**, 1905-1912, Ottoman Diplomatic History, vol. IV., Ed. Sinan Kuneralp, **The ISIS Press**, Istanbul 1990, p. 70 as cited in Najati Abdullah, **op. cit.**, p. 372.

[954] **Ibid.**

$30,000 in compensation for Labaree's death,[955] British and American embassies constantly pressured Iran to punish the Begzade tribe. Finally, in February 1906, a delegation was arranged between the Iranian officials, British and American embassies, and Begzade's hostages and detainees in Tehran. They decided to meet in Urmia to identify all perpetrators of the crime. Unexpectedly, during the transportation from Tehran to Urmia, the detainees, and hostages managed to escape.[956] The government was on a constant hunt for them under continuous pressure from the missionaries, but to avoid the government's punishment, Begzades declared they had always been Ottoman subjects and they had nothing to do with Iran.[957]

At the same time, they asked Tahir Pasha, the governor of Van, to accept them as part of the Hamidiye cavalry and to protect them from the oppression of the Iranian government, Shiites, and Nestorians. Even though the Porte refused to break the status quo, Tahir Pasha accepted their request in September and in November, Ottoman forces seized Margawar.[958]

4.3.2.4. Case of Bayiz Pasha and Capture of Vazneh by the Ottomans

As mentioned in the first section of this chapter, the deepening of the Vazneh problem dates back to 1890 when the Ottoman Commission for determination of the ownership of Vazneh asked Iran to expel Bayiz Agha Mangor from Vazneh before the commission begins its investigation. At the time Iran was in good relations with Bayiz Agha and informed Ottoman representatives that they cannot dismiss Bayiz Agha without any excuses. Then in 1898, the Porte ordered a decree to combine Vazneh and Pishdar and to rename it Ma'muratulhamidiye district.[959] Vazneh region was primarily home to the Mangor and Mamash clans of the great federation of

[955] **Vilas County news**, 16 January 1905, p. 8. Later the American Embassy gave the money to Mrs. Labaree. Wratislaw, **op. cit.**, p. 234.
[956] Wratislaw, **op. cit.**, p. 227.
[957] **Ibid.**, 247.
[958] Ateş, **op. cit.**, p. 247.
[959] For more details visit the first chapter.

Bilbas, who were spending part of the year in Pishdar on the Ottoman side and part of it in the fertile plains of Lahijan and Vazneh.[960]

After Hamza's assassination, Amir Nizam Garusi caused a deepening of the dispute over the chieftaincy of the tribe. Through intimidation and promises, he forced Hamza Agha's brothers to submit to his demands. Then, he officially appointed Kakala Agha, brother of Hamza Agha, as the recognized chief of the Mangor tribe.[961] At the same time, the Ottomans made Bapir Agha, son of Hamza Agha, *Kaymakam* (governor) of Ranya[962] who had been arrested by Iran for a while and later released from prison. In the following years, Bapir Agha became a source of trouble for local authorities in Iran and they repeatedly asked the Ottomans to arrest him. After being disappointed by the Ottomans regarding his arrest, Naser al-Din Shah notified Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs that;

> In these situations, opponents must be taken heedless, killed, and retaliated against. How long shall we ask Ottomans and get nothing? If Hamza Agha's son [Bapir], who was in our prison for a while, was beheaded right away, this wouldn't have been an issue now. Why should such a despicable stay alive? It's our fault and no one else's[963]

Until then, under the chieftaincy of Bapir Agha, some of the Mangors were fugitives in Iran and were living inside the Ottoman Empire. In 1887, the Porte requested Iran to extradite some rebels from Hakkari who had taken refuge in Iran. Tehran, in return, asked the Ottomans to hand over Bapir Agha.[964] However, the Ottomans did not surrender Bapir for Iran did not hand over the "criminals".[965] While Bapir was in the Ottoman territory, Iran was able to shift the balance of power to its supporters by helping Qadir Agha and his cousins.[966]

Qadir Agha, who had succeeded Hamza Agha as the leader of the tribe, repaired the tribe's reputation and power.[967] Yet, as Harris mentioned in 1895, the

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[960] Ateş, **op. cit.**, p. 178.
[961] Amir Nizam, **op. cit.**, pp. 437-440.
[962] Amir Nizam, **op. cit.**, p. 163.
[963] **GESIO.**, Vol. II, No. 371.
[964] **BOA. DH.MKT**., No. 1419/110.
[965] **BOA. DH.MKT**., No. 1515/77.
[966] Nizam, **op. cit.**, p. 33.
[967] McDowall, **op. cit.**, p. 73.

Mangors were in an internal conflict for years to come. At that time, Bayiz Agha, Qadir Agha's nephew and representative gained substantial power in the region,[968] and the governor of Azerbaijan officially made him the head of Mangor. While Bayiz became unchallenged chieftain, in 1903, Mohammed Agha Mamash (who over the past two decades had gained the state's confidence after his cooperation with the state in its confrontations with tribal rebels and was given the rank of the Tribes' Emir '*Amir al-Aashayar'*), helped Bapir to receive the state's amnesty.[969] After getting the state's pardon, Bapir returned to Iran and became a real challenge for Bayiz's chieftaincy. At that time Bapir was living in Gulyan village and Bayiz Agha was in Tirkesh village.[970] Bapir 's return and the support of the chief of Mamash for him, despite the two tribe's traditional rivalry, was a threat to Bayiz Agha's supremacy and was not acceptable. So, Bayiz Agha abandoned the salary and rank given to him by the Iranian government and came to Mamuretülhamid and Raniye districts with 500 households. Looking for such a good opportunity, Ottomans accepted his settlement and gave him the title of Mir-i Ümeralik (the Emir of Emirs).[971] In contrast, Imamquli Khan the governor of Azerbaijan returned the chieftaincy of the tribe to Bayiz Agha's Uncle Qadir Agha, who held the position previously.[972]

This was an example of how the Qajar dynasty dealt with the rebellion of local forces. Whenever a tribe or a force could pose a threat to the state, one way of dealing with it was to create opposition within that force, even though sometimes it benefited the people who were opponents to the state. As Abrahamian points out, an old traditional anti-Shah group suddenly became loyal and sincere friends of the Shah. With the presence of all these allies, the Shah no longer needed royal forces, bureaucracy, and strong armies because he could rely on these associates. The Qajar

[968] Walter Harris, **From Batum to Baghdad: Viâ Tiflis**, **Tabriz**, **and Persian Kurdistan**. W. Blackwood and sons, Edinburgh and London, 1896, p. 196.
[969] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 723, 3 Zilkade 1321.
[970] **BL. IOR/L/MIL/17/15/12/2** "**Routes in Persia Vol. II**, **(North-western Persia.)"**' [240r] (1022/484).
[971] **BOA. DH.TMIK.M**., No. 161/45, 12 Zilkade 1346.
[972] **GESIO.**, vol. IV., No. 723, 3 Zilkade 1321.

Shahs at times inflated the internal conflicts of their strong opponents to destroy them and invest in internal and external conflicts of different groups.[973]

Bayiz Agha's closeness to the Ottomans dates back to earlier years,[974] but these new changes brought them much closer to a degree that an Ottoman force with artillery crossed about 70 kilometers into Iranian territory to defend him.[975] Bayiz Agha's dispute with the Iranian authorities grew more in 1905 when Imamquli Khan assigned Bapir as the Ilkhan of all the Mangors, a post previously held by Bayiz Agha.[976] In contrast, Bayiz Agha was given the rank of Pasha by the Ottoman Empire and became Bayiz Pasha. [977] Later on ,in rivalry with his Ottoman counterpart, Iran granted Bapir the rank of Salar al-Ashair.[978]

Bayiz Pasha's conflict with his opponents coincided with a dispute between Muhammad Agha Mamash and his nephew Hamza Agha over the chieftaincy of Mamash. The governor of Kirkuk, Izzat Beg, took advantage of this opportunity and expressed his willingness to help Bayiz Pasha and Hamza Agha against their opponents. Accordingly, in 1905, Izzat Beg in the name of the official commission for investigation of tribal issues sent two military teams composed of 50 horsemen and 200 men and ordered them to strike adversaries of Bayiz Pasha and Hamza Agha. With the arrival of Izzat Beg's forces to back Bayiz Pasha and Hamza Agha, their opponents including Bapir Agha, Mohammad Agha of Mamash, and Shuja al Dawla, the governor of Sauj Bulaq fled and the Ottomans appointed Bayiz Pasha the ruler of the disputed area of Vazneh with a special salary.[979] As it is evident in the story mentioned above, Kurdish tribal chiefs on both Ottoman and Iranian sides needed assistance from the state to resolve their internal problems, so despite previous bloody clashes they had with the state, they often tried to get legitimacy from it. Perhaps the most striking example is the return of Bapir Agha, son of Hamza

[973] Abrahamian, **op. cit.**, p. 54.
[974] For example, in 1905 the Ottoman Empire asked Iran to allow Piran tribe and Bayiz Agha's wing of Mangor to return to Iran. **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 386, 6 Rabiulahir 1313; **GESIO.**, vol. II, No. 387, 6 Rabiulahir 1313.
[975] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 724, 24 Muharram 1322.
[976] Ateş, **op. cit.**, p. 240.
[977] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 724, 24 Muharram 1322.
[978] **Habl al-Matin** (Newspaper-Tahran), 29 Mart 1908, p. 1.
[979] Ateş, **op. cit.**, p. 241.

Agha, and Shikak chiefs to the state. Even though each one of them and several of their predecessors were killed by state officials through deception and plots. It was a great achievement for any tribal chief who could secure the state's support in its internal tribal struggles.

CHAPTER 5

A FAILED ATTEMPT TO ANNEX ALL SUNNI KURDS' TERRITORIES TO THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Along with the advance of the Ottomans on the ground, a new phase of political conflict between the two states emerged. In this context, the Ottomans tried to secure Kurdish support in various ways and find legal justifications for their stay in the region. At this stage, despite the rise of several political instabilities and changes in Istanbul, the Ottomans increased their demand, so that not only the regions of Azerbaijan were demanded but also the ownership of the entire Sunni Kurdish regions of Iran. The Ottoman's demand for these places had historical roots. Both the Ottomans and Iranians aimed at annexing all the Kurdish regions that were part of their respective states in a particular period. However, neither was able to maintain their hegemony for a long time over the whole geographic areas in which the Kurds settled, for several geographical, religious, and political reasons. Ihtisham al-Saltana who was a significant participant in the diplomatic disputes between the two states over their disputed territories, expressed the views of the Ottoman Empire and Iran regarding the disputed areas as follows:

> The Ottomans considered Tabriz, Sinna, Kermanshah, and Ahvaz as their own, and we considered Van, Mosul, Baghdad, and Basra as ours. We even considered the whole of Mesopotamia as ours. However, there was a difference between us; while the Ottomans were strong and advanced, reading poetry and presenting documents were the only thing we could do, we expected the Russians and the Britons to protect us. We tried to bring the Ottoman authorities closer to us by giving them decorations, robes, and clothes, but we could not push the aggressor forces out of the border and could not expel them from Sauj Bulaq, Kurdistan, and parts of Kermanshah.[980]

As the expression of Ihtisham al-Saltana demonstrates, the Ottomans considered all Kurdish regions as part of their historical territory. During the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II, who pursued a policy of Pan-Islamism, the dream of annexing the Kurdish regions to the Ottoman Empire entered the implementation phase more seriously. The following were the attempts made by the Ottomans to attract and

[980] Ihtisham-al Saltana, **op. cit.**, pp. 557-558.

include Kurds from the provinces of Azerbaijan, Kurdistan, and parts of Kermanshah with their regions to the Ottoman Empire.

5.1. THE OTTOMAN HEGEMONY IN THE KURDISTAN PROVINCE

5.1.1. Issuing Ottoman Passport and Calling for Pan-Islamism in Sinna

As presented in the first chapter, the second half of the 19th century was a period of transition from the concept of frontier to the concept of border between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. This was accompanied by several other reforms and changes regarding the relationship of the state to the individuals and social groups within its boundaries. During this period, the issue of subjecthood and citizenship became more important. The roots of this change in the Ottoman Empire and Iran go back to the Treaty of Erzurum 1847. Which according to Article 8 of the treaty, each of the two states decided to determine the identity of the border tribes in more detail and prevent ambiguity and multiple identities of the tribes.[981] To better resolve the issues, both states decided to allow the opening of consulates in each other's different cities (except Mecca and Medina).[982] However, subsequent events show that these decisions were not implemented until the end of the Ottoman and Qajar rule and some of these consulates became centers through which the Ottomans and Iranians interfered in each other's internal affairs.

The Ottoman Empire, despite its hegemony over the Kurdish regions of Azerbaijan, was able to attract the majority of Kurds in Kurdistan province since the late 19th century through the consulates of Sinna and the Sheikhs of the Qadiri and Naqshbandi tariqas. The first chapter dealt with the dominance of some of the Ottoman sheikhs in Iranian Kurdish society. From the late 19th century onwards, these sheikhs became one of the most important propaganda tools for Ottoman rule among Iran's Sunni Kurdish subjects. The Ottomans tried to obtain the support of

[981] According to the article 8 of the Treaty of Erzurum II: "Tribes whose owners are unclear and are still in dispute, from now on, they will be given permission to determine their permanent residence for the last time. Tribes with obvious subjectivity are forcibly repatriated to the state to which they belong", **Muahedat Mecmuası**, vol. III, pp. 7-8.
[982] **Ibid.**, 7. In the following years, however, Iranian consulates were opened in these places too. See Iran consultant letter from Makka to Tehran, **GESIO.**, vol. V, No. 835-836.

Iran's Sunni Kurds through the Qadiri and Naqshbandi sheikhs. Because of this policy, tens of thousands of people from the Kurdistan province received Ottoman citizenship until the beginning of the 20th century.[983]

What made it easier for the Ottomans to attract the Kurds was the harsh and religious sectarian policies of the Kurdistan province authorities which according to Ihtisham al-Saltana, describing his predecessors: due to powerlessness, vulnerability, and silence of the Kurds "*nothing was safe from the state authorities' assault, not only they usurped their wealth and money, they also raped their wives and children.*"[984] This policy of the Kurdistan authorities led some of the residents of the province to migrate to the Ottoman Empire and others obtained citizenship through the Ottoman consulate, thus protecting their lives and property from the Iranian authority's ill-treatment. This process which is explained below, although it began during the governance of Siham al-Dawla (1888-1891) it was widely practiced during the governance of Amir Nizam Garusi (1892-1894), Hisam al-Mulk (1896-1897), Amir Nizam Garusi (second time) and his son Salar al-Mulk (1897-1899). Since the time of Siham al-Dawla, many of the city's residents have sought refuge in the Ottoman consulate to escape the harsh measures of the governor. Until then, the affairs of Ottoman citizens were supervised by the local government, however, for the first time, the Ottoman consulate had judicial authority in the city and investigated the problems of those who had become Ottoman citizens.[985]

Amir Nizam Garusi who had strong religious views and had been somewhat successful in controlling the Kurdish tribes in Azerbaijan, in 1892 he was appointed governor of Kurdistan. Together with his son, who succeeded him, he played a negative role in deepening the sectarian conflict between Shiites and Sunnis. For the first time during his governance, some Shiite ceremonies were held in Sunni cities in the Kurdistan province which coincided with the ceremony of Omar Kushan (the destruction of the statue of Omar, the second caliph in Islamic history) in

[983] Ihtisham al-Saltana, **op. cit.**, p. 455.
[984] Ihtisham al-Saltana, **op. cit.**, p. 441.
[985] Sanandaji, **op. cit.**, p. 397. Before becoming the ruler of Kurdistan, Siham al-Dawla had the title of Nizam al-Dawla. Concerning his harsh treatment of the frontier Kurdish tribes, Merdox indicates that he buried some frontiersmen alive, for their "wrongdoings". Merdox, **op. cit.**, p. 460.

Azerbaijan.[986] After some time in the office, Amir Nizam was also entrusted with the governance of Kermanshah, so he moved to Kermanshah, and his son Salar al-Mulk was appointed in his place. During this time, Salar al-Mulk came into conflict with the Ottoman consul and the growing number of Ottoman citizens and adopted a harsh policy toward the population of the city. As a result, some of the city's notables, including the Sheikh al-Islam of Sinna[987]sent a request to Tehran to replace Salar al-Mulk and he was soon deposed before being reinstated with his father again.[988]

Hisam al-Mulk was appointed governor of Kurdistan a few months after Salar al-Mulk. Hisam-al-Mulk, mentioned in the third chapter, was the governor of Kermanshah for a while. When he became the governor of Kurdistan, Naser al-Din Shah was assassinated and Muzaffar ad-Din Mirza, his son's father-in-law, became the Shah of Iran. The change in Tehran also increased the influence of Hisam al-Mulk and his son, both of whom were in Sinna at the time.

