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CHAPTER III. KURDS BETWEEN TWO WORLD WARS (1918 – 1941)

In general, this chapter discusses the most significant Iranian and Iraqi Kurdish movements between the two world wars. During this period, social and political movements erupted in Kurdistan and these leading to the formation of political parties, especially by the Iraqi Kurds, which in turn, directly, affected and encouraged the Iranian Kurds to mobilise themselves and eventually to form their own political parties. This chapter focuses on the movement of Simko's rebellion in Iran, Reza Shah's policies towards Kurds and Kurdish political parties in Iraq.

1. Simko's rebellion

Referring to the several significance events and transformations in Iran, before the First World War, are crucial to understand the motivation and tribal uprising of Simko's movements in Iran.

The rivalries and non-cooperation between Shi'a and Sunni Kurds in Iran is an example of discord within the Kurdish community. The reign of Karim Khan Zand dynasty (1751-94) clearly illustrates this example.[215] In the middle of the eighteenth century, Karim Khan, a Shi'a Kurd from the Zand tribe near Kermanshah, brought the Iranian government under his control. This was the first time since the eleventh century that a non-Turk or non-Mogul figure was heading the government in Iran. During the period of Karim Khan's reign, Shi'a Kurds came to occupy high leadership positions. This was especially the case in the Kurdish regions. They enjoyed much less support among the Iranian Sunni Kurds.[216]

After the death of Karim Khan Zand, the tribal Turkic Qajar dynasty (1794-1925) came to the power. During the reign of two Qajar Shahs, Fath Ali Shah and Nasir al-Din Shah, the central Iranian government coexisted with powerful and largely self-ruling tribal authorities. This was also the period when the influence of the European powers began to take root in Iran, with Russians encroaching from the north and the British from the south (see chapter V).

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[215] For more information about the Zand dynasty, see John R. Perry, *Karim Khan Zand: A History of Iran, 1747-1779* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1979).

[216] Nerweyi, A. 2002, 57.

During the reign of Nasir al-Din Shah (1848-1896),[217] Iranian military power was weak. Iran did not attempt to reform its military, as Egypt and the Ottoman Empire had done. Although the Iranian government made attempts to increase role of the formal government, *ulama* still had considerable influence over Iranian society. Because of *zakat* contribution (alms. tithes), the ulama had gotten much richer and financially more independent. They also had income from their educational institutions and the *Waqf* (religious endowment). Consequently, Shi'ite religious figures enjoyed a largely independent position within the Iranian society. While the Safavid Shahs had claimed to be descendents of the Hidden Imam (Mohammad Mahdi)[218], the Qajar shahs made no such divine claims, which left the Shi'ite ulamas as the main religious authority who enjoyed the exclusive right to *ijtihaad* (free interpretation of the religious sources).

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the ulama made use of two concepts: 1. All Shi'ite Muslims must commit to a *mudjtahid,* and 2. Accept his rulings as valid on matters of religious observance: the rulings of living mudjtahids were preferable to all other existing rulings.[219] Since there was no longer a link between the state and Shi'a Islam during the Qajar Dynasty, the faithful were bound to religious dignitaries. The situation enabled the mudjtahids to gain extensive sway over the society. In other words, the ulama maintained the strongest voice in Iranian political life.

The policies of the government of Nasir al-Din, combined with its policy that created a permeable situation for the foreign interference and economic exploitation. This led to unrest among the Iranian people and ultimately to open revolt. In 1890, the Shah awarded a British company the exclusive right to produce and sell Iran's entire tobacco crop. This led to mass protests under the leadership of intellectuals, *Bazaris* and ulama's. Additionally, mudjtahid used their power to ijtihaad to block the government's policy via a nationwide boycott of tobacco production. The Shah repealed the concession in 1892. The ulama learned from this experience that the Iranian people were receptive to calls for political activity based on an Islamic framework.[220] Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Iran was overwhelmed by

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[217] For a detail debate about Nasir al-Dien Shah, see Abbas Amanat, *The Pivot of the Universe: Nasir al-Din Shah Qajar and the Iranian Monarchy, 1831-1896* (London: Tauris, 1997).

[218] Shi'ites believes that the Hidden Imam lives but nobody can get into contact with him. His return among the people has an eschatological meaning. He is also the *Sahibzaman* (Lord of Time). Waardenburg 2000, 128.

[219] William Cleveland L., *A History of the Modern Middle East* (2nd ed., Simon Fraser University: Westview Press, 2000), 109.

[220] Ibid., 113-4.

its debts to the European states, the situation provoked further anger among the populace. Finally, in 1896, Nasir al-Din was assassinated.

The political and economic policies of the Qajars were based on a tribal structure of society. They, therefore, made efforts to preserve the tribal lifestyle. In certain cases, the Qajars tried to foster and manage feuds and rivalries, thereby ruling through dependent chiefs rather than without them. This was the case of the chieftains of Ardalan, Kermanshah, and most Iranian Kurdish regions. Qajars relied on the provocation of hostilities among tribal chieftains in order to buy loyalty from certain sides. Khusro Khan Ardalan, for example, was brought in to the royal palace to ensure the loyalty of his father, who was the Wali (governor).[221]

The absorption of some Kurdish tribal leaders into the state system illustrates another example of the Qajars' political structure. Through marriages, the Qajar's drew some chieftains more closely into the reaches of imperial authority. According to McDowall, Khusro Khan, who succeeded his father as Wali, married one of Fath Ali Shah's numerous daughters.[222] The struggle for power between Mamash and Manguri in the Sawujbulaq (present Mahabad) district is another example of the Kurdish tribal feuds. Rivalries among the tribal leaders for leadership, as well as the loyalty, of some tribes to the government via marital bonds to the Qajar family, were some of the main causes of division among the Kurdish community at the time.[223] The situation changed in the beginning of the twentieth century, when a new movement, generally known as the constitutional revolution, took place in Iran. The wave eventually was to inspire Kurds to attempt to build a more coherent movement for Kurdish nationalism.

The Constitutional Revolution had cultural as well as political effects on the Kurdish communities in Iran. The combination of several factors in the early twentieth century — a decentralized government, a powerful religious organization, merchants and intellectuals — sparked in Iran the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-09.[224] This revolution provided a

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[221] McDowall 1996, 68.

[222] Ibid.

[223] For a detailed study of Kurdish tribalism in the Ardalan region (presently the province of Kordestan), see Abdulhamid Heyrat Sajadi, *Illat ve Ashayire Kordestan* [tribe and tribalism of Kordestan] (Sanandaj: University of Kordestan 1381 [2003]).