The new governor, as Merdox describes was “a fanatic Shiite” and twice held mourning ceremonies during Ashura in the Kurdistan province with an expenditure of more than 3,000 Iranian Rials each time.[989] During his governance, Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Mujtahid Hamadani was the only Shiite scholar in the city who started preaching Shiism, and Hisham al-Mulk respected him more than anyone else. When the religious scholars of the city who were all Sunnis met in the governor’s

[986] **BOA. Y.PRK.ES.A**., No. 18/78.
[987] Sheikh al-Islam was the highest religious rank in the cities appointed by the state during the Qajar period. The duty of the Sheikh al-Islam was to resolve jurisprudence disputes between citizens. Until 1897, the Sheikh al-Islam of Sinna was Mullah Lutfullah Sheikh al-Islam, one of the city's most prominent Sunni scholars who actively involved in political activities. After him, Mullah Abdul Razzaq became the Sheikh al-Islam of the city. Merdox, **op. cit.**, p. 472; Sanandaji, **op. cit.**, p. 417.
[988] Sanandaji, **op. cit.**, p. 409.
[989] Merdox, **op. cit.**, p. 466.

office, Hisam al-Mulk let him sit in the highest place.[990] As explained below, the governor's treatment of him cost him his life.

Sanandaji points out that after the accession of Muzaffar al-Din Shah, Hisam-al-Mulk gathered the city's notables and told them that he was related to the Shah and Shah's daughter is his daughter-in-law so the new Shah would do nothing against his will. The news of Hisam al-Mulk's statement caused great fear among the population and soon about 700 people from Sinna and its surroundings took refuge at the Ottoman consulate and were issued citizenship documents.[991]

Hisham al-Mulk's fanatical attitude toward Sunni scholars and mullahs also had an echo on the Ottoman side. Sheikh Omar Zia' al-Din (1868-1900), from Biara (east of Gulanber), who had a great influence and a large number of murids in the Kurdistan province, sent a long letter to Hisam al-Mulk, warning that the policy of creating sectarian divisions would have undesirable consequences and would create chaos in the province.[992] Yet, Hisham al-Mulk appears to have continued the harsh policy that eventually led to a popular uprising that ended in his ouster.

In 1897, he arrested and tortured a group of *faqihs* (religious students) on charges of theft without trial. The incident caused a stir, and Sheikh al-Islam, Mullah Lutfullah, and the city notables called on the governor to release the detainees but contrary to expectations, the next day, news spread that two of the faqihs had been strangled in prison last night. After this news, all the faqihs and mullahs from the

[990] Merdox, **op. cit.**, p. 467. The culture of propagating Shiism in Sinna seems to date back to the time of Ghulam Shah Khan, the ruler of Kurdistan when in 1855, converted to Shiite and brought a Shiite scholar to Sinna to preach Shiism. Initially, the city's scholars asked him to return to the Sunni sect and reverse his decision, but he insisted on remaining Shiite and invited a Shiite scholar to Sinna to preach. The scholars of the city took refuge in Sheikh Osman Siraj al-Din, who lived in Tawela on the Ottoman side. Sheikh Osman sent his son Abdurrahman and the well-known Kurdish poet Mawlawi to Sinna to advise the ruler. When Sheikh Osman's attempt failed, the people of the city revolted against the ruler, attacking the shops of Shiite merchants, looted their houses and killed some people. In response, the governor of the city arrested 40 Sunnis, cut off their ears and noses, and threw them down from the government castle. This incident caused some of the city's residents to migrate. Among them was Sheikh Abdul Qadir Ma'roof, the author of Tahzib al-Kalam, who moved to Sulaymaniyah with all his relatives. After Sheikh Abdul Qadir left, the governor began to arrest and punish some of the city's religious scholars. He threw the son of the chief of the merchants with the cannon, pierced the eyes of Sheikh Wasmi and collected 80, 000 Iranian Rials from the people of the city every year for three years. Merdox, **op. cit.**, pp. 417-418; Mudarris, **op. cit.**, vol. II, p. 370.

[991] Sanandaji, **op. cit.**, pp.413-414.

[992] For Sheikh Umer's letter see Mudarris, **op. cit.**, pp. 261-263.

mosques of Sinna, most of whom were Ottoman citizens, attacked the governor's office. The injury of several faqihs by Hisham al-Mulk's son, who was guarding the building of the governorate, increased the anger of the people who entered the building and released the prisoners. Inside the prison, they found three of their friends, who were Ottoman citizens, executed. This complicated the situation and the rebels attacked the residence of Hisam al-Mulk. Had the sheikhs and scholars not stopped them, they would have killed him. Not being able to reach Hisam-al-Mulk, they attacked the home of Sheikh Mohammad Taqi Hamadani and killed him in front of his house on the grounds that "*the revenge for the blood of a prominent person is a prominent person"*. Following this incident, the governor of the city took refuge with Mustafa Bey, the Ottoman consul, and after spending several days under the custody of the consulate, he was summoned to Tehran by Muzaffar al-Din Shah, then the experienced strict governor Amir Nizam returned to Kurdistan.[993]

Amir Nizam first arrested and 'suffocated' two of the people who were allegedly behind the incitement to kill the Shiite akhund. He then ordered the collection of 20,000 Iranian Rials from the people of Sinna and its surroundings to be given to the family of the deceased and returned the possessions that had been seized by the people to the previous governor.[994] The harsh treatment of Amir Nizam prompted more people to seek refuge at the Ottoman consulate and obtain Ottoman citizenship. To make matters worse, Amir Nizam was soon reinstated as governor of Azerbaijan and succeeded by his son Salar al-Mulk as governor of Kurdistan. Salar al-Mulk was already at odds with the people and the Ottoman consul, who had become the de facto ruler of the city.[995] As a result, under the demands of the people and the insistence of the Ottoman consulate Baha Bey, Salar al-Mulk was removed and Ihtisham al-Saltana was appointed as the new governor of Kurdistan. In contrast, Tehran asked the Ottomans to replace Baha Bey because he was "*part of the conflict*

[993] Sanandaji, **op. cit.**, pp. 415-416. Also see Merdox, **op. cit.**, pp. 470-471.
[994] Merdox, **op. cit.**, p. 471; Sanandaji, **op. cit.**, pp. 416-417.
[995] Ihtisham al-Saltana points out that, thanks to the policies of his predecessors, the power of the Kurdistan province had fallen completely into the hands of the Ottoman consul. In fact, the Ottoman consul became suzerain (*malik-u riqqab*) and had everything in his hands. Ihtisham al-Saltana, **op. cit.**, p. 444.

and participated in inciting the people to" rebel against the governor of Kurdistan.[996] However, at the request of the new governor Ihtisham al-Saltana, Baha Bey remained in his position. Ihtisham al-Saltana, as he claims, agreed with Baha Bey to obtain permission from the Ottoman embassy to cancel passports for those who were not genuine Ottoman citizens by paying a bribe of 4,000 Tomans. After receiving the permission, Baha Bey gave the signed cancellation of the passports of many to Ihtisham al-Saltana and only a few hundred remained whose Ottoman citizenship was not canceled.[997] After the Ottoman consul's "scandal" was exposed, those whose passports were confiscated became enemies of the consul and by staying in Sinna he would expose himself to danger. Therefore, their positions were swapped with the consul of Tabriz, Bekir Sami Bey (later known as Bekir Sami Kundu).[998]

Initially although Bekir Sami Bay tried to erase the damage to the reputation of the consulate in Sinna and the Ottoman citizens of the Kurdistan province, in 1900, Ihtisham al-Saltana was able to extort him by paying a bribe "*derived from the large sums of money forcibly taken*" by Iran from those whose Ottoman passports had been canceled.[999] Bekir Sami Bay even agreed to confiscate the passports of almost all those who had not been revoked for the first time.[1000] The spread of the news of the incident caused a great reaction among the Ottoman subjects of Kurdistan, who stood up against the consul and threatened to kill him. As a result, the consul took refuge in Ihtisham al-Saltana for 40 days to save his life.[1001]

Although the efforts of Ihtisham al-Saltana were to a certain extent successful, along with the end of his governance, a new consul named Agha Nasrullah, who was originally a Kurd from Penjwen, was temporarily appointed for the consulate of the Kurdistan province. During this period, Nasr al-Mulk was appointed governor of Kurdistan. He informed the Foreign Ministry of Iran in a "highly private and confidential" letter that those who had received passports again

[996] Sanandaji, **op. cit.**, p. 418.
[997] Ihtisham al-Saltana demonstrates that out of tens of thousands of people, only 350 remained with Ottoman passports. Ihtisham al-Saltana, **op. cit.**, p. 445.
[998] Ihtisham al-Saltana, **op. cit.**, p. 456.
[999] **GESIO.**, vol. V, No. 981, 12 Rebîülâhir 1319; Ihtisham al-Saltana, **op. cit.**, p. 457.
[1000] Sanandaji, **op. cit.**, p. 420; Ihtisham al-Saltana, **op. cit.**, p. 457.
[1001] Ihtisham al-Saltana, **op. cit.**, p. 458.

began to violate and try not to recognize the agreement signed with Bekir Sami Bey. Again, they turned to the Ottoman consulate instead of the government administration in Sinna to resolve their problems and complaints. He accused the new consul of being behind the new activities of the old Ottoman citizens.[1002]

While the ill-treatment of the Iranian rulers pushed Sunni Kurds toward Ottomans, Istanbul tried other possibilities to attract Kurds further. When the Ottomans took over the Kurdish regions of Azerbaijan, the Ottoman Sheikh al-Islam from Istanbul called on the Sheikh al-Islam of Kurdistan to advocate pan-Islamism.[1003] In 1910, Sheikh Hassan, the Sheikh al-Islam of Kurdistan, wrote a letter to the Ottoman Interior Minister, Talat Pasha saying that the Kurds of the Kurdistan province had previously hoped for the Ottomans to place Kurdistan within the scope of the Caliph's hegemony, in a situation where the Russians and Britons had divided Iran into two spheres of Russian and British spheres of influence (discussed below). However, he was disappointed and suggested that the Ottomans at least could strengthen their hegemony in the province by increasing consulate guards and constructing hospitals and religious schools.[1004]

Two months later, Mushir Diwan (the highest administrative rank after the governor, appointed by the people of the city) in a private conversation with the Ottoman consul, stated that the province's population of 400,000 to 500,000 had strong geographical and religious ties to the Ottomans and most of the scholars and

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[1002] **GESIO.**, vol. V, No. 981.

[1003] In 1910, the Sheikh al-Islam of the Kurdistan Province told the British Deputy Consul in Mosul that they had met in Biara, he was instructed by the Ottoman Sheikh al-Islam to work for pan-Islamism in India. East India Company. BL. **IOR/L/PS/10/58** "File 2764/1904 Pt 2 'Baghdad Railway: General Negotiations 1908-10', No. 1/2/100, "Vice-Consul Wilkie Young to Sir G. Lowther", 29 January 1910. One of the arguments of the pan-Islamist policy toward Istanbul was to expand the Sultan's power over the Kurdish-Sunni areas within the Iranian border. To avoid the negative consequences of this policy on Iran, Iran's ambassador to Istanbul (1895-1908), Arfa'u'llah, met with Sultan Abdulhamid, conveying the message of Muzaffar al-Din Shah that Iran is ready to cooperate in any way to support the policy of *itihad-i Islam* (Islamic Unity or Pan-Islamism). However, Sultan Abdulhamid told Arfa 'Udaula that he would respond him through Sheikh Abul-Hüda al-Sayyadî. Then Sheikh Abul Huda, on behalf of the Sultan, sent a negative reply to the Iranian ambassador, telling him: "The Islamic world has no more than one Shah (king), Sultan Abdulhamid, so what "Shah" you are talking about"
Khan Mulk-i Sasani, **Yadbudha-ye Sefaret-e Istanbul**, Intisharat-e Babak, Tehran, w.date, p. 278.

[1004] **BOA. HR.SYS**., No. 728/30.

merchants of the province wanted to be annexed to the Ottoman Empire.[1005] In October 1911, with the unrest related to the Constitutional Revolution and the Salar al-Dawla's rebellion, 130 sheikhs and murids of the Qadiri Tariqa sent a letter to the Porte through the Ottoman consulate in Sinna asking the Ottoman Empire to protect their lives and properties and hoped that *the "Sultan of Islam would fulfill his duty to protect all Muslims, especially the people of knowledge and the holders of Shari'ah and Tariqa".*[1006]

5.1.2. 1. Ottoman Hegemony in the Frontier Areas of the Kurdistan Province

The Kurdistan province was neighboring Sulaymaniyah from three regions, from north to south: Bana-Pishdar, Marivan-Penjwen, and the Hawrman Mountains. The Bilbas, Jaf tribes, and Hawramis that were scattered over these areas and belonged to the Ottomans have always been an obstacle to the imposition of state's authority on the frontier region. As for Bana, Ihtisham al-Saltana admits that

> In Bana, the Ottomans had more power than the governor of Kurdistan; whoever the Ottoman consul in Sinna wanted, the governor of Kurdistan had to appoint the governor of Bana.[1007]

> Later in1905, as mentioned above, Bana was occupied by the Ottoman Empire. Regarding two other important border areas; Mariwan and Hawraman, Ihtisham al-Saltana states that:

> The Hawrami and Mariwan were neither Ottoman nor Iranian subjects and did not listen to either state. If one of the Kurdistan governors wanted to punish them, the "brave clans of the two regions would rise against them, destroy the tents of the Khans, send them back defeated, and plundered their goods.[1008]

Although Ihtisham al-Saltana refers to the Hawarmis as a group of independent clans, the western part of the Hawraman Mountains, where the Naqshbandi Sheikhs lived, was the Ottoman land and Sheikhs were Ottoman subjects, and their salaries for their khanqahs were provided from Istanbul. As

[1005] **BOA. HR.SYS**., No. 673/62.
[1006] **BOA. BEO**., No. 3975.298113/3.
[1007] Ihtisham-u Salatanah, **op. cit.**, p. 442.
[1008] Ihtisham-u Saltana, **op. cit.**, pp. 441-442.

mentioned above, these sheikhs had great influence in Iran and defended the rights of Kurds against the authorities of the Kurdistan province and wrote letters to the governors several times.[1009] The sheikhs of Tawela and Biara also had a great spiritual influence on the Ottoman side and had close ties with the Jaf tribe and its chieftains. Even Mahmud Pasha Jaf considered himself a murid of Sheikh Omar Ziauddin Naqshbandi.[1010] However, due to the power of the Jaf tribe, the political affairs of the tribe are less influenced by the sheikhs.

The above situation helped the Ottomans to maintain their hegemony in the Kurdistan province and was a prelude to the seizer of Bana, as well as the seizer of Mariwan, only 70 kilometers from Sinna, in February 1912, while representatives of both states were awaiting the establishment of a joint border demarcation commission. In April, more Ottoman troops were sent to the border but as Soane had heard from an Ottoman officer, the force's final target was Sinna,[1011] however, as it will become clear at the end of this chapter, this Ottoman goal was not achieved.

5.2. THE FATE OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES OF AZERBAIJAN

5.2.1. Ottoman Policy in the Occupied Areas and Claiming Its Ownership

After the capture of Vazneh, Lahijan, and Margawar, the Iranians responded with diplomatic protests. However gradually, with the help of Hamidiye cavalry, the forces of Sheikh Sadiq, and later his son Sayyid Taha, the Ottomans took control of a large area that extended from southern Qutur to the city of Bana in Kurdistan province. The area was about 80 kilometers wide in some places and about 300 kilometers long. First, the disputed areas of Lahijan and Vazneh and later Pasveh were seized by the Ottomans. The occupation of Pasveh took the conflict to another level. Although Iran considered Lahijan and Vaznehh as its property, the two areas

[1009] in Mudarris, **op. cit.**, p. 259, 261.
[1010] Hasan Jaf, "Introduction to", Mahmud Pasha Jaf, **Kashkoli Mahmud Pasha-i Jaf**, Sulaymaniyah 2014, p. 49.
[1011] **BL. IOR/L/PS/10/212**(File 211/1912 "**File 211/1912 'Turkish Arabia Summaries'**, 1912", pp. 10-13.

were still within the borders of the status quo areas, while Pasveh was not a disputed area.

The Ottoman Empire initially claimed that the reason for its occupation was to assist Tehran in its confrontation with the reformists who were very active in Azerbaijan.[1012] This excuse was repeatedly used throughout the Ottoman stay in the region. It was not long before Istanbul's real intention to stay in the region and its defense of the ownership of the territories it had occupied became apparent. In the summer of 1905, Ottomans agreed to form a commission to investigate the border disputes in Lahijan, Vazneh, Mergan, and Pasveh after Iran expressed its dissatisfaction with the Ottoman invasion through the Russians and the Britons.[1013] However, Iran initially demanded that the Ottomans vacate the areas that they had occupied before the commissions met, but the Ottoman Foreign Minister Ahmed Tevfik Pasha rejected Iran's request because, according to him, Vazneh, Lahijan, and Mergan were Ottoman property.[1014] Later, at the insistence of the Russians and the Britons, Iran withdrew its demand but insisted that before the commissions met the Ottomans must vacate Pasveh, which was the real property of Iran and was outside the status quo.[1015] The Ottomans, for their part, appointed Ahmed Vajid Pasha as the head of their commission, along with several members, all of whom were military personnel and experts in the region. Ahmed Vajid Pasha had a good understanding of the region and the Kurdish tribes.[1016] However, because the Ottomans did not vacate Pasveh despite their promises[1017], Iran repeatedly complained to the Porte and the Sultan. On February 25, 1906, the Iranian ambassador in Istanbul strongly protested the Ottoman expansion in Iran, especially in Pasveh, and asked them to leave the area within 24 hours if they did not want war between the two states. The Iranian ambassador then met with the Ottoman foreign minister, who informed him that Sultan Abdulhamid had decided to order the withdrawal of Ottoman forces from

[1012] Ates, **op. cit.**, p. 232.
[1013] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 743, 15 Cemaziyelevvel 1323.
[1014] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 750, 29 Şevval 1323.
[1015] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 743, 15 Cemâziyelâhir 1323.
[1016] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 790, 15 Muharrem 1324; Sarikcioğlu, **op. cit.**, p. 103.
[1017] **Aberdeen Press and Journal**, 18 June 1906, p. 6.

Iranian territories.[1018] However, contrary to the promises received by the Iranian ambassador, on the same day Vajid Pasha, the head of the Ottoman commission, sent a letter to his respective country summarizing his investigations into the border areas which according to his research, the regions of Lahijan, Vazneh, Mergan, and even Pasveh were part of the Ottoman Empire. According to him, Pasveh was home to the Gawrk tribe, 25,000-30,000 Mangor, and 3,000 Piran from the Bilbas tribe, which belonged to the Ottoman Empire who until recent years, paid taxes to the officials of Koya, Ranya, and later Ma'muratulhamid, and their names are in the registry books of these Ottoman areas.[1019]

A few days after Ahmed Vajid Pasha's report the Ottoman foreign minister, contrary to his promise to withdraw the Ottoman forces in a letter, informed the Iranian embassy that in the light of the investigations of Dervish and Hurshid Pashas, he realized that in addition to the captured areas, the Ottoman Empire has to take control over several other frontier points occupied by Iran.[1020] As Ottoman- Iranian negotiations continued, the death of Ahmed Vajid Pasha, who committed suicide in Pasveh in the spring of 1906[1021], delayed the work of the commission for a while[1022] until the Ottoman Empire appointed Zeki Pasha in Vajid's place, who arrived in Sauj Bulaq in September 1906[1023] and Iran appointed the skilled politician and diplomat Ihtisham al-Saltana as the head of the Iranian Commission.[1024] He first went to Sauj Bulaq and then to Sulduz to meet with the Ottomans. From the outset, Ihtisham al-Saltana was unhappy with the course of the meetings, as the Ottomans had managed to win the support of most of the Kurds in the Mukri region, whom Ihtisham al-Saltana described as "savages".[1025] At the time of the arrival of Ihtisham al-Saltana, Iran was struggling with a bad internal condition and the Ottomans tried to use this

[1018] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 753.
[1019] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1016.
[1020] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 791, 18 Muharrem 1324.
[1021] **Aberdeen Press and Journal**, 18 June 1906, p. 6.
[1022] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 795, 30 Rebîülâhir 1324.
[1023] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 800, 17 Receb 1324.
[1024] Ihtisham al-Saltana was one of the most prominent pro-constitutional figures who later became the head of Iran's newly formed parliament. As he, Kasravi, and Dawlat Abadi have pointed out, his appointment as head of the Iranian commission was part of the policy of the Shah and his close associates to remove him from Tehran. Ihtisham-u Saltanah, **op. cit.**, p. 553; Dawlat Abadi, **op. cit.**, vol. II, p. 57; Kasravi, **op. cit.**, **vol. I**, p. 423.
[1025] Ihtisham al- Saltana, **op. cit.**, pp. 561-562.

opportunity to force Iran to fulfill their demands. Simultaneous with the meeting of Ottoman-Iranian representatives, Ottoman forces continued to prepare on the border and Kurdish tribes continued to attack areas still under Iranian control. Ihtisham al-Saltana, who appeared to be in a hurry to return to Tehran's politically contested scene, points out that the Ottomans demanded three villages belonging to their two "rebellious and troublesome" tribes, and although he agreed to give them these villages, Tehran rejected the offer.[1026] After the representatives of the commission of the two states in Sulduz did not reach a decisive result, the commission was translocated to Mosul at the proposal of Iran to continue the meetings[1027] because the Iranian ambassador Arfa' al-Dawla in Istanbul warned Tehran that if the Ottoman commissioners stayed in the Kurdish regions of Azerbaijan for a long time they would instigate Sunni Kurds against Iran.[1028]

As Arfa al-Dawla and the British consul pointed out, the Porte's policy was influenced by a group of statesmen they called the 'war party'.[1029] This group, led by Abdullah Pasha, commander of the Fourth Ottoman Army, and Izzat Bay, governor of Kirkuk, had a major influence on the Porte's encouragement to stay and expand in the Kurdish territories of Iran. According to the British ambassador in Istanbul, by controlling the reports sent to Istanbul from the borders, Abdullah and Izzat Pashas tried to convince Sultan Abdulhamid that withdrawal from Iran would not only disappoint the tribes belonging to the Hamidiye regiments but also could undermine the prestige of the state and create a Kurdish rebellion within the Ottoman Empire.[1030]

Another reason asserted by the Ottomans to legitimize their expansion was the intervention petitions (Ottoman Turkish: *dehalet talebi*) submitted by the Kurdish tribes to the Ottoman authorities. The demand for protection by the Kurdish tribes

[1026] Ihtisham-u Salatah, **op. cit.**, pp. 565-566. Indeed, considering the diplomatic negotiations that took place between Iranian officials and the Ottoman officials during those years, it does not seem that Ihtisham al-Saltana's words are accurate. As will be discussed below, the Ottomans demanded more than what Ihtisham al-Sultan indicates.
[1027] **Ibid.**, 566.
[1028] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 802. 1 Şevval 1324.
[1029] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1019, 10 Şaban 1325.
[1030] Ates, **op. cit.**, p. 244.

had a deep history. As mentioned in the chapter two, since the time of Sheikh Ubeidullah, Kurdish tribes had been repeatedly asking the Ottoman Empire to protect them from religious persecution in Iran. During this period, however, these demands were made continuously and actively, sometimes at the instigation of Ottoman officials.[1031]

During 1906-1907, the Ottomans were able to attract the Mamsh, Zarza, Mangor, Jalali, and Piran tribes. The notables of Sardasht, Oshnavieh, and Bana also proposed a petition for Ottoman intervention in their areas.[1032] During these two years, along with fruitless negotiations between the Ottoman and Iranian commissioners, the Ottoman forces continued to advance with the help of some Kurdish tribes. In 1906, they took over Anzali in southeastern Urmia and, with the help of Ismail Agha Shikak 'Simko', began collecting taxes from the Chehriq region, east of Qutur. While with the help of Karim Khan Harki, Izzat Pasha captured several villages in Baranduzchay and sent more troops around Khuy.[1033] During the presence of the Ottoman forces in Mukri, some Kurdish tribes independently attacked some areas that were under the control of Iran. Kasravi points out that Simko, who wanted vengeance for his brother's death, constantly attacked Shiite and Assyrian villages.[1034] The regions of Lahijan, Targawar, and Margawar were also ruled by the followers of Sheikh Sadiq. In 1906-1907, Sheikh Sadiq's men collected taxes in Turkish gendarmerie uniforms near Urmia.[1035] After the death of Sheikh Sadiq in the spring of 1907, his son Sayyid Taha, who later became a prominent political figure, succeeded him and cultivated tobacco in the fertile plains of Targawar and Margawar.[1036] Wratislaw points out that in the areas occupied by the Ottomans, they were able to provide security and peace to a good extent while allowing the Kurds to create chaos in the areas still under Iranian control to push the

[1031] **Ibid.**, 235.
[1032] Najati Abdullah, **op. cit.**, p. 373; Soane, **Raportêk leser Slêmani**, pp. 105-106.
[1033] Ates, **op. cit.**, p. 245.
[1034] Kasrevi, **op. cit.**, p. 435.
[1035] **The Evining Mail**, 25 Sep. 1907, p. 8; **BOA. BEO**., No.3089/231672, 13 Cemâziyelâhir 1325.
[1036] **The Evining Mail**, 25 Sep. 1907, p. 8.

people of those regions to take refuge with the Ottomans and ask them to intervene.[1037]

5.2.2. The Defeat of the Urmia Army and the Further Advance of the Ottoman Forces

Contrary to Iranian expectations, in 1907 the Ottoman forces seized some new areas. In the cities where constitutionalists came to power, they established an administration run by a constitutionalist council called "*Anjuman*". Majd al-Saltana who was a fugitive and wanted by Muhammad Ali Mirza for failing to arrest and punish Labaree's murderers in time, after the victory of constitutionalism in Tehran, returned to Urmia and was made president of the council in that city. To take revenge on the Bagzade Kurds and erase the shame he had suffered because of them two years earlier, he formed a force of 1,400 Muslims and Christians and in July 1907 launched a punitive campaign against the Bagzadeh Kurds. Initially, he was able to capture some of the villages of the Begzade and force them to retreat to the mountains. However, the Bagzades, who were then under Ottoman protection, asked for help from the Ottoman authorities, and on August 1, 1907, four Ottoman battalions, several artillery pieces, and about 4,000 Kurdish tribesmen attacked the army of Majd al-Saltana. At first, Majd al-Saltana thought it was only the Kurdish tribes, so he confronted them, but when he realized that they were with the Ottoman army, he sent a representative to the Ottoman commander and told him that he had no intention of fighting the Ottomans and that he had come to discipline the Kurds. In response, the Ottoman commander gave Majd al-Saltana three hours to withdraw his army. After the permit expired, the Ottoman forces bombed the army of Majd al-Saltana. After losing about 150 men, he retreated to Urmia, while his tents and artillery fell into the hands of the Ottoman forces.[1038] Habl al-Matin newspaper depicts that after the incident, the Ottomans registered all members of the Bagzade

[1037] Wratislaw, **op. cit.**, p. 267.
[1038] **BOA. HR.SYS**., No. 742/42 9; Wratislaw, **op. cit.**, pp. 265-266; **The Salt Lake Herald**, August 29, 1907, p. 1; **Deseret Evening News**, August 29, 1907, p. 7; Kasravi, **op. cit.**, vol. I, pp. 434-435; Soane, **op. cit.**, p. 105.

tribe as the Hamidiye cavalry, and they agreed with great pleasure. Regarding the potential danger posed to Iran by the process, the reporter adds:

> If the officers of the neighboring state become the owners of the Kurds and the tribes in these areas and give them weapons and military supplies, undoubtedly there is no more chance for us in these areas.[1039]



Figure 11. A cannon was left behind by the Majd al-Saltana troops and seized by the Ottomans in 1907.[1040]

After the defeat of Majd al-Saltana, the Kurds attacked and plundered the villages around Urmia and the Ottoman forces entered the villages, so the Shiite and Christian inhabitants fled to Urmia. As a result, Urmia was sieged and isolated from

[1039] **Habl al-Matin**, (Tehran) 3 October 1907, p. 4.

[1040] **Pearl Digital Collections** Avilable at https://digital.history.pcusa.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A139126?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=8dcb2647aa3234094841&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=0 (Accessed in 1 Julay 2022). Physical Location; Archives 16-0623, Box 2, Folder 5; Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA. Copyright Undetermined.

other areas under the control of the Iranian government.[1041] The Kurds even cut off the Urmia telegraph line.[1042] Lazarev claims that the Ottoman authorities made every effort to involve as many of the Hamidiye forces in the attacks on Iran, especially in the lower regions of Lake Urmia. However, in the western regions of Lake Urmia, to avoid confrontation with Iranian forces and lest provok Russia and Britain, the Ottomans were inclined to use soldiers or even Hamidiye forces, instead they entrusted the task to the unorganized pro-Ottoman Kurdish tribes of the frontier.[1043] Confirming Lazarev's statement, The New York Times newspaper indicates that the Kurds were in the lead and the Ottoman military forces were behind them.[1044] In contrast, as in the case of Majd al-Saltana, the Iranians refrained from fighting the Ottomans directly, and their punitive campaign was mostly against the Kurds. After the capture of the areas around Urmia and further unrest, the Kurdish tribes of Sauj Bulaq declared their allegiance to the Ottoman Empire and sought help from the Ottoman commander Mohammad Fazil Pasha, who was then in Pasveh. Before Fazil Pasha could receive permission from Istanbul to capture Sauj Bulaq, Farmanfarma, the governor of Tabriz marched with an army toward Sauj Bulaq and plundered about 20 Sunni Kurdish villages[1045] which caused protests in Istanbul and it was interpreted as an unfriendly act of the governor of Tabriz.[1046] After the arrival of Farmanfarma in Sauj Bulaq, Bayiz Pasha Mangor sent a letter with a 'sayyid' to the people of Sauj Bulaq, threatening that if they did not expel Farmanfarma from the city, he would attack the city. Nevertheless, the governor insisted on staying in the city and convinced the notables of the city to swear to defend the city to the end. Consequently, Bayiz Pasha, with the help of other Kurdish tribes of Mangor, Mamsh, Gawirk, Dibokri, Begzade, Sardasht, Kumkale, and even part of the Karapapak tribes, all about 18,000 people, attacked the city[1047] and captured the heights around it after 12 hours of fighting. Despite the deaths of 100 of Farmanfarma's forces, the

[1041] **Aberdeen Press and Journal**, 10 August 1907, p. 5; **Evesham Standard & West Midland Observer**, 17 August 1907, p. 7.
[1042] **Newcastle Evening Chronicle**, 24 December 1907, p. 6.
[1043] Lazarev, **op. cit.**, 194.
[1044] **New York Times** "Kurds Raiding Persia" 24 Jun 1908, p. 1.
[1045] **BOA. HR SYS.** No. 742/84, as cited in Ates, **op. cit.**, p. 257. See also **Newcastle Daily Chronicle**, 14 December 1907, p. 12.
[1046] **Westminster Gazette**, 06 December 1907.p. 5.
[1047] **Habl al-Matin**, 28 Mart 1908, p. 1.