[224] About the history of the Iranian Constitutional Revolution of 1905-9, see Ahmad Kasravi, *Tarikhe Mashrutihye Iran* [History of the Iranian Constitutional Revolution], (Tehran: Negah Publications, 2003); for

foundation for Kurdish nationalism, particularly in Iran. It is, therefore, necessary to analyze this event.

The constitutional revolution is generally viewed as a nationalist religious movement. According to Edward G. Browne, the most popular Western scholar of Iranian culture at the time, the constitutionalist movement that stood for progress, tolerance and freedom insisted that nationalism 'Persia for the Persians, [Iran for the Iranians]' was the force that characterized the movement.[225] During and after the constitutional revolution, the idea of 'Persia for the Persians' compelled Kurds, especially the urban populations, to establish some Kurdish associations in Sawujbulaq, Urumiyeh, Saqqiz, Sinna and Kermanshah. The more urbanized Kurdish communities and Kurdish intellectuals were mostly supportive of the constitutionalist movement, as it offered a hope for relief from the arbitrary and corrupt policies of landlords, chieftains, and governors. One of the popular associations was *Sedaqat* (honesty/loyalty), which was created in 1907 by certain intellectuals in Sinna under the leadership of Mohammad Mardokh. Nerweyi believes that most fundamentally, the members were to swear not to commit falsehood and not to tolerate oppression.[226] The Kurdish nationalist movement was mainly based on the last point. It was fighting not only for self-rule but also against the tribal chieftains, who were deemed responsible for the intertribal rivalries and the backwardness of Kurdish communities.

Unlike the urban intellectuals, Kurdish tribal chieftains and certain Kurdish religious figures were against the constitutionalist movement. In general, they identified with the monarchy and the existing hierarchical system, which they were a part of. Because of the intertwined ideological and political interests of Qajars and tribal leaders, the tribal chiefs were not sympathetic to constitutionalism. Although the tribal chiefs had some autonomy with their own boundaries, their rule was permitted by and depended on the Shah. This situation ensured a certain level of loyalty by the tribal chiefs to the Shah. One of the pillars of constitutionalism was secularism, which had an archenemy, the Shi'ite cleric. The modernist concept is for Mangol Bayat one of the five conventional views of religion and religious leadership in the politics of Iran at the turn of the century. According to Bayat:

English version see Ahmad Kasravi, *History of the Iranian Constitutional Revolution* [*Tarikhe Mashrutihye Iran*], Volume I, tra. Evan Siegel (Costa Mesa , California: Mazda Publications, 2006).

[225] For more discussion of the clerical influence on the Qajar Shahs, especially the role and effect of Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, see Edward G. Browne, *The Persian Revolution of 1905-1909* (2th ed., London: Cambridge University Press, 1966).

[226] Nerweyi, A. 2002, 130.

Modernist concepts and ideas were introduced by the religious dissidents who mobilized the masses, preaching the merits of the movement in mosques and religious schools, wrapping their innovative thought in the traditional language of the Koran and the holy texts. Far from attempting to safeguard Islamic traditions, they called for socio[-]cultural and political changes which, they insist[ed], constituted a return to true Islam.[227]

The founding leaders of this religious reformation were the two famous political and religious figures: Sayyed Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838/39-1897) and his disciple Mohammad Abduh (1849-1905). Afghani is known as a quite political and revolutionary figure, who opposed imperialism and the corrupt Muslim rulers. Abduh is more known as an advocate of reform within the context of Islamic education, particularly in the areas of morality and religion. The ideology of Afghani, pan-Islamism against imperialism, became more clearly defined when most of the Iranian Kurds cooperated with the Ottoman Empire against the Allies in the First World War (Afghani left via Iranian Kurdistan to the Iraqi Kurdistan, when he deported by the Iranian Shah in 1891). [228] Some of the most important families in Sawujbulaq, such as Ghazi Mohammad's family, supported the *jihad* (holy war) of the Ottoman Empire[229] against the Allies, and especially against the Tsarist Russia, but other Kurds did deals with the Russians.

As above-mentioned, the Constitutional Revolution of Iran in 1905-1909 afforded people more freedom to assemble through association. During this period, Kurdish intellectuals and religious figures established a range of associations throughout most of the Iran's Kurdish regions. These associations formed the basis for the first modern awakenings of the Kurdish national identity in this territory. After the constitutional revolution, Kurds

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[227] Mangol Bayat, *Iran's First Revolution: Shi'ism and the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1909* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 10.

[228] For details about these two figures, see Nikki R. Keddie, *Sayyid Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani: A Political Biography*, (Berkeley: University of California, 1972); __, *An Islamic Response to Imperialism: Political and Religious Writings of Sayyid Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani*, (Berkeley: University of California, 1968); Elie Kedourie, *Afghani and Abduh: An Essay on Religious Unbelief and Political Activism in Modern Islam*, (London, 1966); My master thesis Hawar Nerweyi, *De Islam in het Denken van Afghani en Abduh: religieuze inspiratie of politiek opportunisme* [de Islam in the thought of Afghani and Abduh: religious inspiration or political opportunism] (Utrecht: University Utrecht, 2006). www.nerweyi.blogspot.com

[229] Nerweyi, A. 2002, 133.

became more responsive to modern political and social movements.[230] From the constitutional revolution to the end of the Qajar Empire in 1925, which marked the beginning of the Pahlavi dynasty, the territorial sovereignty of Iran was vulnerable. The north, south, and west of Iran gradually drifted away from the central government. In some parts of the country, relations between the centre and the periphery broke down through movements such as the one in Gilan in the north, under the leadership of Mirza Kochak Khane Jangali, and the movement in the Kurdish area under the leadership of Simko[231]. The Simko movement, which took place right after the First World War, attempted to create an autonomous government in the south-west areas of Lake Urumiyeh.

After the First World War the only great tribal uprising in Iranian Kurdistan against the central government was that of Simk, a chieftain of the large Shikak tribe and confederated his movement with some other Kurdish tribes. He was looking after his own wealth and power instead of entertaining national or ethnic Kurdish concerns. Simko, Ahmad Kasravi notes, fought the Russians on behalf of the Ottoman Empire, and then shifted his alliance to fight in the Russian front against the Azeris. For Kasravi, Simko's movement had tribal character and had nothing to do with nationalism. He refers to Simko as a murderer and bandit. In 1917, Simko killed a leader of the Assyrian people in a bilateral negotiation and proclaimed later that it done for the sake of Iran.[232] For Kasravi and many other Iranian writers Simko was a 'mercenary', who had no grasp of 'civilization'. Some Kurdish writers, however, reject these ideas about Simko and describe him as a hero. They believe that Simko had strong nationalist ideas.[233]

Shikak, after Kalhur, was the second largest Kurdish confederacy in Iran. It grew further by forming a confederacy with some other small tribes. It had reached its greatest autonomy under the leadership of Simko, particularly in the period of 1918-22. In 1919,

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[230] Regarding the influence of the constitutional revolution on Kurds in Iran, see Ali Tatar Nerweyi, *Bizava Siyasi li Kurdistanê: 1908-1927* [the political movements in Kurdistan: 1908-1927], (Duhok: Pires Publisher, 2002), 64-7.