Kurds were unable to capture the city until Mohammed Fazil Pasha marched to Sauj Bulaq with a military force and artillery. According to Kasravi, Farmanfarma was ordered from Tehran not to fight the Ottomans because they had not officially declared war and only fight the Kurdish tribes. So Farmanfarma sent a delegate to Fazil Pasha to ask him how they had attacked the city without officially declaring war. Fazil Pasha replied: "*How can a declaration of war be clearer than being a couple of kilometers close to the city with 20,000 soldiers and six cannons?"* Then Fazil Pasha gave them six hours to leave the city or else expect a fight." Thus Farmanfarma was compelled to leave the city and retreat to Miandab.[1048]

5.2.3. Anglo-Russian Convention and Its Effects on the Ottoman Presence in Iran

According to an agreement signed in 1865 between Russia, Britain, Iran, and the Ottoman Empire, it was decided that the Ottoman Empire and Iran had to determine the borderline and whenever they could not reach an agreement, they would return to Russia and Britain. However, During 1905-1907 Iranians on the one hand, tried to convince the Russians and the Britons to become mediators between them and the Ottomans, and on the other hand, tried to convince the Ottomans with this proposal which they rejected.[1049] Russia and Britain had not taken the Ottoman-Iranian conflict seriously until the German presence in the region and the plan to build an Ottoman-German railway from Anatolia to Shatul Arab, which coincided with the plan to build a Russian-Iranian railway from Julfa to the Gulf, which caused concern among Russians and the Britons. As the Evening Mail reporter indicated; "*There are many who think that the pivot of world politics lies at the present moment (1907) between these two lines*."[1050]

The increasing German hegemony within the Ottoman Empire and the privilege of opening a school and a branch of the Orient Bank of Berlin in Tehran

[1048] Kasaravi, **op. cit.**, pp. 539, 541. Also see Soane, **op. cit.**, p. 105; **Daily Telegraph & Courier** (London) - Monday 30 December 1907, p. 5.
[1049] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1019, 10 Şaban 1325.
[1050] **Evening Mail**, (London) Wednesday 25 September 1907, p. 8.

along with rumors of the Germans' desire to get the concession to build a railway in Iran caused a stir in European and American newspapers and increased Russian and British concerns.[1051]

To counter German influence on the one hand, and to agree on their sphere of influence on the other hand, Russia and Britain began negotiations in late 1906[1052] until they signed an agreement in August 1907 to divide their influence over Iran, Afghanistan, and Tibet. According to the agreement, Iran was divided into three zones of influence of Russian domination in the north, a neutral zone in the middle, and a British zone in the south. The parliament and the constitutional bloc strongly protested the agreement and did not recognize it. This brought the British and Russians closer to the Shah, who opposed the parliament and the constitutionalists.[1053] As the British and Russians approached the settlement of their conflicts, they began trying seriously to remove Ottoman hegemony (which had also paved the way for the Germans) in Iran.[1054]

Accordingly, in mid-August,1907, the Russian and British ambassadors in Istanbul asked the Porte to withdraw Hamidiye cavalry from Iranian territory, however, as mentioned above, despite the demands of the Russians and the Britons, the Kurdish-Ottoman forces entered Sauj Bulaq in November of the same year. Later, in response to the continuous protests of the Russians and the Britons, the Porte stated they did not intend to occupy Sauj Bulaq, but they had captured the city as a result of the cruel measures of the governor of the Azerbaijan province against the Kurds. [1055]Then, Russian and British representatives at the Porte's request called on Tehran to refrain from using violent measures against the Kurds.[1056] Subsequently, Fazil Pasha, after asking for reassurance from Iran not to use violence

[1051] **Totnes Weekly Times** (Devon, England) Saturday 27 April 1907, p. 3; **Dublin Daily Express**, Tuesday 09 April 1907, p. 5; **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 1167.
[1052] Wratislaw, **op. cit.**, p. 264.
[1053] Dawlatabadi, **op. cit.**, voll.II, pp. 102-103; Kasravi, **op. cit.**, vol. I, p. 461.
[1054] **Freeman's Journal** (Dublin), Saturday 10 August 1907, p. 7; **Evesham Standard & West Midland Observer** (Worcestershire, England) Saturday 17 August 1907, p. 7.
[1055] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1165, 24 January 1908. Also see **Westminster Gazette**, Friday 07 February 1908, p. 6.
[1056] **Habl al-Matin**, (Tehran) 18 February 1908, p. 4.

against Kurds,[1057] on the orders of the Porte, withdrew its forces from Sauj Bulaq to Pasveh on February 22, 1908, under pressure from Iranian, Russian, and British diplomats. Fazil Pasha's withdrawal from Sauj Bulaq harmed the Ottoman's credit among the Kurdish tribes and it explained that the Ottomans could only stay in the region to a limited extent. According to Kasravi, the rebel Kurds of Sauj Bulaq, after the withdrawal of the Ottomans, *"repented their usual behavior"* and declared their support for Iran.[1058] The Iranian parliament also issued an order to punish those who supported the Ottomans and *"caused tribal insurgency*" in Sauj Bulaq after Fazil Pasha's withdrawal.[1059]

5.2.4. Military Withdrawal but Claiming Further Land: Ottoman's Demand for All the Kurds' Regions

After the commission of Zeki Pasha and Ihtisham al-Saltana ended without any results, the commission was dissolved in August 1907.[1060] Soon, at the insistence of the Russians and the Britons, the Ottoman Empire and Iran agreed to create a new commission to resolve the issues. The Ottoman Empire appointed the governor of Bitlis, Farhad Pasha, and the commander of Kirkuk, Daniel Pasha, as the head and the assistant of the Ottoman Commission respectively[1061] while Iran appointed Muhtasham al-Saltana as the new governor of Urmia and the head of the Iranian commission.[1062] The new commission decided to appoint the British Consul General Wratislaw in Tabriz and Russian Deputy Consul Tcherkassov in Urmia, as advisors, though the Ottoman Empire was not satisfied with this decision.[1063] After all the

[1057] **Globe**, Monday 24 February 1908, p. 2.
[1058] After the withdrawal of the Ottoman forces from Sauj Bulaq, Iranian Ambassador in Istanbul Arfa al-Dawla, the head of the Iranian commission in Mosul, Ihtisham al-Saltana, Mohammed Ali Shah, and British and Russian counsels claimed that Sultan Abdulhamid withdrew his forces because of them. Arfa al- Dawla, **op. cit.**, p. 437; Ihtisham al-Saltana, **op. cit.**, pp. 567-68; **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1165; Kasravi, **op. cit.**, vol. II, p. 542.
[1059] **Habl al-Matin**, (Tehran) 27 February 1908, p. 2.
[1060] Muhtesham al- Saltana, Ed. by Roqiya Aghabalazadah, **Muntakhab-i az Asnad-e Hukumat-e Urumiya-ya Hasan Asfandiyari**, Tehran 1396, vol. III, p. 13.
[1061] **BOA. BEO**., No. 3132/ 234860, 17 Receb 1325.
[1062] Muhtesham al-Saltana, **op. cit.**, p. 15.
[1063] The Iranian ambassador in Istanbul states he had suggested to the Grand Vizier that the border issue should be resolved either in the presence of Russian and British representatives or in the presence of another neutral country, but the Grand Vizier refused the proposal. **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1025.

representatives arrived in Urmia in early February 1908, the members of the commission began the negotiations.[1064] As the Ottoman and Iranian commissions were exchanging letters for nearly a year, the Kurdish tribes became increasingly dominant in the region. Kasrawi notes that despite the Kurdish had evacuated Sauj Bulaq, Kurdish tribes continued to attack Christian and Shiite subjects. As a result, a large number of Christians and Shiites left the surrounding villages and towns and moved to Urmia.[1065]

According to the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, they promised to protect the sovereignty and integrity of Iran, and based on this promise, the Iranians asked the Russian and Britons representatives to confront the Ottomans. The Kurds' confrontation with the Christian subjects in the areas around Urmia further encouraged the Russo-British defendant of Iran against the Ottomans and the Kurdish tribes. Wratislaw, who believed that "*the only good Kurd is a dead Kurd and eradicating this race is an achievement for humanity*", during the negotiations tried to convince Tahir Pasha that the Kurds with the support of the Ottomans, were killing and looting "innocent" Christian and Shiite villages in the region, while Tahir Pasha blamed Christians and Shiites and saw the claims as part of the propaganda to tarnish the reputation of the Kurds.[1066]

[1064] Wratislaw, **op. cit.**, p. 266.
[1065] **Leicester Daily Mercury**, Tuesday 23 June 1908, p. 3; Kasravi, **op. cit.** vol. I, II, pp. 440, 542.
[1066] Wratislaw, **op. cit.**, pp. 269, 271.



Figure 12. Turco-Persian Boundary Commission: from left to right Mirliva Tahir Pasha (third person seated), the head of the Ottoman Commission (1907-1909), Muhtasham al-Saltana (fourth person seated)[1067] the head of the Iranian Commission (1907-1910). Circa 1907-1908.

Although for the first time, Zeki Pasha had claimed that all Kurds belonged to the Ottoman Empire and had defined the shores of Lake Urmia as the Ottoman border,[1068] this issue was seriously advocated when Tahir Pasha was appointed the head of the Ottoman commission. The arrival of Tahir Pasha in Urmia marked the beginning of a new phase in the Ottoman policy toward the events in the region. While the Iranian commission expected the Ottomans to vacate the territories they had occupied, contrary to expectations the Ottomans increased their demands. Until then, the Ottoman occupation had even passed the line from many places that Dervish Pasha had defined as the ancient borders of the Ottoman Empire such as the regions of Pasveh, Chahriq, Sauj Bulaq, Bana, Saqiz, east Oshnavieh, Soma, north and south Anzal.[1069] Taking advantage of Iran's weakness, which was preoccupied

[1067] **Pearl Digital Collections**, physical location; Archives 16-0623, Box 2, Folder 4; Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA.
[1068] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1121, Cemâziyelâhir 1326.
[1069] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1338, 20 Receb 1326.

with domestic political problems related to the constitutional revolution, the Ottoman Commission began to claim Ottoman ownership of all Kurds and their regions. As the meetings began, in order to put more pressure on Iran, in December 1907, the Porte ordered the Fourth and Sixth Armies to mobilize more forces on the frontier.[1070]

Throughout 1908, the Iranian-Ottoman commissions met several times in two stages and exchanged 50 reports with each other.[1071] The first round of meetings was held in February 1908 in which Tahir Pasha tried to prove the Ottoman sovereignty over the Kurds by referring to the Treaty of Zahab 1639 and the Treaty of Erzurum 1823. In its report on February 8, 1908, the Ottoman Commission proposed six points to the Iranians, in which they emphasized that in accordance with the Treaty of Zahab 1639, the borderline was defined according to the ethnic differences (Akvam), and accordingly it was guaranteed that Iran would not interfere in the affairs of the *"Kurds who are ours"*. They also reminded the Iranians that according to the Treaty of Erzurum 1823, Iran had again promised not to interfere in the affairs of the "Kurdistan provinces". Finally, the Ottoman Commission notified its Iranian counterpart that:

> In the villages, towns, cities, and provinces of Kurdistan that extend from Bayazit to southern Sulaymaniyah, the Iranian state's interventions have no legal basis."[1072]

Expectedly, the meetings were suspended because the views of the Ottoman and Iranian commissions were too far apart to reach any agreement. According to Wratislaw, Tahir Pasha repeated three times at the first meeting that "*the Kurds are the subjects of the Sultan wherever they are*" and then left and did not return for three months.[1073]

During this time, both Ottoman and Iranian regional authorities actively sought to attract Kurdish tribes. Meanwhile, although Fazil Pasha's army left Sauj

[1070] **Globe**, (London) Friday 13 December 1907, p. 11.
[1071] For the list of the exchanged reports see **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1092.
[1072] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1097, 29 Zilhicce 1325.
[1073] Wratislaw, **op. cit.**, p. 268.

Bulaq, he tried to maintain the Sunni Kurds' support for the Ottoman Empire. As a result, Iranian Foreign Minister Mushir al-Dawla called the Porte for the removal of Fazil Pasha and several other officers because of their encouragement of the Kurds to attack, loot and raise sectarianism between Sunnis and Shiites. Furthermore, he accused Fazil Pasha of instigating the Kurds to propose intervention petitions and asking Istanbul for help with the fake stamps of the chieftains of Mukri and Debukri nobles. The Ottoman Foreign Minister Ahmet Tevfik, meanwhile, denied the claims and accused Iranians of attracting local tribes by giving them decorations and promises, placing them on the border, and encouraging them to plunder the homes and livestock of the Ottoman Kurds. He also claimed to have complete evidence that Iranian officials had settled Armenians along the border and helped them smuggle weapons and ammunition into the Ottoman territory to create chaos.[1074]

While the Ottomans made serious efforts to keep the Kurds on their side, there were various proposals among Iranian politicians to do the same. The Iranian Ambassador to the Netherlands Sediq al-Mulk while informing his country about the Western press reports regarding the Ottoman-Kurdish cooperation, proposed to his country the following:

> What is wrong with us doing the same thing that the Ottomans do? While we cannot subjugate the Kurds by force, we can attract them with the power of a little money, wooing, and promises and when necessary, direct them to attack the Ottomans. This is the essence of deception and politics that the Ottomans used and still use against us!!![1075]

Failing to attract the Kurds, Iran possessed a weak position while discussing border issues. After months of suspension, when the Ottoman-Iranian Commission resumed negotiations in July and August 1908, Tahir Pasha and his group repeated the same demands. In July, when Iranian commissioners asked to base their negotiations on the Treaty of Erzurum 1847, the Ottoman commissioners responded that the treaty only dealt with the disputed areas, therefore, it was not sufficient to define the borders of the two states. The Ottoman commissioners, despite

[1074] For Mushir-al- Dawla's letter see **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1172/1, 16 Rebîülevvel 1326. For Ahmet Tevfik Pasha's respond see **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1182, 22 Rebîülevvel 1326.
[1075] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1186, Rebîülevvel 1326.

emphasizing the previous demands, told their Iranian counterparts that if part of the Kurdish areas were still in Iranian hands it was because while the Ottoman Empire was at war with the Russians (1806-1812), the Crown Prince Abbas Mirza was able to reach out to *"our Kurds"* and acted as he pleased. Finally, contrary to all expectations, asking Iran to vacate all the Kurdish regions, the Ottoman commissioners told the Iranian commissioners that: "*the seizure of the Kurds will not benefit Iran except that you will harm your religious brothers and occupy a neighboring state*".[1076] As we mentioned in the introduction, because the original text of the Treaty of Zahab 1639 was not available, the Ottoman commissioners relied on the Turkish texts in their historical books which divided the two states' subjects based on sectarian differences (*kavim*), while, the Iranians relied on the Persian texts which they had taken from their historical books. Therefore, the Iranian commissioners, while not recognizing the Ottoman narrative of the Treaty of Zahab 1639, believed that the Treaty of Erzurum II should be the basis for determining the border. Furthermore, Iranian Commissioners reminded the Ottomans that if indeed the subjects were separated on the basis of sectarian differences in the Treaty of Zahab 1639, then Ottomans should be aware that "*because your provinces are also full of Shiites, it is clear what the consequences of this claim will be for you.*"[1077] Three weeks later, the Ottoman Commission submitted another report to the Iranians and despite reiterating the previous claims, told them that during the administrative and military changes made by the Ottomans in the middle of the 19th century:

> The Iranians have intimidated our Kurds and made them confront each other, but now, thank God, there is nothing left to frighten our Kurds. Therefore, we think it is time for your respected commission to restore our rights".[1078]

The Iranian commission replied to the Ottomans that: If it is decided that the Kurds, who are part of the ancient people of Iran should be separated from other Iranians they should be further separated from the Turks, who are neither of the same race nor origin. Moreover, if a distinction is made between the Ja'fari (Shiite) and Shafi'i (Kurdish) schools of thought, there must also be a distinction between the

[1076] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1102, 1 Cemâziyelevvel 1326.
[1077] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1137, 20 Receb 1326.
[1078] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1104, 20 Cemâziyelâhir 1326.

Hanafi (Turks) and Shafi'i schools of thought.[1079] As it is evident from the above discussions, the views of the Ottoman Empire and Iran were too far from each other to solve their issues through dialogue. In addition to that, as we will discuss below the coming months witnessed some important events in Tehran and Istanbul that had a great impact on the positions of the two states regarding the border demarcation and the Kurdish tribes.

5.3. BORDER DISPUTES IN THE CONSTITUTIONALISM ERA

5.3.1. Constitutional Revolutions in Tehran and Istanbul and Their Impact on the Frontier Disputes

Simultaneously with the discussions of the Tahir Pasha and Muhtashm al-Saltana commissions, in June and July 1908 the political situation in both Istanbul and Tehran was going through a sensitive period. While in Tehran Muhammad Ali Shah bombed parliament and ended constitutional authority for a while, in Istanbul, Sultan Abul Hamid was obliged to accept a constitutional government. Accordingly, the Committee of Union and Progress "CUP" took power, ending nearly three decades of absolute rule by the Sultan. On the foreign policy front, the CUP sought to form a new alliance with Britain and expressed its willingness to resolve the border disputes with Iran.[1080] As Kasravi indicates, the CUP had not yet come to power when it began to support Iran in the name of neighborliness and solidarity. They even sent a letter in Turkish to the constitutionalist House of Councilors (*dar al-shura*) and the Council of Tabriz, expressing their opposition to the Ottoman invasion of Iran.[1081] In addition to that, after coming to power, they took some steps to resolve the border issues. Initially, at the request of the Iranian ambassador, the Ottoman Grand Vizier decided to remove Tahir Pasha, who had an expansionist attitude, as the head of the Ottoman commission, and appoint him as governor of Bitlis. He also promised the Iranian ambassador to withdraw Ottoman forces from all

[1079] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1136, 17 Rebîülevvel 1326.
[1080] Kurt, **op. cit.**, p. 973.
[1081] Kasravi, **op. cit.** vol, I, p. 479.

areas that indisputably belonged to Iran and to resolve border disputes with Iran equitably.[1082]

Istanbul made the same promise to the Russian and British representatives. The optimistic British diplomat, Marling conveyed the news to the Iranian Foreign Ministry as follows "*Because most of the expansionist party members have been distanced from the Porte, there is hope that the problems will end soon and fairly*."[1083] A few days after the Grand Vizier's promise, the Ottoman Council of Ministers decided to withdraw the Ottoman forces into the status quo. Later, although the decision was not implemented, the Ottoman forces withdrew from some places.[1084] In some cases, as will be explained below, the Ottomans even helped the constitutionalists against the Kurdish tribes who opposed constitutionalists in Iran.

After Mohammad Ali Shah's overthrow of the constitutionalists and the closure of parliament in Tehran, Shah's Loyalists took control of almost all Iranian cities. The only place left under the control of the constitutionalists was Tabriz, which became their last stronghold until Russian troops entered the city in the spring of 1909. So, Tabriz had become a place for confrontation between the loyalists and the constitutionalists. Iqbal al-Saltana, the ruler of Mako, who was a loyalist of the Shah, played an important role in confronting the constitutionalists with the help of Kurdish tribes who participated in the siege of Tabriz.[1085]

It is worth mentioning that Kurdish society in general had a negative or passive attitude toward the constitutional revolution that had a Shiite essence from the beginning. Shiite scholars from Najaf and other parts of Iran played an important role in directing the movement. In 1906, when the constitutional system was adopted in Iran, the first article of the Iranian constitution indicated that: "*The official religion of Iran is Islam and the true doctrine of the Twelve Imams of Jafariyah, the Shah of Iran should have and promote this doctrine.*" Thus, the first point of the constitution

[1082] **Irish Times**, Friday 21 August 1908, p. 5.
[1083] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1024, 22 Augast 1908.
[1084] Lazarev, **op. cit.**, p. 211.
[1085] Kasravi, **op. cit.** vol. III, p. 749.

was contrary to the will of the Kurds and the non-Shiite subjects of Iran.[1086] Besides, the constitutional revolution in Iran, like the Ottoman Empire, was charged with a nationalist sentiment that, for two different ethnoreligious reasons, had a negative view of the Kurds. As Wilson observed:

> Persian Nationalists are inclined to be antagonistic to all non-Persian minorities in Persia, except the Turkish-speaking element which predominates in North Persia. They dislike Arabs; they dislike the Kurds, as such, and because they are Sunnis; they dislike the Assyrians of Urmia because they are Christians…'[1087]

Even those Kurds who had expressed their support for the constitution in Sauj Bulaq, Saqiz, and Sinna were given little attention by the constitutionalists.[1088] Therefore, while Azerbaijan had become a battlefield between the constitutionalists and the loyalists, Kurdish tribes such as Shikak and Jalali in the Mako, Khoy, and Qutur regions played an important role in opposing the constitutionalists. Simko Shikak, who had become the chief of the tribe after the death of Jafar Agha and his father, was becoming a growing power in the region. Although as mentioned above, he played an important role in helping the Ottomans in the western regions of Lake Urmia, after the coup of CUP, he stopped acting per the Ottoman agenda. In late November 1908, when Iqbal al-Saltana, was at war with the constitutionalists, Simko joined the fight to help him and they were able to defeat the constitutionalists near Khuy which increased Simko's power.[1089]

While Simko fighting the constitutionalists, the government of the CUP sent Khalil Pasha, uncle of Anwar Pasha, a leading member of the CUP, to persuade Haideran, Jalali, Marzeki, Takori, Milan, Hazaran, and Shamsaki tribes to join the constitutionalists.[1090] Khalil Pasha even himself joined the fight with constitutionalists and a group of Armenians against Simko in Qutur. According to Kasrawi, several constitutionalists and about 100 Kurds were killed in the

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[1086] **Mutemmim-i Qanun-e Asasi**, 14 Zilkade 1324, article I.
[1087] Arnold Talbot Wilson, **SW. Persia: A Political Officer's Diary**, **1907-1914.** Oxford University Press, 1941, p. 136.
[1088] Sayyid Abddulhamid Sajadi, **Golzar-e Shairan Kurdistan**, Tehran 1344, p. 257.
[1089] Kasravi, **op. cit.** vol. III, p. 811.
[1090] Ates, **op. cit.**, p. 263.

fighting.[1091] What helped to strengthen Simko's power in the region was that despite the Ottoman's claims of all Sunni Kurdish areas, they did not take over Qutur during the period between 1905 and1912 except for some western villages as explained earlier because of the Berlin Treaty of 1878 left no legal justification for the Ottomans to claim Qutur. So, the absence of direct Ottoman power in Qutur allowed Simko to pursue politics more independently. After his confrontations with the constitutionalists, he became an unchallenged man in Qutur and Salmas which according to Kasravi, after the *Anjuman* of Tabriz realized it would not be easy to defeat him by force, they tried to attract him, so the state officially appointed him governor of Qutur.[1092]

5.3.2. Resumption of Expansionism in the Committee of Union and Progress's Era

In 1909, political changes in both Istanbul and Tehran ended the brief cooperation between the Ottoman and Iranian constitutionalists. In April 1909, while Sultan Abdulhamid attempted a counter-revolution, he was ousted and power was handed over to the CUP. Simultaneously, in the same month, after nearly 11 months of siege by the royalists, the Russians entered Tabriz with 4,000 troops on the pretext of breaking the siege. At first, they had good relations with the constitutionalists, but later their relation became disturbed and as a result, Star Khan, the leader of the Tabriz constitutionalists, and hundreds of constitutional activists sought refuge in the Ottoman consulate in Tabriz, and the city fell completely under Russian control.[1093]

In the Ottoman Empire, during the early days of the revolution of the CUP a short-lived political freedom which Jalil et al., call the "Young Turks' Spring" began, in which the Kurdish elites and notables started to intensify their national activities.[1094] As Özöğlu indicates, due to promoting equality, justice and fraternity initially Young Turks were welcomed by the Ottoman subjects from different ethnic

[1091] Kasravi, **op. cit.**vol. III, p. 875.
[1092] Kasrawi, **op. cit.**, vol. II, p. 473.
[1093] Sohrab Yazdani, **Mujahidan-e Meshruta**, Trhran 1388, pp. 150-152. The Scotsman - Tuesday 01 June 1909, p. 5.
[1094] Jalil et al., **op. cit.**, p. 103; also see, Burzuyi, **op. cit.**, p. 128.

groups.[1095] Subsequently, Sheikh Abdul Qadir returned from exile and formed a political organization with Sharif Pasha and Ahmed Zulkifl called "the Kurdish Cooperation and Progress Association" for which Sheikh Abdul Qadir was appointed president. The association published a newspaper named after the organization [1096] and Ismail Hakki Babanzadeh, Saeed Kurdi (Nursi), Sheikh Abdul Qadir, and Suraya Badir Khan were among the writers. One of their goals and demands was to develop the Kurdish language.[1097] The organization soon opened branches in other Kurdish cities and became the largest Kurdish association to express Kurdish national aspirations.[1098] Kurdish intellectuals then established Kurdish clubs in the cities of Bitlis, Diyarbakır, Muş, Erzincan, and Mosul, which were growing rapidly. For example, the Mush Club, which opened in 1908, grew its members from 700 to several thousand within a few months.[1099]

However soon, after the removal of Sultan Abdulhamid, the CUP authorities put an end to the Kurds' political activities. In mid-1909, the Kurdish clubs were closed down on the grounds that they were a threat to the unity of the Ottoman Empire.[1100] Consequently, several uprisings broke out in the Kurdish regions, which were suppressed by the Ottoman authorities and resulted in reducing the power of the sheikhs and Hamidiye cavalry chiefs. For instance, Ibrahim Pasha, the most prominent Hamidiye cavalry leader and supporter of the Sultan, was killed after rebelling against the CUP's coup near Diyarbakir. Similarly, Sheikh Saeed Hafed in Sulaymaniyah, who previously played an important role in building support for the Ottomans among the Iranian Kurdish tribes, was defeated in Mosul after rebelling against the new authorities of the CUP.[1101] Similarly, Sheikh Abdulsalam Barzani revolted against the new Ottoman administration in 1909-1910. Similarly, from the end of 1910, Mahmud Pasha Jaf, was detained in Mosul for one year, for his tribe

[1095] Hakan Özoğlu, **Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State: Evolving Identities, Competing Loyalties, and Shifting Boundaries**, Albany: SUNY Press, 2004, p. 18.
[1096] Tofiq, **op. cit.**, p. 364.
[1097] Kutschera, **op. cit.**, p. 53.
[1098] Tofiq, **op. cit.**, p. 365.
[1099] Borzuyi, **op. cit.**, p. 128.
[1100] Lazarev, **op. cit.**, p. 219; Jalil et al., **op. cit.**, p. 105.
[1101] Nikitine, **op. cit.**, p. 206.

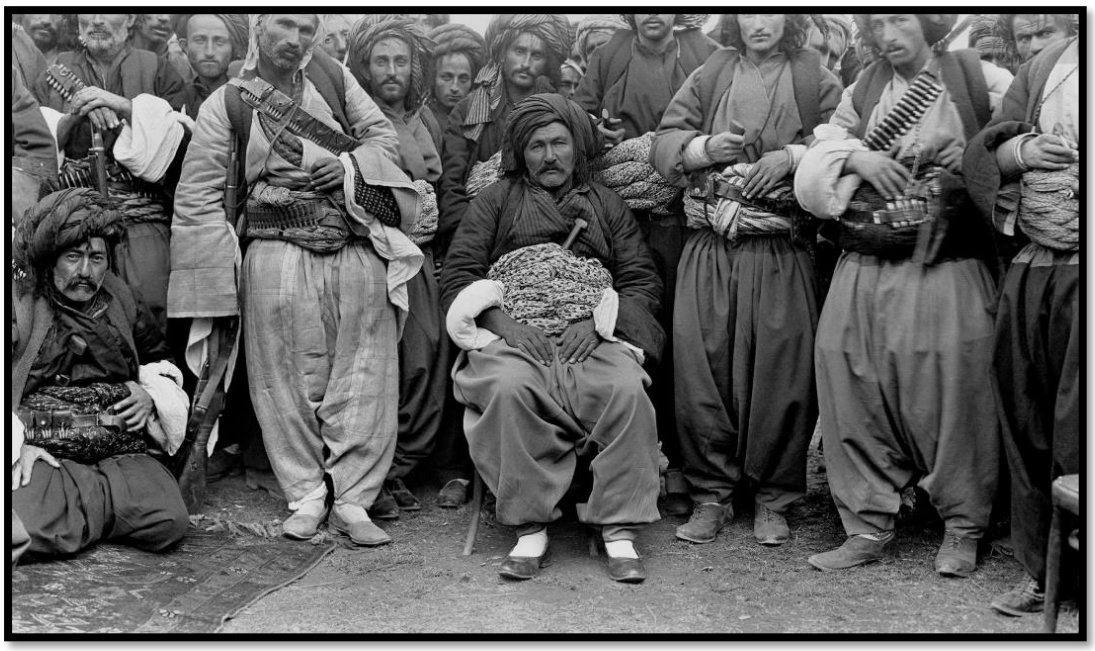
refused to pay tax since the advent of the Young Turks.[1102] Moreover, some Hamidiye cavalry chiefs, such as Kor Hussein Pasha Haidaran moved to Iran with a large part of his tribe, which previously had six Hamidiye cavalry regiments.[1103] Initially, the CUP wanted to disband the Hamidiye cavalry and withdraw their weapons, but this decision was not implemented in the face of the tribal defense, and to avoid further complications in 1910, nonetheless, they changed their name to the Tribal Cavalry Regiments (Turkish; *Aşiret Süvari Alaylari*).[1104] This coincided with the decision to recruit soldiers from non-Muslim subjects of the empire which decreased the significance of the Kurdish cavalry and they were no longer the spoiled men of the Empire.

While the atmosphere for freedom of political activity in Anatolia shrank, Kurdish political activities were transferred to the outside of the Ottoman territories. In this situation, the weakness of Tehran's power and the possibility of Russian assistance to Kurdish nationalism attracted the attention of some Kurdish Nationalists to the Kurdish regions of Azerbaijan. Thus, Khoy, Salmas, Qutur, and Mukri regions became the focus of Kurdish political activity. In the following years, Simko Shikak, Sayyid Taha Nehri (son of Sheikh Sadiq), and Abdur Razzaq Badir Khan became the leaders of the Kurdish national mindset in these areas.

With the political changes in Istanbul, on the Iranian side in July 1909, Mohammad Ali Shah was completely deposed, ending a period in Iranian history called Minor Tyranny (*istibdad-ı saghir*). The constitutionalists then replaced him with his son Ahmed Shah, who was only 12 years old. While Iran was in a political crisis, the Russians had taken over Tabriz, and the conflict between the constitutionalists and Shah's supporters reached its peak, the CUP’s administration, meanwhile, resumed its policy of expansionism eastward. Contrary to the conflicts that arose between the CUP and Kurds in the Ottoman territory, thanks to a common enemy in Iran, the alliance between the Murkri Kurdish tribes and the Ottomans remained strong. Thus, in June 1909, Ottoman forces, with the help of the Kurdish

[1102] Jwaideh, **op. cit.**, p. 109.
[1103] Jalil et al., **op. cit.**, p. 110.
[1104] See Sunar, **op. cit.**, p. 126.

tribes took control of Khoy and Salmas. Bayiz Pasha, with a force of 2,000 men and



artillery, along with the Ottoman forces, once again captured Sauj Bulaq, Miandab, and Maragh which was about 130 kilometers from the border and 60 kilometers from Tabriz, where the Russian forces were stationed.[1105] Following the Ottoman-Kurdish advance, the Ottomans opened a customs house in Sauj Bulaq and the Ottoman consul asked the people of the city to apply for Ottoman citizenship. Similarly, Ottoman passports were distributed and sold to the people in the areas around Urmia,[1106] and the Ottoman consul informed all Sunni Kurds in Urmia that they were under Ottoman protection. They also established a customs house between Salmas and Urmia and a telegraph office in Pasveh.[1107]

Figure *13.* Bayiz Pasha and members of the Mangor tribe, 1913.[1108]

[1105] **Englishman's Overland Mail** (India) Thursday 10 June 1909, p. 3; **Greenock Telegraph and Clyde Shipping Gazette**, Tuesday 22 June 1909, p. 3; **Aberdeen Press and Journal**, Tuesday 01 June 1909, p. 5; **The Scotsman**, Tuesday 01 June 1909, p. 5.
[1106] Ates, **op. cit.**, p. 264.
[1107] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1200, 24 Rebîülevvel 1327; **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1201, 8 Zilkade 1327.
[1108] John Tchalenko, **Persia through a Russian Lens**, 1901-1914: The Photographs of Alexander Iyas, Article in History of Photography, September 2006, Photo by Alexander Iyas, physical location "The Finnish Museum of Photography, Helsinki. Figure".

It is worth mentioning, that the return of the Ottomans was directly related to the Russian presence in Tabriz, and the conflict turned into a Russian-Ottoman conflict in the region. Especially since the Russians had started building the Julfa-Tehran railway.[1109] However, part of the CUP's expansion in the Mukri region was related to internal events in the Ottoman Empire and the rise of the Kurdish insurgency which was part of the protest among non-Turkish subjects of the Empire against the centrist and nationalist policies of the new Ottoman administration that in 1910, led to revolutions in Albania, Macedonia, and Yemen.[1110] Describing the growing national and racial conflict among the Ottoman subjects Wilson in 1909 states that "*the Arabs dislike the Turks, the Kurds are at heart set upon autonomy*".[1111] The Ottoman authorities, therefore, were concerned that the Kurdish regions of Azerbaijan would become a center of political activity for the newly emerged Kurdish nationalism and Kurdish political organizations (as they were later). In this regard, justifying the Ottoman occupation of the Kurdish regions of Azerbaijan, Hussein Hilmi Pasha, the Ottoman Grand Vizier, notified Arfa al-Dawla, that:

> Iran has neither government nor hegemony on the Azerbaijan frontiers and if we withdraw our troops who are situated in some areas, a rebellion will be started by the tribes and the bandits whose fire will spread within us.[1112]

Hilmi Pasha added that if the Ottomans leave the area, the Russians would take their place.[1113]

5.3.3. Eastern Regions (*Nevâhi-i Şarkiyye*): Administrative Annexation of the Occupied Areas

While in many parts of the Ottoman Empire, the Kurds had become a new challenge to the new government of CUP, in the Kurdish parts of Azerbaijan the

[1109] **Englishman's Overland Mail**, Thursday 10 June 1909, p. 3.
[1110] Ates, **op. cit.**, p. 265.
[1111] Wison, **op. cit.**, p. 85.
[1112] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1201. 8 Zilkade 1327.
[1113] Mehdiquli Khan Mukhbir-u Saltana, **Toloh Meshrutiyat**, intisharat-e Jam, 1363, p. 137.