[231] Simko has also been called Semitqo and Ismael Agha.

[232] Ahmad Kasravi, *Tarikhe Hijdah SalIhye Azarbaijan* [The Eighteen Years History of Azarbaijan] (Tehran: Amirkabir, 1982), 454-3.

[233] Mehmed Resul Hawar has not doubt that Simko's uprising was a political and nationalist Kurdish movement, see Mehmed Resul Hawar, *Simko (Esma'il Axayi Shukak) u Bizutnewey Netewayetiy Kurd* [Simko and Kurdish nationalist movement], (Stockholm: Apec Publishing, 1996); Sallar Fendy also agrees with Hawar, see Sallar Fendy, *Bizaven Simkoy Shikak: 1919-1926* [Simkoy Shikak movements: 1919-1926], (Hewler: Kurdistan, 1999).

Simko organized a meeting of the most important chieftains of Iranian Kurdistan, to establish an independent Kurdistan -- an open insurrection against the Iranian government.[234] The majority of Simko's operational military successes against the central government took place between March 1921 until July 1922. During this period, his authority covered all Iranian territory west of Lake Urumiyeh and to the south as far as Baneh and Sardasht, as well as the northwestern borders of Iraq, where the British and the Kemalists were still competing for control.[235] Except for the entire Shikak confederacy and the Harki tribe, most of the northern tribes of Iranian Kurdistan and some tribes in southern Iranian Kurdistan took part in Simko's movement. In 1921, Simko's troops occupied Sawujbulaq, according to van Bruinessen, unlike Urumiyeh, its inhabitants were mainly Kurds.[236] Although the Kurds composed one of the largest populations in the Urumiyeh region, in the city centre the Azeri were predominant. Perhaps that was why when Simko's forces occupied the city of Urumiyeh, they did not spare the city from plunder. Khalil Fettahi Ghazi, however, cites another possible motive for the pillage. According to him, the aggression of Simko's troops in Urumiyeh was revenge for the losses they had suffered while capturing Mahabad. According to Fettahi Ghazi, Simko had demanded fifty thousand tomans for his tribesmen killed in Mahabad.[237]

Reza Khan after seizing power via a coup d'état in February 1921, had devoted most of his energies to the building of a modern, disciplined, and cohesive national army, which was hugely instrumental in defeating Simko's uprising. Similar to Atatürk's position vis-a-vis the uprising of Sheikh Sa'id, the movement of Simko was a great test for the modern army of Reza Khan. By 1923, Simko's ventures had not led to any political solution for himself or his followers. He fled to Turkey and then to Iraq. Eventually, Simko was killed in an ambush in 1930, after being insincerely invited by the Iranian government to be a governor of Ushnawiyeh. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century the Kurdish uprisings remained largely old-fashioned and tribal in character, as opposed to modern entities with an interest in nation building. Although Simko asserted his authority over a wide territory, he

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[234] Van Bruinessen, 'A Kurdish Warlord on the Turkish-Persian Frontier in the Early Twentieth Century: Isma'il Aqa Simko', in Atabaki (ed.), *Iran and the First World War: Battleground of the Great Powers* (London: I.B.Tauris & CO. Ltd, 2006), 88.

[235] Ibid., 89-90.

[236] Ibid., 90.

[237] Khalil Fettahi Ghazi, *Korteh Mêjoey Binemaleyi Aazi le Wilayeti Mukri* [short history of the Ghazi family in Mukri province], (Hewler: Aras Publishing, 2009), 94.

established no formal organization, no political party to organize his followers, and no formal government or war council.[238]

Simko's movement was essentially a tribal one, but one of the most successful in uniting a number of tribal Kurdish leaders against the Iranian government. In an interview in 1921 with Mustafa Pasha, a nationalist Kurd from Turkey, Simko claimed that at this moment there was no organization, and he maintained that they had no need for such a thing as a flag, since Shikak has already has its own flag.[239] Simko's resistance, according to Hashem Ahmadzadeh and Gareth Stansfield, was inspired mainly by his tribal ambition and lacked organization and a nationalist Kurdish agenda. Both academics proclaimed that although Simko's movement was deficient in terms of an intellectual nationalist discourse, it nevertheless provided the foundations of the Kurdish nationalist movement in Iran.[240] This movement was a reaction to the homogenizing policies of Reza Khan, who sought to build a nation based on the cultural-linguistic imprint of the dominant Persian ethnic group. At the end of Reza Shah's reign, the Kurds had not only mobilized against the centralistic policies of Reza Shah but also found their ambition and activities focused on Kurdish self-determination or self-government. Therefore, it is necessary to analyse Reza Shah's policies in Iran, particularly as they relate to the Kurds, in order to understand one of the important motivation behind the Iranian Kurds' mobilization during the Second World War.

2. Iranian Kurds in the period of Reza Shah

Khosro Mo'tazed remarks, that via the guidance of the British political military officers, a union between Reza Khan and Sayyid Zia al-din Tabatabai was formed, which carried out a coup d'état and eventually established a strong Iranian government.[241] It was essential for the British government to halt any Bolshevik penetration into Iran as it was considered a serious threat against the British colonial possession of India. As noted by Ervand Abrahamian, the

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[238] Van Bruinessen, 'Isma'il Aqa Simko', 2006, 91.

[239] Mojtaba Borzowi, *Uwza'e Siyasi Kurdistan: Az sale 1258 ta 1325* [political situation in Kurdistan: from 1878 to 1945], (Tehran: Fekre now publishing, 1999), 223.

[240] Hashem Ahmadzadeh and Gareth Stansfield, 'The Political, Cultural, and Military Re-awakening of the Kurdish Nationalist Movement in Iran', *Middle East Journal* (Vol. 64, No. 1. winter 2010), 13.

[241] Khosro Mo'tazed, *Tarikhe Panjaho haft saliye Iran dar 'asre Pahlavi: Fi'aliyithaye Jodasiri ve Tajziyetalibane dar Iran az 1296 ta 1325* [fifty-seven years history of Iran in Pahlavi period: separation and disintegration activities in Iran from 1916 until 1945], (Tehran: Maharet Publishing, 2001), 173.

British provided ammunition, supplies and funding for Reza Shah's troops.[242] The coup d'état in February 1921 was synchronous with national and international political crises in Iran. According to Ali Murshadizad, the Treaty (Anglo-Tsarist) of 1907 was still in effect (and was renewed in 1919) and the country was on the threshold of being divided between Great Britain and the newly-built Soviet government.[243] The Soviet Army had occupied northern Iran and there were some insurrections in other parts of the country, such as in Gilan, Khorasan, and Kurdistan. During the First World War, as Murshadizad points out, all strata of the Iranian society, aristocrats, clerics, merchants, and labours, had tired of waiting for a charismatic leader.[244]

Mo'tazed observes that Reza Khan established a uniformed army, asserted his authority over the state, and used his influence to bring Majlis under his control. He created and expanded a modern army. Furthermore, he defeated the uprising that was carried out under the leadership of Simko and, via the *Qahriyeh* (aggressive) forces and by granting concessions to some tribal chieftains, such as Bakhtiyari and Lur, established his central authority over regions and tribes throughout the country.[245] The other effective means used to eliminate the tribal character was the construction of a country-wide road and transportation network. As Richard Cottam notes, 'the railroad and new road system enabled the army to patrol formerly inaccessible tribal areas and to ensure the collection of taxes.'[246] Five years into the coup d'état, Reza Khan, having become the decisive authority and appearing as Iran's leader both inside and outside the country, declared himself the king of kings. Reza Shah, founder of the Pahlavi dynasty of 1925-1979, not only worked to modernize the Iranian administrative, educational and legal systems, but also aimed to shape a centralist and military state. Abrahamian observed, 'for the first time since the Safavids, the state was able to control society through extensive instruments of administration, regulation, and domination.'[247]

Sedentarization of the nomads was another modernization process encouraged by Reza Shah. Between the two world wars, Reza Shah used violence to force Kurdish tribes and

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[242] Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982), 117.

[243] Ali Murshidizad, *Roshinvikrane Azeri ve Howiyite Milli ve Qomi* [Azeris intellectuals and national and ethnic identity], (Tehran, 2001), 161.

[244] Ibid.

[245] Mo'tazed 2001, 174.

[246] Richard W. Cottam, *Nationalism in Iran* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1978), 61.

[247] Abrahamian 1982, 136.

nomads into a settled lifestyle. Due to this campaign, whole tribes were often completely destroyed. The majority of Jalali tribe, for example, who lived on the frontiers between Iran, Turkey and the Soviet Union, were deported to central Iran. Only a small part of the deported Jalali population had survived by the time they returned in 1941. Lur and Galbeghi tribes were also deported to Hamadan and Isfahan and their lands given to Turkish-speaking peoples. Most tribal chieftains were also deported from their homelands. These forced migrations, according to Ghassemlou, suited the interests of the Iranian bourgeoisie, who needed a settled population to form a significant and dependable market.[248] Four important motivations determined the forced migration process and sedentarization of Kurdish tribes and nomads by Reza Shah. Firstly, it made it easier to control the tribes and nomads, who otherwise were inclined to participate in secession movements against the central government. Secondly, as Ghassemlou claims, sedentarization was very much to the advantage of both the Kurdish and Iranian landowners who were able to exploit the peasants and buy their lands for agricultural production.[249] Thirdly, sedentary life-style yielded better tax collection, which was crucial for the enrichment of Reza Shah's treasury. Finally, it was easier to recruit young people to the modern military service from sedentary communities.

In a historical context modernization is used to refer to the particular social and cultural transformation that has occurred in Europe since the Enlightenment. In the course of the nineteenth century and especially during the two world wars, the Islamic world increasingly came under the influence of European expansion. As well as causing political and economic changes, this influence also transformed the social and cultural dimensions of the Islamic world. Atabaki and Zürcher rightly assert that for more than two hundred years the model of European modernity has been perceived as the exclusive model for adopting modernization in non-European societies such as Turkey and Iran.[250] It would be a mistake, however, to consider the modernization process in the Islamic world simply as an extension of the European modernization. This is because the Islamic world, according to Atabaki and Zürcher, did not have an exclusive perception of European modernity as the instrument to implement certain changes that they fervently desired, changes such as those that had transformed a traditional, rural and agrarian society into an urban, secular and industrial one

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[248] Ghassemlou, 'Kurdistan in Iran', in Chaliand 1980, 114.

[249] Ibid., 115.

[250] Atabaki and Zürcher 2004, 1.

in Europe. Modernisation in the Middle East was rather a defensive reaction.[251] In the Middle East, particularly in Iran by Reza Shah and in Turkey by Atatürk, the modernization processes were supported and accelerated by three major developments in communication: 1. The printing press: the distribution and installation of printing presses. 2. Translations: initially a small amount, but later a growing number of books (history, mathematics and novel) translated, printed and published in Turkish, Arabic and Persian. 3. Newspapers.[252]

In general, Reza Shah's policy toward Kurds had two phases. 1- Annihilation of tribalism, destruction of collective tribal armies, and the establishment of military bases in Kurdistan. 2- Prevention of vernacular labour engagements in Kurdistan and prohibition of Kurdish language.[253] During Reza Shah's reign, the Ministry of Culture, as Ghassemlou points out, had literally asked Rashid Yasemy to write a book titled *Kurd ve Piywastigy Nijady ve Tarikhi* [Kurds and their race and historical union]. The whole purpose of this book is to establish a link between the Persian language and culture and the Kurdish language and culture, thereby implying that Kurdish is not really different from Persian.[254] In 1933, the Ministry of Education formed a society named *dar al-mo'allimine 'ali* (the teacher-training college), with the commission to suggest new Persian terms in the arts and sciences.[255]

In the 1930s, the political geography of Iranian Kurdistan was purposefully subdivided. As Ghani Bulourian (who participated in the Republic of Kurdistan government and was a leader of the KDP) observed, the Kurdish district were transferred into the Kordistan and Kermanshah provinces, Ilam was separated from other Kurdish areas, Mukriyan and northern Iranian Kurdistan were assigned to the western Azerbaijan province and all of the Kurdish place names of these regions were deleted. Azerbaijan was also separated into two provinces: west and east Azerbaijan. According to Bulourian, the primary objective of the Iranian government was brought to light in the book by General Razmara, titled *Joghrafiyaye Siyasiye Iran* [political geography of Iran]. Razmara claimed that the majority of the inhabitants of the Kermanshah and Ilam areas were Shi'ites and therefore are

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[251] Ibid., 1-2.

[252] Lewis 2002, 53.

[253] Borzowi 1999, 262.

[254] Abdul Rahman Ghassemlou, *Chil sal Xabat le Penawi Azady: Kortayak le Mejoeyi Hezbi Dimocrati Kurdistani Iran* [forty years of struggle for freedom: a short history of the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran], (2th ed., Vol. 1, 1988), 23.