Ottomans sought to establish their power formally. The cooperation of the past five years between the Mukri tribes and the Ottoman Empire against a "common enemy" that was still present made the relationship between the two parties less affected by internal Ottoman events. Accordingly, in 1910, the Ottomans began to carry out some administrative and financial procedures in the occupied areas with the assistance of the Kurdish tribes with whom they had good relations. These included the population census, the organization of property registration, and the implementation of a tax system.[1114] In some areas, such as Salmas, where the Ottoman presence was challenged by the Russian hegemony, Ottomans lifted tithes on cattle for six years to preserve the tribes' proximity to the Ottoman Empire.[1115]

In 1910, with the expansion of Russian influence and the settlement of some troops around Khoy and Urmia,[1116] the Ottomans took over part of western Qutur, which was then ruled by Simko Shikak. Based on Russian archives, Jalil et al., demonstrate that in the autumn of the same year the Ottomans asked Simko to join them, and for their part, they too would accept him as the ruler of Qutur as their subject. However, Simko, who was aware of the growing Russian hegemony in the region and that the Ottomans had no right to stay in Qutur, according to the Treaty of Berlin, rejected the offer.[1117]

According to the new administrative regulations, all the regions that fell under the Ottoman occupation were first named "the New Provinces" (Ottoman Turkish: *Nevâhi-i cedide*), and their names were later changed to "the Eastern Regions" (*Nevâhi-i Şarkiyye*).[1118] To annex these areas to the Ottoman Empire, the governor of Van visited Urmia to determine the new borders of his province.[1119] However, the new administrative regulations were not welcomed in some Kurdish areas of Mukri. While the Ottoman tribal chiefs and landowners benefited from the reforms, they ended up to the detriment of the pro-Iranian subjects. Moreover, the

[1114] Jalil et al., **op. cit.**, p. 115.
[1115] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1027, 10 Cemâziyelâhir 1327.
[1116] Fatih Ünal, "Rusların Kürt Aşiretlerini Osmanlı Devleti'ne Karşı Kullanma Çabaları", **Karadeniz Araştırmaları**, vol. V, No. 17, Bahar(Spring) 2008, p. 139.
[1117] Jalil et al., **op. cit.**, pp. 116-17.
[1118] **Ibid.**, 115; Lazarev, **Méjwi Kurdistan**, p. 282; Ates, **op. cit.**, p. 235; Ünal, **op. cit.**, p. 139.
[1119] Ates, **op. cit.**, p. 264.

method adopted by the Ottoman civil authorities in the region to collect taxes further complicated the situation[1120] that at the end of 1910, fighting broke out between the Ottomans and the Kurds in Pasveh, where the Mamash tribe lived, which resulted in the killing of 15 Kurds and arresting 30.[1121]

The instability caused by the new tax system in the region prompted Russian and British ambassadors to ask the Porte to agree to the appointment of a new commission to resolve the border issues. They also threatened that if the Porte did not agree to the proposal, a commission would be formed without the presence of the Ottoman representative.[1122] At the same time, the Iranian embassy officially protested the Ottoman advance in Iranian territory.[1123] So at the end of 1910, Istanbul sent Colonel Ali Reza Bey and Colonel Rafiq Bey, who were two military figures, as border demarcation commissioners to the Kurdish regions of Azerbaijan.[1124] According to a letter obtained by the Times, simultaneously the Ottoman Grand Vizier notified the War Minister:

> As to be ready in case of need to support our claims, relying on our armed forces. As the success of our diplomacy depends chiefly on the strength of our forces on the Persian frontier, I request you forthwith to take steps to increase our contingents on the border regions of Persia to the greatest possible limits. [1125]

However, despite sending these commissioners, no meeting to determine the boundaries was held that year.

5.3.4. 1911 Russo-British Commissioners and the Protocol of Tehran

The oil discovered in Chia Surkh was not pleasant, because its amount was small and the transportation route was remote and difficult. Therefore, D'Arcy, through G.B. Reynolds continued to explore oil in other parts of Iran but after

[1120] **Aberdeen Press and Journal**, Wednesday 01 June 1910, p. 6.
[1121] **Northern Whig**, Saturday 19 November 1910, p. 7. In December of the same year, fighting broke out between the Ottoman and Iranian troops in Salmas, in which Ottomans killed 26 Iranian soldiers and took 70 prisoners, according to **Dundee Evening Telegraph**, Friday 23 December 1910, p. 1.
[1122] **Belfast News-Letter**, Wednesday 01 June 1910, p. 7; **Aberdeen Press and Journal**, Wednesday 01 June 1910, p. 6.
[1123] **Edinburgh Evening News**, Wednesday 02 November 1910, p. 4.
[1124] Lowther to Grey, Pera, March 1, 1911, Schofield IV, 460, as cited in Ates, **op. cit.**, p. 270.
[1125] **Edinburgh Evening News**, Thursday 17 November 1910, p. 2.

expending a lot of money and on the brink of bankruptcy, he had to sell most of his rights to the Burmah Oil Company. In 1909, the Company discovered a large amount of oil in Masjed Suleiman, and Iran became an oil country. On April 14, 1909, the Company opened a branch called the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC). In the following years, the British government purchased the company and before the outbreak of World War I, it became the majority shareholder and the hidden power behind the company by financing it with £2 million.[1126]

Meanwhile, in 1911, the Ottoman Empire was dealing with a major political crisis. In the Balkans, it was busy suppressing the Albanian revolution and was defeated by Italy in Libya losing the last African territory under its control. At the same time, Iran was going through some internal crises related to the conflict between the royalists and the constitutionalists, the most important of which was the rebellion of Prince Salar al-Dawla (1911-1912), with the help of the Kurdish tribes in Kurdistan and Kermanshah provinces. Salar al-Dawla was seeking to restore the power of his family and to carry out this plan, he managed to win the support of the two major Kurdish tribes; the Jaf and Kalhur, led by Mahmud Pasha and Daud Khan respectively. Before the uprising began, Salar al-Dawla visited the houses of Mahmud Pasha Jaf and Sheikh Hussam al-Din in Biara[1127] who were Ottoman subjects, also he visited the Mukri region which was under Ottoman occupation. To convince the Kurdish tribes in the Ottoman territory, he claimed that the Ottomans promised to support him.[1128] This led the Iranians, Britons, and Russians to suspect that the Ottomans were backing Salar al-Dawla's movement. Jalil et al., indicate that

[1126] **BBC**, "The Company File from Anglo-Persian Oil to BP Amoco", 11 August 1998, Available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/149259.stm, accessed in 17 February 2023.

[1127] Merdox, who was one of the prominent mullahs of Sinna at the time, indicates that Sheikh Hussam al-Din had invited him from Biara to attend their meeting with Salar al-Dawla. However, Merdox, who did not arrive at time, relates the story as follows: "Sheikh Hussam al-Din stated that the purpose of calling you here was to meet Salar al-Dawla, who had been dressed in Kurdish clothes a few days ago. He [Salar al-Dawla] stated that he had met Mohammad Ali Shah in Vienna and they had decided to attack Iran from both sides to regain the throne of their family. The Jaf chief [Mahmud Pasha] promised to help him and he was very happy to meet you, but you arrived late and I promised him on your behalf that you will support him. He is scheduled to leave for Kurdistan with the Jaf tribe in early spring. "Until he gets there, you can prepare, so that these unfortunates can regain their crowns and thrones." Merdox, **op. cit.**, p. 524.

[1128] **GB.HP. Persia**. (1911), No. 1/128/1. "Further correspondence respecting the affairs of Persia, summary of Events for four weeks", May 18, 1911; **GESIO.**, vol. VII, No. 1442.

Salar al-Dawla spent the winter of 1910-1911 in the Ottoman territory, and he agreed to encourage the Kurds against Tehran on the recommendation of the CUP. [1129]

Moreover, according to Lazarev, he promised the Ottomans that in exchange for helping him with money and weapons, he would recognize the Ottoman rule in both the Kurdistan and Azerbaijan provinces if he won the throne.[1130] Similarly, while Salar al-Dawla was seeking support in Sauj Bulaq, the British consul in Tabriz telegraphed Edward Gray that the Ottomans had promised Salar al-Dawla to help him encourage the Kurds against Tehran.[1131] In response to the rumors, the Iranian Foreign Ministry warned the Ottoman ambassador to stop Salar al-Dawla's activities or allow Iranian forces to enter the areas of Azerbaijan that were still under Ottoman rule to capture him.[1132] At the same time, the Iranian Foreign Minister warned his fellow Interior Minister that the Ottomans might want to use Salar al-Dawla against Iran, so, as he added, Iran should prepare to confront him and not wait for the Ottomans.

Nevertheless, there is no reliable proof to support the above claims.[1133] The Ottomans even seem to have been unaware of the meetings between Salar al-Dawla and their subjects Mahmud Pasha and Sheikh Hussam al-Din.[1134] After reports reached Istanbul [incorrectly] denying Salar al-Dawla's meeting with Mahmud Pasha and Sheikh Hussam al-Din, unsatisfied with the "rumors" the Porte warned the Interior Ministry not to allow the Kurdish tribes to cross the border and cooperate with Salar al-Dawla.[1135]

Nonetheless, in the summer of 1911, supported by the Kurdish tribes of Jaf, Kalhur, Sanjabi, Goran, and some tribes of the Mukri region, Salar al-Dawla took

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[1129] Jalil et al., **op. cit.**, p. 117; also see Lazarev, Mêjwi Kurdistan, pp. 283-284.
[1130] Lazarev, **op. cit.**, p. 283.
[1131] Godarzi, **op. cit.**, p. 83.
[1132] **GESIO.**, vol. VII, No. 1442.
[1133] Godarzi, **op. cit.**, p. 83.
[1134] As mentioned above, after meeting Sheikh Hussam al-Din, Merdox confirmed that Salar al-Dawla had visited him earlier and had met Mahmud Pasha. However, reports reaching Istanbul denied that Salar al-Dawla had met Mahmud Pasha and Sheikh Hussam al-Din. See **BOA. BEO**., No. 3938/295342.
[1135] **BOA. BEO**., No. 4046/ 303391, 12 Cemâziyelâhir 1330.

over Kurdistan and Kermanshah provinces without fighting. [1136] However, they were finally defeated by the state forces in Kermanshah in October 1912,[1137] Daud Khan Kalhur and his son were killed in the battle, ending the period of extensive power of the Kalhur tribe.[1138]

The above situation prompted the British and Russians, who had previously agreed to divide Iran into their spheres of influence, to put more pressure on the Ottoman Empire and Iran to resolve their border disputes. The Russians wanted to keep the Ottomans out of north-western Iran, which was their sphere of influence and the Britons were trying to resolve border disputes between the two states in the oil areas near Zahab where a British company had obtained oil extraction concessions. They, therefore, intensified pressure on both Tehran and Istanbul to form a new commission. In January 1911, the Russian and British embassies in Istanbul were able to convince the Porte to allow their representatives to survey the frontier areas to investigate the situation and visit the territories occupied by the Ottomans. The committee was led by Hammond Shipley, British Consul in Tehran, and Vladimir Minorsky, the second dragoman at the Russian legation in Tehran. The Minorsky-Shipley joint committee aimed to investigate the Ottoman administration in the occupied territories, relations between the Kurds and the Ottomans, and the intervention petitions. The committee was also tasked with investigating the long-term Ottoman goal and it is imperative to see whether it is possible to go back to the 1905 borderline. Throughout the summer of 1911,[1139] the committee traveled along the border and published the results of its journey in a joint report. During the trip, which was closely observed by the Ottoman officers, they met some of the Kurdish tribes in the occupied territories. As they had observed, even in areas such as Sauj Bulaq and Khoy, the Ottoman consuls had become de facto administrators, and the officers in those regions were all Kurds without exception. In many of those territories, the Minorsky-Shipley joint committee encountered some demonstrations, real or staged, raising the Ottoman flags and yelling "*Long live Sultan Mehmed*

[1136] Godarzi, **op. cit.**, pp. 84-85, 94-95; also see **IOR/L/PS/20/261** (Persia, 1911-1913), No. 318.
[1137] **BL.**" ,**IOR/L/PS/10/291**File 3154/1912 Pt 1-2 'Turco-Persian frontier: the position of Hawizeh; miscellaneous prints" 8 October 1912, No. 348.
[1138] **Ibid.**, 137.
[1139] Lazarev, **op. cit.**, p. 546.

V."[1140] However, Minorsky-Shipley questioned the intervention petition letters written by local people because some of them were written in fluent Ottoman Turkish, which was unlikely to have been written by the Kurdish tribes, and others were written in an identical Persian style which only their signatures were different.[1141]

After the work of the Minorsky-Shipley committee finished, the Iranian Foreign Ministry and the Ottoman Embassy in Tehran signed a protocol on December 23, 1911, to resolve the border disputes. According to the protocol, the two sides agreed on five points:

1. A commission of representatives of both states shall meet in Istanbul as soon as possible in equal numbers.

2. To determine the boundaries of the two states, the representatives must first start negotiations based on written documents. Then, a technical committee should be established in the disputed areas of the border and based on the discussions agreed upon by the previous commission, determine the dividing line between the two states.

3. The Treaty of Erzurum of 1847 shall be the basis of the negotiations.

4. The negotiations must be completed within six months, and if there is any disagreement, the disputed areas will be referred to the Hague Tribunal.

5. For either of the two states, the passage or occupation of the disputed areas shall not be evidence of the ownership of that party over the area.[1142]

5.3.5. Istanbul Treaty of 1912 for Border Demarcation

Soon after the Tehran Protocol, a six-member commission was formed. The Ottomans consisted of Adel Bey, the senior advisor to the Grand Vizier, Daniel, and

[1140] Ates, **op. cit.**, p. 276.
[1141] **Ibid.**, 277.
[1142] **BOA. HR.SYS**., No. 704/2; **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 1051.

Ali Nader Pashas and on the Iranian side, they consisted of Ihtisham al-Saltana, Iran's ambassador in Istanbul (1911-1918), I'tila al-Mulk, and Nazim al-Mulk.[1143] The commission held its first meeting in March, 1912 and met 18 times as of August.[1144] Although not mentioned in the Tehran Protocol, Russian and British representatives participated in the commission meetings as mediators, but in fact, they became the real decision-makers on the last border demarcation.

During the 18 meetings (the Procès-verbal), three main issues were discussed between the commissions of both states:

1. The question of acceptance of Explanatory Notes by Iranian representatives related to the Muhammara region was discussed in Procès-verbal No. 3 to 5.

2. The issue of ownership of Zahab and the claims of both states for ownership of the area were discussed in Procès-verbal No. 4 to 13.

3- The issue of agreement on the demarcation of the borders of Sulaymaniyah, which was discussed in Procès-verbal No.13 to 15.

Concerning the Explanatory Notes mentioned in the first chapter, the Ottoman commissioners believed that these notes were an integral part of the Treaty of Erzurum 1847 and they would only recognize the treaty on condition that Iran accepted them. In the case of Zahab, the Ottomans referred to the second article of the Treaty of Erzurum 1847, which gave the “mountainous areas” west of Zahab to Iran and the “flat areas” of the east to the Ottoman Empire. They even declared Mount Karand as part of the Ottoman territory. As for the Sulaymaniyah province, which Iran had promised to give up all its claims for it in the Treaty of Erzurum 1847, in Procès-verbal No.13, the Iranian delegates demanded an explanation. For Procès-verbal No.14, the Ottoman delegates presented a report on the borders of Sulaymaniyah province to the Iranian delegates. In which after presenting the history of administrative changes in Sulaymaniyah province, the report concluded that the

[1143] **BOA. HR.SYS.**, No. 707/2; **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 1037.
[1144] Lazarev, **op. cit.**, p. 547.

eastern borders of Sulaymaniyah province start near Lake Urmia; it covers the regions of Maragh, Sauj Bulaq, Sulduz, Oshnavieh and Lahijan, Bana, Saqiz, Qizilja and its surroundings, Paveh, Shameran, Pushtikuh and is connected to the peaks of Sahand Mountains. From there it extends along the mountains that separate Lake Qzil Uzun from the basin of Lake Chekato, from there it passes through the Qzilja and Hawaraman Mountains to reach Mount Shaho.[1145] Even Ottomans indicated that the border of Sulaymaniyah covers the entire region of Sinna and Urmia.[1146] As expected, Procès-verbal No.15, Iranian delegates rejected the views of Adel Bey and his team.