[255] For detailed information on language reformation in Iran and Turkey see John R. Perry, 'Language Reform in Turkey and Iran', in Atabaki and Zürcher 2004, 238-59.

friendly to the central government. He feared Kordestan Province (Sanandaj), because they had large Kurdish intellectuals, but he nevertheless identified the Mahabad and Mukriyan districts as the centre of Kurdish nationalism and advised officers to be more alert in these areas.[256] Throughout Iran, Reza Shah reinforced his New Order with a modern state bureaucracy. Abrahamian explains how the administration of old provinces, districts and counties were changed according to a new administrative structure:

> The old division of few large provinces (*ayalat*) and innumerable small districts (*vilayat*) was abolished. Instead, the ministry was structured into eleven provinces (*ostans*), forty-nine counties (*shahrestans*), and numerous municipalities by governors-general, counties by governors, municipalities by mayors, and some rural districts by official councils appointed by the Interior Minister.[257]

During the twenty years of Reza Shah's reign, the oppression of some ethnic groups in Iran was unprecedented. This Persian autocracy, according to Ghassemlou, was the formal political organisation of Pahlavi's regime. The Persian ethnic group became the law-giving and dominant group. In an attempt to remove the cultural and historical existence of all ethnic groups, Reza Shah gave Persian names to villages and cities, banished some cultural rituals, forbade traditional clothing (such as that of the Kurds).[258] European dress (uniform clothing and the Pahlavian hat) was imposed on the Kurdish people between the late 1920s and 1940. This raises the question: To what extent were these policies applied to or considered acceptable within Kurdish areas? In his memoir, Bulourian recounts those Kurdish villagers who travelled to Mahabad routinely brought along a set of modern trousers, shirts, and hats. Right before entering the city, they took off their traditional clothes and wore the ones that conformed to the standards of Reza Shah's dress policy. The police were known to seize those walking around in traditional clothing and humiliate them publicly.[259] The new dress policy, however, was not a success in Kurdish villages[260] and in some cities people began to protest.

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[256] Ghani Bulourian, *Alehkok: KhatIrate Ghani Boulourian* [green leaf: memorandum of Ghani Boulourian], trans. From Kurdish by Reza Kheyri Mutlaq, (Tehran: Khadimate Farhangiye Resa, 2000), 29.

[257] Abrahamian 1982, 137.

[258] Ghassemlou 1988, 23.

[259] Boulourian 2000, 28.

[260] Ibid., 27.

Suppression of customs, such as the traditional costume, led to angryremonstrations by the people. Mulla Khalil's uprising in 1928 against the dress policy of Reza Shah is one example of this. The Manguri tribe, under the guidance of its religious leader, rose up in rebellion against the Shah's choice of clothing for them. Borzowi claims that during the uprising forces of Mulla Khalil captured members of the military between the Mahabad and Sardasht districts, a region inhabited by the Manguri tribe, and punished them by removing the tops of their military hats.[261] According to Major General Amir Lashker Khza'i, commandant of Azerbaijan armies, the uprising spread through the entire Kurdish region, including West Azerbaijan. In his telegram to the Shah, he explained that 'Sunnite clerics proclaimed jihad [against dress policy] and they decreed that the dress policy was a *kofer* (blasphemy).'[262] Elimination of Mulla Khalil's movement had two significant consequences: 1- Government control over Kurds was intensified to the point of centrally appointing tribal chiefs, as opposed to the traditional selection of chieftains by the tribes themselves, a policy that continuedduring the Qajar period. 2- On the other hand, it emboldened the Kurdish clerics and intellectuals to resistance against Reza Shah's policy.[263] Reza Shah's despotic policies might have been one of the reasons behind the rise of Kurdish national aspirations. The cruelty of Reza Shah's regime stimulated antagonism against central control and, after the decline of his regime in 1941, led to the formation of the Kurdish nationalist political party in Iran, called *Jiyani Kurd* (Kurdish Life). This party, commonly referred to as the JK, will be discussed in more details below. Prior to, however, for a comprehensive overview of the situation, it is essential to first review some of the Kurdish political parties in Iraq, which they directly affected to the establishment of the JK party.

3. Kurdish political parties in Iraqi Kurdistan

Political parties are a quintessential product of modern life, having emerged in the nineteenth century in Europe and in the twentieth century in the rest of the world. They now serve a central role in of all political systems, including communism, liberal democracy, dictatorship, and they transcend all religious perspectives whether polytheism, monotheism, or atheism. Because political parties arose from pre-existing divisions within a given community, they

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[261] Borzowi 1999, 255.

[262] Ibid., 256. For general dress code information in Iran, see Houchang Chehabi, 'Dress Codes for Men in Turkey and Iran', in Atabaki and Zürcher 2004, 209-37.

[263] Borzowi 1999, 259.

were often viewed negatively when they made their debut as a political phenomenon. The contempt for political parties was a widespread phenomenon. Isaac Lipschits mentions several examples where the existences of parties are contrary to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community. James Madison, for example, one of the American founding fathers, had little interest in political parties. The president tolerated themas a necessary evil.[264] Such disdain, however, did not stop thethe emergence and spread of political parties. Today, moreover, the emergence of competing political parties is seen as an important sign of democracy.[265]

Political parties in the modern sense were established for the first time in Iran during the period of the Constitutional Revolution (1905-09), which ended the reign of absolute monarchs in Iranian history. Two major political parties emerged in 1908, the *Inqlabi* (revolutionary) and the *I'tedaly* (moderate).[266] In Kurdistan, prior to the First World War, there were no political parties as such. Instead, the period saw the emergence of groups or organizations connected with cultural associations. It was during the two world wars that Kurdish intellectuals and elites formed political parties within Kurdish communities. The emergence of these new Kurdish political parties was actually a consequence of the collapse of the old empires (such as the Austro-Hungarian, Russian, Ottoman, and Qajar empires) and of the emergence of new nation states (such as Turkey, Iraq, and Syria), which gradually divided up Kurdistan among and witin their newly established borders. Below is a discussion of some of the significant Kurdish political movements and political parties after the First World War.

Since the Second World War the most successful Kurdish nationalist movements and some of the most prominent Kurdish nationalist intellectuals have emerged in Iraqi Kurdistan. This shift was, due to events between the two world wars. In this part of Kurdistan, Kurds were officially recognized after the First World War as an ethnic minority in possession of certain rights, including self-government in matters of language, dress, and education. Kurds even served in certain governmental positions. The following factors may have played a role

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[264] Isaac Lipschits, *Ontstaansgeschiedenis van de Nederlandse Politieke Partijen: De Protestants-Christelijke Stroming tot 1940* [Origin-history of the Netherlands political parties: the Protestants-Christian movement until 1940], (Vol. I, Deventer: Uitgeverij Kluwer B.V., 1977), 11.

[265] For more about political parties as a modern phenomenon, see Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

[266] Behrouz Tayarani, *Asnade Ahzabe Siyasi Iran: 1320-1330*, [Political Parties in Iran, A Collection of Documents: 1941-1951], (Vol. 1, Tehran: Publication of Iran National Archives Organization 1997), 12.

in the exceptional freedom of Iraqi Kurdistan: Woodrow Wilson's 14 points for World Peace was the dominant policy in place after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. It recommended autonomy for the minorities formerly under Ottoman rule. In 1919 British policy cited point no. 14 as a reason to avoid political commitments in Kurdistan and established a couple semi-autonomous Kurdish provinces, such as Suleymaniyeh, where Kurdish intellectuals introduced Kurdish as the administrative and public language.[267] The British policy was also a significance part of the plan for the solving of the overall Kurdish issue in the Sèvres Conference in August 1920.

The official recognition of Kurdish national aspirations was one of the major features of the Treaty of Sèvres. According to Jwaideh 'this Treaty [Sèvres], which provided for the establishment of a Kurdish national state, is regarded as a milestone in Kurdish history.'[268] For the Ottoman Empire, on the other hand, the treaty marked a dramatic defeat. It is signing by the Ottoman delegation, as Atabaki points out, 'effectively eliminated Turkey's sovereignty.'[269] Section III (Articles 62-64) of Part III (Political Clauses) of the Treaty of Sèvres dealt with Kurdistan and Article 63 referred to the Turkish government accepting article 62. Articles 62 and 64 read as follows:

> Article 62: A Commission sitting at Constantinople [...] shall draft within six months from the coming into force of the present Treaty a scheme of local autonomy for the predominantly Kurdish areas lying east of the Euphrates, south of the southern boundary of Armenia […] north of the frontier of Turkey with Syria and Mesopotamia. Article 64: If within one year from the coming into force of the present Treaty the Kurdish peoples within the areas defined in Article 62 shall address themselves to the Council of the League of Nations in such a manner as to show that a majority of the population of these areas desires independence from Turkey, and if the Council then considers that these peoples are capable of such independence and recommends that it should be granted to them, Turkey hereby agrees to execute such a recommendation, and to renounce all rights and title over these areas.[270]

There was no general agreement among Kurds about the borders of Kurdistan because of the disparity between the areas of Kurdish settlement and the political and administrative

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[267] Edmonds 1971, 92.

[268] Jwaideh 1960, 380.

[269] Atabaki and Zürcher 2004, 51.

[270] For the complete Sèvres Treaty, see Hurewitz 1956, 81-7.

boundaries of the region.[271] One of the obstacles facing a Kurdish unity was the Armenian frontier that had, in fact, already been determined by the Article 89 of the Sèvres Treaty. According to this article, the boundaries between Armenia and Turkey in the *Wilayets* of Erzurum, Trebizond, Van and Bitlis were to be subject to the arbitration of the President of the US.[272] The population of some of these Wilayets was mainly Kurdish and without pausing to consult the inhabitants or to determine their ethnic composition, Woodrow Wilson allocated these areas to the Armenian state.[273] The Kurdish nationalists, such as Emin Ali Badir Khan, proposed an alternative map which included Van and an outlet to the sea via Turkey's present Hatay Province.[274] At the time, however, 'the Kurdish nationalists were too weak to effectively press their claims.'[275]

The Kurds disagreed not only about the borders of Kurdistan but also about the kind of autonomy or independence they wanted for themselves. In general, there were four different arguments regarding the self-government for Kurdistan. 1. Autonomy for the Kurds within Ottoman territories, under the flag of the Ottoman Empire with Turkish as the official language, 2. A Kurdish state under the authority of the Iranian government, 3. An independent Kurdistan, and 4. An independent Kurdistan with its own flag and Kurdish as the official language under the authority of the British Empire.[276] However, none of these plans were implemented as the Treaty of Sèvres was replaced by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, which repeated the provisions for the three Arab states but made no mention of an Armenian or a Kurdish state. Since the Lausanne Conference, Kurdish rights have been consistently denied and consequently there have been many insurrections and political movements in Kurdish landsareas.

1- Several uprisings by Sheikh Mahmud in Suleymaniyeh against the British mandate of Iraq had compelled the British authorities in Iraq to concede to with his demands to a certain extent. The unrest caused by Sheikh Mahmud had actually begun in 1919 and continued to well up until 1932, when he settled for the terms offered by the newly formed Iraqi government. Sheikh Mahmud's ultimate aspiration was not limited to cultural rights. He

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[271] Hakan Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State: Evolving Identities, Competing Loyalties, and Shifting Boundaries* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 38.

[272] Hurewitz 1956, 83. My italic.

[273] Chaliand 1980, 43.

[274] Özoğlu 2004, 40.

[275] Van Bruinessen, 'Kurdish Nationalism and Competing Ethnic Loyalties', 1994.

[276] Nerweyi, A. 2002, 145-6.

had actually aimed for an independent Kurdistan.[277] The British refused Sheikh Mahmud's proposal, insisting that the Kurdish region must all fall under direct British administration. Although the British mandate in Iraq had promised autonomy to the Kurds, that promise was never actually fulfilled by the suceeding Iraqi government. The British had to vigorously press the Iraqi government to even recognize Kurds' cultural rights.[278]

2- Between 1920 and 1925, there was a possibility for a Kurdish state in the Wilayet Mosul.[279] The Mosul issue in 1920s was a hot topic in international politics; the area was claimed both by Iraq and Turkey. The political crisis between Turkey and Iraq on the liability of Wilayet Mosul necessitated the establishment of a Commission within the League of Nations to find a compromise between two new countries. In February 1925, the Commission began an investigation into the Wilayet Mosul issue to determine boundaries between the two countries. The commission's study concluded that the majority of the residents were Kurds. Eventually, the Commission assigned Wilayet Mosul in 1925 to Iraq under two conditions: that Iraq would remain about 25 years under the British mandate and that the Iraqi state would recognize the rights of Kurds to self-rule, allowing them to develop their cultural identity through their own institutions.[280] As Edmonds observed:

> In 1925 the League of Nations made it a condition of its Mosul award that 'regard should be had to the desires expressed by the Kurds that officials of Kurdish race should be appointed for the administration of their country, the dispensation of justice, and teaching in the schools, and that Kurdish should be the official language of all these services'.[281]

The influence of oil, however, overrode any other reason or argument. The British were no more inclined to give up the oil in Iraq than the Turks were willing to see the emergence of a Kurdish state in the region. In 1926, the Turkish and the British governments agreed that 10% of the oil proceeds, from the disputed region would be given, he former while the British promised not to interfere with Kurdish and Armenian issues in the future. In return, Turkey

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[277] Charles Tripp, *A history of Irak* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 57.