[1145] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 1037. Also see **BL. IOR/L/PS/10/267** "File 1356/1912 Pt 2 'Turco-Persian Frontier: - negotiations at Constantinople. (Mohammera Boundary)'[680/201v] (411), No. 1, p. 4. One day before Procès-verbal No. 14, Shipley and Minorsky met with the new Ottoman foreign minister who continued to claim that the Ottoman frontier extends to the coast of Tabriz. **BL.**, **File 3154/1912 Pt 1-2**, No. 33340/1, "Consul Shipley to Mr. Parker" 31 Julay 1912. In fact, according to the interpretation of the Ottoman Commissioners, Sulaymaniyah was considered the collective name for most Kurdish provinces which were within the Baban rule for a particular period, as they had emphasized during the Procès-verbal No. 14, "In 964, the province comprised eight administrative units known as the Shahrazur province, which included Zalm, Qarawan, Shameran, Nawsud, Zangabad, Hawar, Siwail, and Shahrazur. By 967 (1559-1560), it had expanded to 18 administrative units, consisting of Zalm, Chenar, Khub Sar, Wilka, Shamiran, Hawar, Nawsud, Sazam, Yeni Baski, Paveh, Davdan, Shahr Bazar, Siwail, Druran, Qardag, Surchak, Kalas (present-day Sardasht), and Chikan. In 980(1572/1573), Sulaymaniyah was once again divided into 18 administrative units, including Mehrban (present-day Mariwan), Hawraman, Suruchk, Hawar, Dilwaran, Qardagh, Kalas (Sardasht), Paveh, Baski, Oshnovieh, Chikan, Bana, Mukri (Sauj Bulaq), Qizilja, Siah Kare, Krfto, Plngiyan, and Mar. By 1018 (1609/1610), Sulaymaniyah had been divided into twenty-one provinces known as the Kurdistan provinces, which included Suruchk, Erbil, Ksan, Ajur Changula, Shahr Bazar, Alan, Jabal Hamrin, Muram, Hazarmard, Bana, Dbran, Burna Mrgiawa, Bilbas (Lahijan), Harir, Qazi Kashan, Sayed Buranjin fort, and Mehrban. Later that year, Sulaymaniyah was further divided into thirty-two provinces, encompassing Kirkuk, Surchak, Erbil, Shamamik, Zangana, Chakan, Sharbazar, Shahrazur, Changula, Qizialja, Jabal, Anjiran or Anjirah Hazar Merd, Alan, Dluran, Margiawa, Dewin, Harirkoy, Bilatori, Syedburgin, Ajur, Hawraman, Daudan, Paveh, Brand, Balbas, Lahijan, Oshnoviehh, Qazi fort, Goran, Mehrban, and Shamiran. According to the 1639 Treaty, Hawraman and Merban were given to Iran. The administrative divisions of the region, with the exception of Hawraman and Mehrban, remained the same until 1179 (1765/1766), but two additional divisions, Maragha and Saqiz, were created, which were governed by Shahrazur governors. The Iranian invasion of the Kurdistan provinces began in 1179 (1765/1766), leading to the Treaty of 1238 (1823), in which the Iranian state promised to recognize the previous borders of the Ottoman Empire (which were defined in the Treaty of 1049 (1639) and reiterated in the Treaties of 1149 (1736) and 1159 (1746)). They also promised to evacuate all fortresses and bases constructed before or during the war, and not to aggression on or incursion into the provinces of Kurdistan." **BOA. HR.SYS.** No. 704.3/16, 15 July 1912; **GESIO**, vol.VI, No.1037, 15 July 1912; also see, **BL. IOR/L/PS/10/267**, File 1356/1912 Pt 2 'Turco-Persian Frontier: - negotiations at Constantinople. (Mohammerah Boundary)' [201v] (411/680).

[1146] **BL. IOR/L/PS/10/212**, [404/128r] (262), File 211/1912 'Turkish Arabia Summaries' British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers, Summary of events in Turkish Arabia during June 1912. (Received on 22nd July 1912.), No. V. Persian Affairs.

The Ottoman representatives, in Procès-verbal No. 16 suggested that since Iran's responses contained nothing new, to resolve the disputes it was better to refer the matter to the Hague Tribunal based on the Tehran Protocol.[1147] However, because the Hague Tribunal would have brought other international players into the matter, and maybe *"the Ottomans had obtained the necessary documents to support their claims and were well prepared,"* Russia and Britain thought it was best not to go to the Hague Tribunal.[1148] Therefore in August, Russian and British representatives eagerly urged Iran to accept the Explanatory Notes. In a joint letter to the Iranian Foreign Ministry, the Russian and British ambassadors asked him to accept the Explanatory Notes as soon as possible otherwise, the Ottoman Empire would not recognize the Treaty of Erzurum 1847, and Iran would lose the right to claim any part of Zahab.[1149]

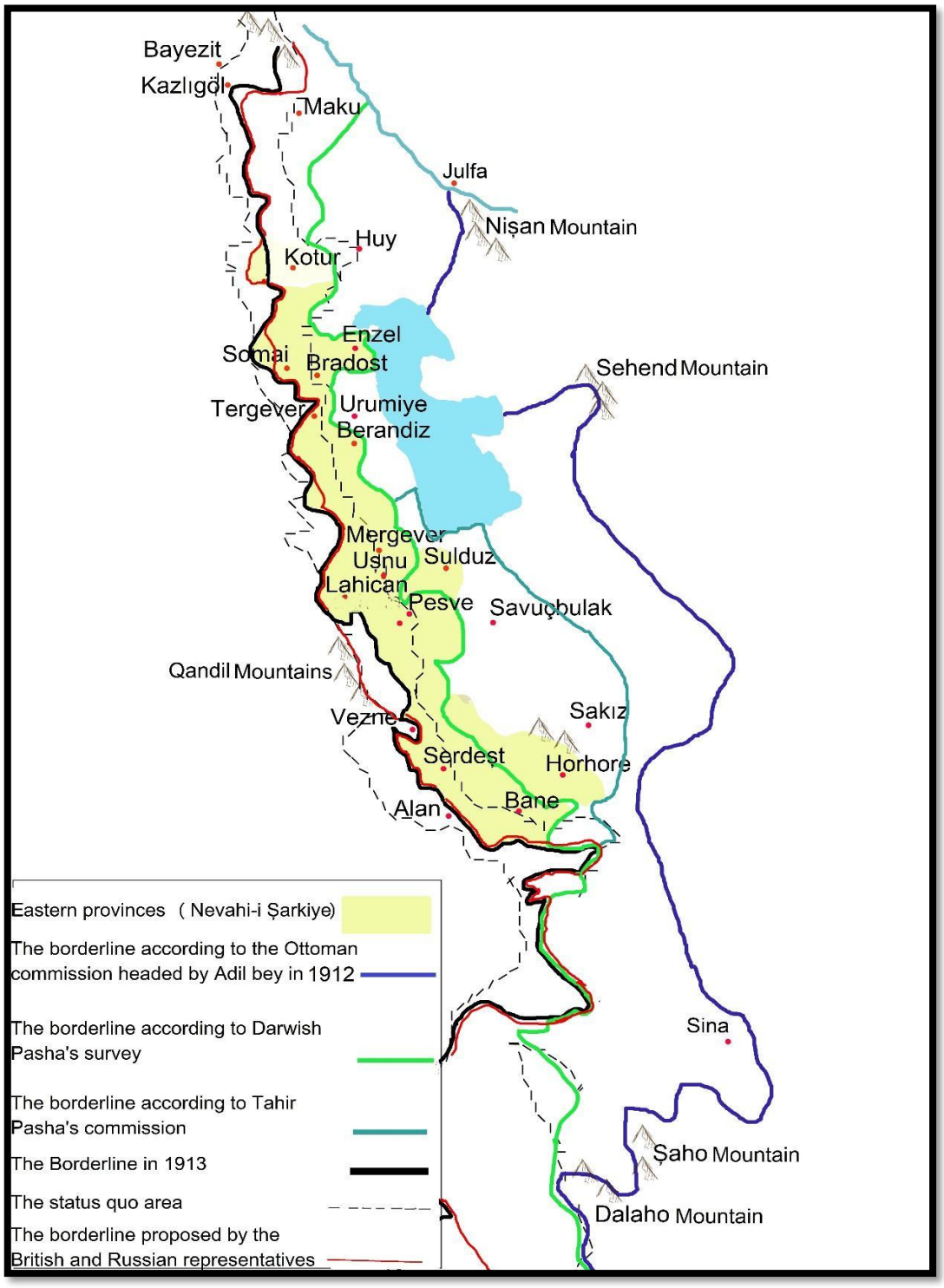
Similarly, on August 14,1912 Shipley and Minorsky in Istanbul asked the Iranian ambassador to accept the Explanatory Notes without delay.[1150] Under these constant pressures, after nearly 70 years of denying, Iran in Process-verbal No. 17 agreed to recognize the Explanatory Notes as part of the Treaty of Zahab.[1151] This ended the Muhammara issue and the issue of Zahab and Sulaymaniyah remained to be solved. In (Proces-verbal No. 18), on the grounds that the six months had expired, Adel Bey and his team again requested to resort to the Hague Tribunal to resolve the remaining issues. However, Iran asked for an extension of three or six months, and the Ottoman Commissioners accepted an extension of three months. During those three months, only two more meetings were held due to the absence of the members of the Ottoman Commission, the first on August 25, 1912 and the second on September 5, without any new progress.[1152] At the end of the first three months, this time because Istanbul was going through some internal and external political crises,

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[1147] **BL. IOR/L/PS/10/267**, "File 1356/1912 Pt 2 'Turco-Persian Frontier:- negotiations at Constantinople"."Report by Mr. Shipley. No. .Foreign Office, March 19, 1913. 1
[1148] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 1055.
[1149] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 1036. Also see **BL. IOR/L/PS/10/291**, File 3154/1912 Pt 1-2, No. 709, "Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan", 23 August 1912.
[1150] **GB.PSD.**, **File 3154/1912 Pt 1-2**, No. 675. 19 August 1012.
[1151] **BL. IOR/L/PS/10/267**, "File 1356/1912 Pt 2 'Turco-Persian Frontier: - negotiations at Constantinople. (Mohammerah Boundary)' [202r] (412/680)," Report by Mr. Shipley" No. 1.{Received at Foreign Office, March 19, 1913.).
[1152] **Ibid**, infra; **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 1037, 1044, 1047.

which we will discuss below, the Ottoman Commissioners requested an extension of two months. Although the Russians believed that the Ottomans should not be given more than 15 days, Iran agreed to extend the commission for two months on the British proposal.[1153]

[1153] **GESIO.**, vol. IV, No. 1037.



Map 9. The Borderline according to the Ottoman, Iran, and mediating countries' commissioners at different times

5.3.6. The Withdrawal of the Ottomans from the Kurdish Regions of Iran and the Final Demarcation

While the Ottoman Commissioners insisted on their claims to the areas that they believed to be within the boundaries of Sulaymaniyah, some internal and external changes weakened Istanbul's position against Iran. On July 17, 1912, a group of officers called Savior Officers (*Halâskâr Zâbitân*) overthrew the cabinet of the CUP and on October 8, 1912, the Balkan War began with disastrous consequences for the Ottomans, in which they lost much of Europe. Finding the Ottoman Empire in a weak position, Iran informed the Russians, Britons, and the Ottomans that it would not participate in the border demarcation commissions had not the Ottomans withdrawn from all the status quo territories. While Iran upheld its participation in the commission, Russia and Britain intensified pressure on the Porte to return to the 1905 borderline and evacuate the disputed areas.[1154] In a letter to Edward Gray on September 11, 1912, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Sazonov accused the Ottoman Empire of being responsible for the failure of the border negotiations, and on behalf of Russia and Iran, he objected to the attempts to refer the border dispute to the Hague Tribunal. Sazanov threatened that if the Ottomans stay in Khoy, Salmas, Urmia, Sulduz, and Sauj Bulaq, Russia would be obliged to occupy parts of Azerbaijan, especially the regions of Mako, Qutur, Khoy, and even Margah, until Iran becomes strong enough to preserve its sovereignty.[1155] This was at a time when Russia had taken control of parts of north-western Iran.[1156] Moreover, in late 1911, they began to increase the number of their consulates in the Kurdish regions of Iran and opened consulate branches in Khoy and Sauj Bulaq.[1157]

It was not in Britain's political and economic interests to create any further unrest, so they tried to convince the Porte to withdraw from the areas claimed by Russia. Istanbul, which was in a losing war on the Balkan front, was not in a position

[1154] **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1055.
[1155] Lazarev, **Kêshai Kurd**, p. 584; also see **BL. IOR/L/PS/10/291,** File 3154/1912 Pt 1-2 'Turco-Persian frontier: the position of Hawizeh; miscellaneous prints, " No. 239.
[1156] **IOR/L/PS/20/261** (Persia, 1911-1913), No. 335, "Sir E. Grey to Sir G. Buchanan" 25 September 1912.
[1157] Lazarev, **op. cit.**, p. 513.

to go to war with Russia from the east so the Porte began negotiating for the Zahab oil fields instead of the Kurdish areas of Azerbaijan and Kurdistan provinces. In mid-September, 1912 the Ottoman Foreign Minister Gabriel Effendi told the Russian consul that they would accept Russia's demands in the northern part of the Iranian border and expect Russia and Britain to give them some economic concessions and compensate them in the regions of Zahab. The Russian ambassador in Istanbul advised his ministry that it would not be a bad idea to give some concessions from Zahab to Istanbul to divert their attention from the regions of Azerbaijan.[1158]

Meanwhile, the British diplomat Mr. Marling from Istanbul, notified Edward Gray that, if Qasr-i Shirin fell to the Ottoman Empire, it would be more profitable for the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, because the Ottomans, unlike Iranians, could better protect the security of the oil fields and employees especially if it was in their interest or they were requested by a powerful state. Marling dictated that the APOC was already doing business with Baghdad at the time, so it would be easier for the APOC if there were no border barriers and could also build a pipeline from there to Baghdad whereas it is difficult to transfer oil through Iran because of the lawless tribes. Therefore, he suggested that even if they could at least return a part of Qasr-i Shirin to the Ottomans, it would be in Britain's interest.[1159]

In early October, 1912, Russia took some tougher practical steps. On October 12, they sent a military force to Khuy to put pressure on the Ottomans and force them to withdraw.[1160] Before Russia completely distributed its forces, the Ottoman Consul informed Tehran that his country was ready to withdraw from Iranian territory to the 1905 line if Iran could fill the gap in their absence in such a way that life and the

[1158] **BL. IOR/L/PS/10/291**, File 3154/1912 Pt 1-2 'Turco-Persian frontier: the position of Hawizeh; miscellaneous prints", 5/796.
[1159] **Ibid.**, No. 683/1.
[1160] **BL. IOR/L/PS/10/291**, File 3154/1912 Pt 1-2 'Turco-Persian frontier: the position of Hawizeh; miscellaneous prints" No. 551; **Ibid**, No. 18. As mentioned above, Russian forces were already present in Tabriz. According to the British ambassador, about 3, 000 Russian troops were in Tabriz in March and another 500 were heading from Julfa. **Ibid**, No. 81" Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey" 9 March 1912.

possessions of the Sunni population would not be in danger.[1161] After receiving assurances about the Sunni population, they began withdrawing from mid-October until the end of November.[1162] Thus they evacuated the villages around Salmas on the lower shore of Lake Urmia, Sulduz, Lahijan, Pasveh, Mergan, Sardasht, Bana, and in the west of Urmia and withdrew from some areas north of Urmia[1163] in the hope that they would be compensated in Zahab.