[278] Ibid., 83.

[279] Edmonds 1971, 93.

[280] Tripp 2000, 87.

[281] Edmonds 1971, 93.

had to forgo anyclaim on Wilayet Mosul.[282] The British delivered its end of these promises at the treaty that they signed with the Iraqi government in 1930, which also marked the establishment of an independent Iraqi state. Unlike the agreement of the League of Nations, however, the Anglo-Iraqi treaty included no section on the rights of minorities.[283] In 1932, under the pressure from the British, the League of Nations recognized the sovereignty of the Iraqi state and in the same year Iraq became a member of the League of Nations. According to Bert Cornillie, the League of Nations insisted that the Iraqi government provide guarantees regarding the recognition of the Kurdish language (Sorani) as the official language in the Kurdish areas, alongside the Arabic language. But by the time Iraq had become a member of the League of Nations in 1932, Cornillie claims an Arabization policy was already a fact in Kurdish schools in Mosul, Kirkuk and Arbil.[284]

Kurdish leaders and intellectuals opposed the treaty and the Arabization policy of the Iraqi government, but there was no national unity within the Kurdish community. A trans-national Kurdish political party in Iraqi Kurdistan was not to be formed until well into the late 1930s, about couple years after the independence of Iraq. There had been virtually no manifestation of political Kurdistan nationalism in Iraq.[285] This changed drastically in the early 1940s, when the new educated group of officers and intellectuals took up the cause of Kurdish ethno-nationalism. According to Vali, this period also marked the beginnings of the modern nationalism in Iranian Kurdistan.[286] This group of officers and intellectuals became the main rivals to the traditional Kurdish leadership, the tribal chieftains and Sheikhs. The nationalist movement the new men built favored the rights of the peasants and sought to liberate them from oppressive landlords.

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[282] Martin van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan* (London, Zed Books, 1992), Persian tra., Ibrahim Yuonesie, *Jâmi`a-shinâsî-yi mardum-i Kurd (âghâ, Sheikh u dowlat). Sâkhtârhâ-yi ijtimâ`î u siyâsî-yi Kurdistân* (Tehran: Nashr-i Pânîz, 1999), 393.

[283] Bert Cornillie & Hans Declercq (red.), *In de Schaduw van Saddam: Het Koerdische Experiment in Irak* [in the shadow of Saddam: the Kurdish experiment in Iraq], (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bulaaq, 2003), 64.

[284] Ibid., 65.

[285] FO 371/24560, 'Russia and the Kurds', 15 February 1940.

[286] Abbas Vali, 'Desthelati Siyasi we Hakmiyet le Komari Kurdistan' [political power and sovereignty in Republic of Kurdistan], *Gzing*, No. 13, autumn 1997, 31. See also his article 'Making of Kurdish Identity in Iran', *Critique* (No. 7, 1995).

In 1939, under the leadership of Rafiq Hilmi, some of the Kurdish officers and patriotic intellectuals in Iraqi Kurdistan established a secret party called *Hiva* (Hope).[287] The Hiva was a modern urban-based political organization, surrounded by figures of the conservative class.[288] The initial branches of this political party were already in existence in bigger Kurdish population centres. They focused mainly on urban areas and away from the traditional mountainous and tribal environments. The most popular slogans of this party were: 'Unity of all four parts of Kurdistan (Greater Kurdistan)' and 'Demand an independent Kurdish state'. Their reformist slogans were shaped around the appeals for an administration by Kurdish representatives, education by Kurdish teachers and scholars, construction of hospitals, schools, and railways in the Kurdish region. The ideological framework of the Hiva movement was structured around advocacy for agrarian reform, the rights of peasants, and opposition to landlords and tribal chieftains.[289]

In retrospect the movement's rhetorical opposition to landlords and tribal chieftains seems hollow, however, considering some of their activities and the composition of their leadership. According to McDowall, Hiva had more than a few members who were landlords, Sheikhs and chieftains, yet there were virtually no peasants.[290] At the time, Sheikhs, tribes and tribal chiefs had more control over the socio-political situation in Kurdistan. So in spite of its apprent political ideology, Hiva then had no choice but to work together with some tribal chiefs. Cooperation with tribal chiefs, according to Edmund Ghareeb, weakened the Hiva movement after 1940, causing its leadership to assume more of a tribal character.[291] The participation of some Hiva members in Mulla Mustafa Barzani's uprising of 1943-45 is considered an example of Hiva's inclination toward a tribal character. They had chosen Barzani as a leader mainly because of Barzani's strong tribal influence and his ability to provide troops. The political polarization of the Hiva party began during the period of Barzani rebellion in 1943-45.

The last significant stage of military conflict between Barzani's troops and the Iraqi government was at the end of the summer of 1945. In this battle, Barzani had enormous

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[287] Ibrahim Ahmed, 'Le Birehweryekanim: Damezrandni Liqi Komalayi JK' [from my memories: establishing JK Society's filial], *Gzing*, No. 13, autumn 1997, 45.

[288] Vali 2003, 85.

[289] Abdullah Mardokhi, 'Komalayi Jiyaneweyi Kurd [the JK] u Komalayi Hiva' [Revival Kurdish Organization and Hiva Organization], *Gzing*, No. 13, autumn 1997, 60.

[290] McDowall 1996, 289-90.

[291] Edmund Ghareeb, *The Kurdish Question in Iraq* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1981), 35.

military success. The defeat of the Iraqi government was not only a humiliation for Iraqi government, a state viewed as an ally and a part of the British sphere of direct influence, but also a great political embarrassment for the British reputation in the region. With help from the British Air Force and some aghas who had sided with the Iraqi government, the Barzani rebellion was eventually defeated. Subsequently, Barzani, with many supporters took refuge in Iranian Kurdistan in October 1945. In recognition that some tribes had joined with Barzani, the British Ministry of Foreign Affairs had stated that the Iraqi 'Ministry of Domestic Affairs' endeavour to separate some tribes [Zebari] from [the Barzani movement] ended with result.'[292] Departure of Barzani into Iran also marked the end of the Hiva movement.

Two other important reasons explain the polarization that led to the collapse of Hiva: members were divided between right- and left-wing ideology and whether or not to support the Barzani insurgence. According to Shemzini, the right-wing within the Hiva movement, under the leadership of Hilmi, clung to looking forward to assistance from Britain. This wing believed that Britain was a great power and that its influence in the region could play a decisive role in the question of Iraqi Kurdistan. They argued that the Soviet Union would not support the Kurds due to their fear of an independent Kurdistan. According to Shemzini, the right-wing, suspecting that it might provoke an angry reaction by the British, did not want anything to do with the Barzani movement. The left-wing, on the other hand, as Shemzini points out, believed that the Soviets offered rescue, both practically and ideologically, from Britain and other overlords. This wing also assisted the Barzani rebellion against the Iraqi government.[293] In 1944 Hiva organised a conference in Kirkuk. In this conference, the right and left wing supporters of the party finally broke ties and the party became officially divided into different new political parties.[294]

Kotchera writes, in the summer of 1945 Hiva actually disintegrated into three political parties: Shurish (Revolution), Azadi (Freedom), and Rizgari Kurd (Kurdish Liberation). The Shurish Party was formed mainly by the Kurdish communist group within the Hiva movement, taking its name from its journal, Shurish. The Rizgari Kurd Party, although short-lived, had greater popular support and preserved the largest number of members, as many as

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[292] FO 371/45341, British Ministry of Foreign Affair, 17 September 1945.

[293] Shemzini 2006, 264-7.

[294] Ibid., 267-8.

6.000.[295] Rizgari Kurd emphasized unity between Kurds and maintained contact with Barzani. As the British Security Defence Office in Bagdhad noted, '[Rizgari Kurd] claims to embrace all Kurdish nationals [and] it has contacts with those Barzans who are now refugees in Persia.'[296] As the Iraqi government could not eliminate Barzani's movement on its own, it sought British support a fact illustrated by in a letter from Rizgari Kurd to the UN:

> When the world war ended in the glorious victory of democracy the Kurdish nation in Iraq renewed its political activity to regain its denied rights. But the Iraqi Government supported by British imperialism is trying to put down every national movement which draws the Kurds nearer to liberation and self-determination.[297]

In another message to a conference of British, US and Soviet foreign affairs representatives, Rizgari Kurd underlined the following points regarding the Kurdish question and peace in the Middle East.

> 1- We support endeavours by our Kurdish brothers and Azeris in Iran to attain autonomy and establish a democratic regime; and their struggle against imperialism and its allies. 2- We would like to draw attention on the Kurdish situation in Turkey, for the Turkish fascist government brutally suppresses Kurds and subjects them to a policy of Turkification. 3- Kurds in Iraq are enduring appalling circumstances. British imperialism and the Iraqi fascist government hold fast all Kurdish rights, as exampled by Barzan's destroyed villages and districts and persecuted the Kurdish patriots.[298]

By the last year of the Second World War, the political activities of Hiva Party had spread from the Kurdish urban centres throughout Iraqi Kurdistan and even into Iranian Kurdistan after the occupation of Iran by the Great Powers. After the party split into various groups, however, there was no mother party that could represent itself as the umbrella entity encompassing all of its offshoots. Such an entity emerged in Iraqi Kurdistan by 1946 with the establishment of the KDP of Iraq.

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[295] Kotchera 2003, 190-1. According to McDowall, Hiva is disintegrated in Rizgari and Shurish parties. McDowall 1996, 294.

[296] FO 371/52369, 'Kurdish problems: Iraqi-Kurdistan relations', July 1946.

[297] FO 371/52369, 'Kurdish problems: Iraqi-Kurdistan relations', 18 January 1946.

[298] Shemzini 2006, 276-7.

In 1946, while in Iranian Kurdistan, Barzani sent one of his representatives, Hamzeh Abdullah, to Iraqi Kurdistan for an eventual establishment of a political party, one that was similar to the political party in Iranian Kurdistan. According to Ibrahim Ahmed, Hamzeh Abdullah said that the Soviet proposal for a Kurdish political party in Iraq could be based on that of the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran and under the leadership of Mulla Mustafa Barzani.[299] Massoud Barzani, however, claims that the formation of the KDP of Iraq was not influenced by the Soviets, stating:

> In light of the successful founding of the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDP) and the lesson of the Barzani Revolt of 1943-1945, the Kurdish struggle clearly required the founding of the KDP of Iraq, named after its Iranian counterpart.[300]

Ahmed, together with Abdullah, organized the First Party Conference in Bagdhad in 1946. The conference proclaimed the establishment of a new Kurdish political party in Iraq, called the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP).[301] Thus the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iraq was officially established on August 16, 1946. Although not present at the congress, the body also elected Mustafa Barzani as the first president of the party.

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[299] Ahmed 'Le Birehweryekanim', *Gzing*, No. 13, autumn 1997, 51-5.

[300] Massoud Barzani, *Mustafa Barzani and the Kurdish Liberation Movement: 1931-1961* (USA: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 107.

[301] Ahmed 'Le Birehweryekanim', *Gzing*, No. 13, autumn 1997, 51-5.

4 Conclusion

The Kurdish nationalists were in the process of establishing an internationally recognized autonomous government in their territories. This began in the second half of the nineteenth century with the concurrent uprisings of Sheikh Ubeydullah and his families and the secular family of Badir Khan of Botan. The power struggle between the abovementioned families continued until just after the First World War. It is questionable, however, whether Badir Khans, Shemdinans and other Kurdish movements could be considered as nationalist movements per se prior to World War I, because during that period, religion and religious figures were more significant in the region than *Kurdayeti* (Kurdistaness). After World War I, however, Kurdish nationalism emerged as an absolute political movement defined by political loyalties with the ultimate aim of establishing a homogeneous nation-state.

The victorious Great Powers of the First World War organized various international conferences after the war, such as those at the Mudros Armistice, San Remo, Sèvres and Lausanne. One of the positive outcomes for ethnic minorities in these conferences, as at the Sèvres conference, was the recognition of self-determination for ethnic minorities, such as Kurds, within the Ottoman Empire. However, at other conferences, like that in Lausanne, some little recognition was obtained for ethnic minorities. Therefore, Kurdish areas in general, rebelled against the newly formed central governments that were based on nation-states. There were four large organized Kurdish rebel uprisings in Turkey as well as two in Iraq and one in Iran. In Turkey and Iraq there were institutions behind the uprising, including political parties such as the Azadi, Khoybun and Hiva. Political activities of these uprisings were largely organized by political parties, but mainly the religious figures and elites were the ones making policy. The formation of political parties was a new phenomenon for the Kurdish community, one which had not occured until the First World War.

The essential foundation of the Kurdish insurrection was the Kurd's desire to safeguard their rights and preserve their identity. To establish Turkey and Iran as modern nation-states, their respective leaders Atatürk and Reza Shah promulgated major modernization reforms. This reform and modernization process in both countries led to a massive pressure on previously unmolested indigenous peoples. Forced migration, settlement

of nomads and semi-nomads and the prohibition of major parts of the ethnic minorities' identities, such as language, clothes, and schools, drastically affected the Kurds.[302]

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[302] Reza Shah's modernization process did not last as long as that of Atatürk, which continued in Turkey but with different norms and values, such as the authorization of Islamic movements under the determinate role of the military.