After the Ottoman withdrawal, in 1913, representatives of Russia, Britain, Iran, and the Ottoman Empire met in Istanbul to reach the final agreement on the demarcation of the border. After the 18th meeting, they signed an agreement known as the Istanbul Protocol. This protocol became the theoretical basis for a technical commission that in 1913-1914 conducted a thorough field survey that took 12 months to determine the final boundary.[1164]

According to the protocol, the commission would be composed of members from all four states and if the Ottoman Empire and Iran had a dispute over part of the border, they would submit their memorandum to the representatives of Russia and Britain within 40 days, and whatever they decided, Ottoman Empire and Iran would accept. According to the seventh article of the protocol, all the concessions granted to William Darcy by Iran in 1901 and were now in 1913 have been transferred to the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, in the territories that belonged to Iran and fell to the Ottoman Empire would remain effective and Istanbul must abide by them.[1165]

Although after the evacuation of northwestern Iran, the Ottomans expected to be given back Zahab and Qasr-i Shirin, because it was not in Russia's interest, these

[1161] **BL. IOR/L/PS/10/267**, "File 1356/1912 Pt 2 'Turco-Persian Frontier:- negotiations at Constantinople. (Mohammerah Boundary), " No. 581, "Sir W. Townley to Sir Edward Grey" 6 November 1912.
[1162] **BL. IOR/L/PS/10/291,** File 3154/1912 Pt 1-2 'Turco-Persian frontier: the position of Hawizeh; miscellaneous prints, " No. 350, "21 October 1912."
[1163] **Ibid.**, No. 1004/1.
[1164] Gilbert Ernest Hubbard, **From the Gulf to Ararat: an expedition through Mesopotamia and Kurdistan**, Edinburgh; London: W. Blackwood, 1917, p. 15.
[1165] **27 Teshrin-i Sani 1913 Tarihinde Dersaadette İmza Olunan Devlet-i Aliyye- İran Tahdid-i Hudut Protokolu Tercümesi**, Matba-i Osmaniye, Dersaadet (İstanbul) 1330, pp. 12-13.

regions fell to Iran.[1166] It is worth mentioning that according to the line drawn by the mediating countries in 1852, Qasr-i Shirin in the Zahab region should have been left to the Ottoman Empire but the Russians were insisting on Iran's right over the region with eagerness. The Russian ambassador told the Porte that Qasr-i Shirin belonged to Iran because it was home to Shiite tribes such as Sanjabi and Kalhur. However, the main reason for the Russian support of Iran in this regard was that Russia and Germany had received the concession to build a railway line that started in Azerbaijan and terminated in Qasr-i Shirin.[1167]

While Shiite tribes occupied most of the eastern Zahab, the Ottoman Empire tried to annex all Sunni populated areas in the west of Zahab to maintain its hegemony over Zahab's oil fields through the dominance of Sunni tribes such as Jaf, Bajalan, and Sheikh Omar Naqshbandi's sons.[1168] Finally, based *on "Sunni for Turkey and Shia for Persia*"[1169], the oil fields in the north (Chia Surkh oil wells) and west of Qasr-i Shirin were given to the Ottomans, provided they allowed the Sanjabi tribe to return to their pastures in winter.[1170]

5.3.7. Role and Reaction of the Kurdish Tribes to the Ottoman Withdrawal

As mentioned above, while during the Minorsky-Shipli journey, some of the inhabitants of the occupied areas had reaffirmed their support for the Ottomans, some

[1166] As, Scofield indicates, European powers intervened by sending a combined (Anglo-Russian) survey team to Zuhab. Their objective was to propose three methods for dividing the province, as stipulated by the 1847 treaty. The first approach aimed to ensure that the existing Anglo-Persian oil wells were acknowledged as Persian territory. The second approach attempted to follow the natural geographical features closely, staying true to the original basis of the partition. The third method involved carefully separating the traditional grazing lands of rival Sunni and Shi'i tribes. However, none of these suggestions were implemented, as Constantinople desired to gain control over the oil wells in the northern region of Zuhab province. Consequently, the Mandali and Khanaqin oilfields became known as the "transferred territories." Furthermore, a significant portion of the mountains in the southeast of the province, despite serving as the primary pasturelands for the Persian Sinjabi tribal group, were recognized as Ottoman territory. Richard N. Schofield, "Laying it down in stone: delimiting and demarcating Iraq's boundaries by mixed international commission." **Journal of Historical Geography** 34.3 (2008): 397-421. pp. 415-416.
[1167] Hasan Nia, **op. cit.**, p. 590.
[1168] Hasan Nia, **op. cit.**, p. 595; **BL. IOR/L/PS/10/267**, "File 1356/1912 Pt 2 'Turco-Persian Frontier:-negotiations at Constantinople. (Mohammerah Boundary)', No. 1/2.
[1169] Ibid., No. 226.
[1170] Hasan Nia, **op. cit.**, p. 597.

scholars, and notables of the Kurdistan province expected the Ottomans to include the province inside their sphere of influence just as Britain and Russia had divided northern and southern Iran into their spheres of influence. However, as explained above Ottomans had already decided to withdraw.

Ottomans had not withdrawn completely when some Kurdish tribes of some areas inside and outside the Eastern Provinces sent their final petition for intervention to the Ottomans, but it was rejected by Prime Minister Kamil Pasha, who considered the deployment of any army would provoke Russia. Nonetheless, he added that anyone could take refuge in the Ottoman territory. These words, as Ates states, "*marked the end of the very last chapter of Ottoman expansionism, and the hopes of some Sunnis of the northernmost frontier to be included within the domains of the caliph*."[1171]

The rapid withdrawal of the Ottoman forces created an unexpected situation and undermined the credibility of the Kurds who had by then ruled the region alongside the Ottomans. In September 1912, some of the tribes that had previously joined the Ottomans laid down their arms and surrendered to the Iranian government while others fled to Ottoman territory via Russia. Then Iranian military forces were sent from Tabriz to Sauj Bulaq to capture the city and Iran issued a general amnesty, under this condition most of the tribes that had been Ottoman subjects until then gathered in Sauj Bulaq and expressed subjection to Iran.[1172]

Alexander Iyas, who was appointed Russian consul in Sauj Bulaq immediately after the Ottoman withdrawal, commented on the Ottoman's sudden withdrawal as follows:

> This news surprised the Kurds of Mukri, so that they lost faith in their great protector and sought refuge in the Iranian government. Their leaders are waiting for our protection (ie Russia) and they are hoping to join our side which will help us consolidate our power among the tribes around Sauj Bulaq.[1173]

[1171] Ates, **op. cit.**, p. 292.
[1172] **BL. IOR/L/PS/10/291**, File 3154/1912 Pt 1-2 'Turco-Persian frontier: the position of Hawizeh; miscellaneous prints", No. 1004/1, 28 November 1912.
[1173] Lazarev, **op. cit.**, p. 523.

As Iyas pointed out, after the withdrawal of the Ottomans, the Kurds fell under the domination of Russia and Iran posing a great threat to the Ottomans. After the withdrawal of the Ottoman forces from the disputed areas, a fresh and fertile condition emerged for Russian policy in the Kurdish regions of Iran. As Lazarev describes, there was no longer any danger of Ottomans entering the region again, so Russian diplomats and officers began to work on imposing their influence in the region.[1174] The Russians, during the years before World War I, to prevent the Ottomans from taking advantage of the Kurdish capabilities in any possible war between the Russians and the Ottomans, tried to force the Iranian government to pursue a softer policy with the Kurds. In this regard, Minorsky and Iyas believed that the Iranian authorities should not be allowed to deviate from the law and oppress Kurdish tribes and their chiefs, in order not to give the Ottomans an excuse to interfere in the affairs of the region.[1175]

Apart from the foregoing, the strengthening of the Russian hegemony in the region brought about a new era and made the region a favorable environment for the emergence of a new wave of Kurdish nationalism. During this period, Simko Shikak, who had already officially become the ruler of Qutur, was assisted by the Russians until before the withdrawal of the Ottomans and faced several confrontations with Turkish forces.[1176] In the following years, he led a prolonged Kurdish nationalist movement that lasted until 1930. Simko's strengthening attracted the attention of

[1174] Lazarev, **op. cit.**, p. 521.
[1175] Lazarev, **op. cit.**, pp. 524, 527.
[1176] **BL. IOR/L/PS/10/291**, File 3154/1912 Pt 1-2 ‘Turco-Persian frontier: the position of Hawizeh; miscellaneous prints” Section 10, No. 11.

many Ottoman Kurds and became a refuge for them, including Abdul Razzaq Badir Khan[1177] Sayyid Taha, Sheikh Abdul Qadir, and Sheikh Abdul Salam Barzani.[1178]

However, despite, military withdrawal, the Porte tried to keep its hegemony alive among the Iranian Kurds, especially through Sheikh Ubeidullah's family. Until the end of the Ottoman Empire, Sheikh Abdul Qadir, though working on Kurdish nationalism, believed that any political entity must be within the reign of the caliphate. This eventually led to his dispute with Abdul Razzaq Badir Khan, who had placed his hopes on the Russians.[1179] The Porte's new policy, aimed at creating a sphere of influence instead of military presence, which bore fruit in the coming years: during World War I, the Ottomans twice captured Urmia and Sauj Bulaq through Sheikh Abdul Qadir and with the help of Simko.[1180] Nonetheless, Sheikh Abdul Qadir and his son Mohammed were executed in Istanbul in 1925, on charges of participating in the revolution of Sheikh Saeed Piran[1181] while, Simko led a national movement whose activities spanned both Iran and the Ottoman Kurdish

[1177] Abdul Razzaq Badir Khan was the master of ceremonies at the [Yildiz] imperial palace until 1906 and his uncle Ali Shamil Pasha was the military governor of Scutari (Uskudar). They were arrested for the assassination of the Prefect of Istanbul, Ridwan Pasha, and were deported to Yemen. On March 23, 1906, Ridwan Pasha was shot dead by four men while getting off a train at Guzeltepe station in Istanbul's Scutari district. The reason for his murder was that the Istanbul Municipality had previously paved the front of the house of one of Ridwan Pasha's closest employees in Shishli (Şişli), but had not paved the front of the house of Abdul Razzaq Badir Khan in the same neighborhood of Shishli. An argument broke out between Abdul Razzaq and the municipal employee, which ended with the killing of one of Abdul Razzaq's men by Rizwan Pasha's men. Initially, Sultan Abdulhamid decided to banish Rizwan Pasha to Baghdad but at the plea of the latter's mother, the Sultan reversed his decision and Rizwan Pasha remained in office. When the Badir khan family realized that Rizwan Pasha would not be punished, they gathered and planned to kill him and they did. **The sun** (London), September 04, 1906, p. 5.

[1178] As mentioned above, the beginning of the revolution of Sheikh Abdulsalam Barzani goes back to the CUP's revolt. Later, in 1912, when he refused to go to Mosul at the request of Mohammed Fazil Pasha, the deputy governor, to answer the charges against him, a force of 6, 000 men was sent to arrest the sheikh, who withdrew after fighting and his village (Barzan) and his Takya were destroyed and the leader of the Sheikh's forces, who was one of his students, was killed. See Wadie Jwaideh, **The Kurdish National Movement: Its Origins and Development**, Syracuse University Press, 2006, pp. 111-113. The state then pardoned Sheikh Abdulsalam through new measures and he returned to Barzan, but again rebelled against the rule of Mohammed Fazil Pasha and after his defeat, Sheikh Abdul Salam fled to the Azerbaijan province of Iran with about 3, 000 to 4, 000 Kurds. **GESIO.**, vol. VI, No. 1455-1457. Finally, then, in early 1914, when he tried to meet Simko Shikak, he was arrested by a group of Shikak and handed over to the governor of Van and then he was later sent to Mosul, where he was executed along with three of his companions. Jwaidah, **op. cit.**, p. 113.

[1179] Hawar, **op. cit.**, p. 150.

[1180] Burzuyi, **op. cit.**, pp. 197-204.

[1181] **New York Times**, May 26, 1925, p. 6.

regions until, in 1930, he was assassinated in Oshnavieh while going to negotiate with Iranian authorities.[1182]

[1182] For details on his assassination see Hawar, **op. cit.**, pp. 637-643.

CONCLUSION

Throughout the history of the neighborhood between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, the Kurdish tribes have played an important role in relations between the two states because of their location. Until the mid-19th century, the Kurdish regions were barriers to confrontations between the two states in times of peace and a field of conflict at times of war. The Kurds' position as frontiersmen was responsible for creating a particular lifestyle and mentality that guaranteed their survival. At the same time, an unstable border that was the field of conflict between the two states and the route for invading each other's land, prevented the development of urban features and the formation of cities and prosperity, so that after centuries of rule of the Ottoman Empire and Iran, there are no remains of civilization characteristics in these areas.

From the late 19th century onwards, efforts to define and establish borders increased the importance of the role of tribes that were scattered as local players over the frontiers. Each tribe's allegiance with either the Ottoman Empire or Iran decided the state's ownership over that tribe's winter and summer quarters. The most important factors that had roles in directing tribal affiliations toward the Ottoman Empire or Iran were geographical, linguistic, and religious divisions among the Kurds. These divisions of identity and affiliation make it difficult to study the role of the Kurdish tribes between the Ottoman Empire and Iran and while researching, we encounter a number of unrelated and fragmented events.

However, the religious affinity between the Ottoman Empire and the vast majority of the Kurds who spread across the frontier from Ararat to Khanaqin created more proximity to each other. This was the reason behind the participation of some Kurds who fell within the Iranian boundary beside the Ottoman Kurds in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, assisting the Ottoman Empire. In the coming years, the Kurdish participation in the war gave them enough military strength to create political challenges for both the Ottoman Empire and Iran in the frontier areas. In 1880, some Kurdish tribes, led by the Ottoman subject; Sheikh Ubeidullah Nehri, revolted and took over parts of the Kurdish regions of Azerbaijan and Kurdistan

provinces of Iran. Initially, Sheikh Ubeidullah's rebellion created a political crisis between the two states and each blamed the other for the rebellion. However, the political-national goals of the rebellion, the human casualties it caused, and the pressure from international forces such as Russia and Britain compelled the Ottoman Empire to help Iran suppress the rebellion. Although Sheikh Ubeidullah's rebellion failed to achieve its goals, it blurred the boundary that separated the Ottoman and Iranian Kurdish tribes.

In the conflict between the Ottoman Empire and Iran over the Kurds, the Iranians tried to include the Kurds and their place of residence by insisting on cultural proximity and Iranian identity while the Ottomans tried to make the Kurds part of themselves by asserting on their religious identity. Meanwhile, the Kurdish tribes struggled to a different identity during the rebellion of Sheikh Ubeidullah Nehri. As his poems and some of his letters show, he led a protest against the policy of both Tehran and Istanbul toward the Kurds.

In the years following Sheikh Ubeidullah’s Rebellion, Iran adopted a harsh policy in the Kurdish regions of Azerbaijan, which restored security and stability to the region for a while. However, in the frontier areas of Sulaymaniyah-Sinna, and Khanaqin-Kermanshah, nomadic tribes such as Jaf, Hamawand, Bajalan, Sanjabi, and Kalhur due to seasonal migration, refuge, and the divisions of their allegiance have contributed to political conflict between the Ottoman Empire and Iran. These tribes took advantage of the characteristics that the frontiers had given them, such as nomadic life, the openness and ambiguity of the frontier, and either state’s need for the tribes as much as the tribes need for them, so, they tried to maintain semi-independent and avoid their financial obligations to the Ottoman Empire and Iran. Affiliation of each of these tribes for either of the two states, despite approving the ownership of the winter and summer resorts of the tribe to that particular state, it had a financial aspect too. The tribes were a source of profit and military strength for both the Ottoman Empire and Iran. The state annually collected taxes from the tribes and used them as border guards against neighboring states.

In 1890-1889, the growth of Armenian nationalism in Anatolia posed a threat to the political position of the Kurdish tribes and the Ottoman dominance over the region as well. This "common enemy" created a mutual political goal for the Kurds and Istanbul, which led the Porte to incorporate the Kurdish tribes into a new military organization called Hamidiye cavalry to help the state maintain its regional hegemony. Because the tribes that participated in the Hamidiye cavalry received political and military support from the state, a large number of Kurdish tribes, some of whom came from Iran, joined too. Along with the creation of the Hamidiye cavalry, the Ottoman Empire allowed Sheikh Muhammed Sadiq son of Sheikh Ubeidullah to return to Hakkari, who had been exiled after the rebellion. In the early 20th century, while the process of demarcating the border between the two states was not yet completed, the Ottoman Empire took over a border stripe with the help of Hamidiye Cavalry, Sheikh Muhammed Sadiq and some Kurdish tribes, which extended from south of Qutur to south of Bana from the Iranian side including more than 30 Kurdish towns.

The direct occupation of these areas by the Ottomans followed measures the Iranian authorities took against Kurdish tribes in the regions of Azerbaijan and Kurdistan provinces during the years between 1904 and 1907. The conquest of these areas coincided with numerous petitions for Ottoman intervention proposed by the Kurdish tribes. Some of these letters were instinctively written by the Kurdish tribes, but others were sent to the Porte at instigation of local Ottoman officials. After the Ottomans took over these areas, the idea of annexing all other Kurdish-Sunni areas of Iran to the Ottoman Empire was developed by the Ottoman politicians. To implement this purpose, Istanbul relied on interpretations of the treaties of Zahab 1639, Kerdan 1745, Erzurum I 1823, and Erzurum II 1847, to prove its ownership over all Kurds and their regions. However, the Ottomans finally evacuated the territories in 1912 due to the political crisis and pressure from international powers such as Russia and Britain and returned to the pre-1905 border.

The withdrawal of the Ottomans from the Kurdish regions of the Azerbaijan and Kurdistan provinces, and the agreement between the Ottoman Empire and Iran to establish a border, officially made the Kurds a human barrier between the two states,

along with the natural obstacles. However, the settlement of border disputes and the demarcation of the boundaries which was unclear for centuries, reduced to some extent the role of the Kurdish tribes in the political agenda of the Ottoman Empire and Iran. Nevertheless, the emergence of a new political-national movement by several Kurdish tribal chiefs and political elites like Simko Shikak, Abdurazzaq Badir Khan, Sayyid Taha, etc., once again brought back the Kurds into the political conflict between the Ottoman Empire and Iran which continued until after the World War I, the study of which is beyond the scope of this research.

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