

ETHNIC GROUPS AND THE STATE:
AZARIS, KURDS AND BALUCH OF IRAN

By

Ramesh Farzanfar

Submitted to the Department of Political Science

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

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ABSTRACT

This study is a historical examination of the relationship between the Iranian state and three trans-border ethnic groups inhabiting Iran, Azaris, Kurds and Baluch. A comparative analysis demonstrates a difference in the way the state has approached these groups. The Iranian state has been accomodating towards the Azaris while "carrot and stick" have been used to deal with other groups. This differential approach, however, is not a result of the transformation of the state through time. Indeed a relative continuity can be observed in the mutual perceptions and expectations. Such continuity is only explicable by observing the Iranian state and these groups in the historical context in which group encounters originated. As each group has had a different historical experience vis-a-vis the state, its relationship with the state has been different by virtue of that particular experience. Historical precedents, therefore, have had impacts on the nature of the relationships that have followed. At the same time as these groups share ethnic kin on the other side of the borders with the neighbouring countries, the problem of their incorporation for the Iranian state has been linked, partly, to the ties of these communities to their ethnic kin in the neighbouring state and to its own relationships with those states.

A comparison of the relationships between the Iranian state and these groups within traditional and modern socio-political structures also demonstrates that

modernization cannot be directly linked to ethnic conflict. It is the state that through implementation of various policies has been responsible for creation or resolution of conflict. The state, through utilization of myriad of policies ranging from coercion to co-optation of the political elite at the local level [Baluch and Kurds] and power sharing at the national level [Azaris] has been able, at times, to put a cap on ethnic aspirations. The Iranian state, however, due to its unwillingness to install democratic political institutions has not succeeded to create national cohesion. This explains the fact that the state, at different historical junctures, has resorted to force to bring the centrifugal elements within its sphere of influence.

This study will also argue that although cultural and economic grievances are tangible and real, political factors are the most salient in the creation or resolution of conflict.

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INTRODUCTION

Since time immemorial a mosaic of numerous groups of distinct racial, linguistic, religious and cultural backgrounds have inhabited the territory called Iran. At present, although there are no reliable census data, it is widely believed that the Persian community who is politically and socio-economically dominant in Iran, represents about half of the total population which is estimated to be around 58 million.¹ We call Persian those segments of the Iranian population who speak Persian as their mother tongue and mostly inhabit the central plateau. The Persians are dominant in the bureaucratic, military and religious institutions and possess a high percentage of the national wealth.

The non-Persian population mainly inhabits the peripheral regions of the Iranian territory and speaks a variety of different languages. The most important of these groups are: the Azarbaijanis, the Kurds, the Baluch, the Turkomans, the Arabs, and the Bakhtiari, Lur, Qashqai, Shahsevan and other smaller tribal groups. Linguistic differences, however, are not the only markers of differentiation among these groups. Such communities as the Kurds, the Baluch and the Turkomans are Sunni Muslims

and thus sectarian differences together with the linguistic ones separate them from the Persians.

Among the above-mentioned groups, the most important, from a political perspective, are Azarbaijanis [15-20% of the total population], the Kurds [5-7%], and the Baluch [2%].² These three ethnic groups are regionally concentrated and thus have a claim to a territorial "homeland." They also share kin on the other side of the borders with the neighbouring countries. The Azarbaijanis are divided between Iran and the newly independent state of the Republic of Azarbaijan -a republic of the former Soviet Union-, the Kurds are divided mostly between the three states of Iran, Iraq and Turkey with small enclaves in Syria and several republics of the former Soviet Union, and the Baluch are divided mainly between Iran and Pakistan with a smaller number in Afghanistan. The trans-border nature of these groups, indeed, presents the Iranian state with potential problems of international dimensions. In point of fact, for the Iranian state the problem of incorporating these groups has been linked, partly, to the ties of these communities to their ethnic kin in the neighbouring states and to its own relationships with those states.

This study is an attempt to examine the relationship

between the Iranian state and the above-mentioned three groups, i.e., Azaris, Kurds and Baluch, within the political structure of the last two monarchical dynasties and the present Islamic regime. The Qajar dynasty [1789-1925] represents the traditional political structure while that of the Pahlavi [1925-1979] a modernizing/modern one. Also, the Islamic Republic and its relationship with these groups will be examined to understand whether the revolutionary upheaval and the drastic change of the state ideology has in any way altered the state's posture vis-a-vis these groups.

Of particular importance to this study has been the difference in the relationship between the state and these groups, i.e., the relationship has not been similar or equal. The findings of this study suggest that such a difference is not the result of the transformation of the state through time. Indeed, it is believed that there has been a relative continuity in the relationship between each group and the Iranian state. This continuity can only be explained by placing these groups and the Iranian state in the historical context in which these relationships originated. As each group has had a different historical experience, its relations with the state has been different from other groups by virtue of

that particular experience. Within such context it can be observed that historical precedents, to a large extent, set the stage for the kind of relations that follow. Indeed the history of group encounters, by and large, has determined the nature of mutual perceptions and expectations that have emerged. Another finding of this study is that although modernization, greatly, contributes to the emergence of political consciousness among these groups, it is not, by itself, responsible for group conflict. It is, indeed, the state that through implementation of various policies is able to control the process of conflict-generation or conflict-resolution. It will also be argued, throughout this study, that the modern Iranian state has not had a great success in creating national consensus and cohesion in Iran. This observation is based on the fact that the state has had to resort to coercive measures in order to keep such groups as the Kurds in line since the slightest indication of the weakness of the central authority reactivates centrifugal tendencies. At the same time the links between these groups and their co-ethnics in the neighbouring countries have been important factors in the process of identity formation particularly among the Azaris and the Kurds but less so in the case of the Baluch. The main reason for

such discrepancy seems to be the rate of development and the degree of the political consciousness of the ethnic kin in the neighbouring country. Furthermore, it will be explained that such cultural attributes as language and religion are not intrinsically important in the creation of either ethnic consciousness or ethnic conflict. What makes these cultural markers important is the context in which they are placed and considered. It will also be emphasized that political reasons are, indeed, more salient in the generation or resolution of conflict. Although economic or cultural factors may be recognized as tangible reasons for articulating communal grievances, the results of this analysis demonstrate that it is the political realm that determines the instability or stability of group relations .

This study will begin by examining the relations between the traditional state and the Azaris, Kurds and Baluch. The traditional Iranian state was characterized by a segmented political organization in which the dynastic ruler had absolute power and ruled without interference. This rule over the periphery, however, was often intermittent and sporadic; limited to extraction of some resources in tribute and military levies. Most ethnic groups inhabiting Iranian territory before the 20th

century were thus autonomous and insulated units. The rulers' "divide and rule" policies as well as their frequent alliances with the local leaders enabled them to govern the heterogeneous and diverse population who inhabited their realm.

This was basically the way the traditional Qajar Shahs approached the Kurds and the Baluch. Both groups were tribal with a considerable nomadic population who would not be easily subdued and both as peripheral groups were in the "intermittent zones of influence" of the Qajar rulers. The relationship of the Qajars with the Kurds and the Baluch was, basically, one of conquest. However, the Qajars had to utilize non-violent means to deal with these groups. These ranged from marriage alliances to divide and rule and appeasement of the local leaders. By and large, these policies can be summed up as "carrot and stick."

The Azaris, on the other hand, present us with a different situation. They were not only Turkish-speaking and could thus identify with the Turkish-speaking Qajar rulers, their province, Azarbaijan, was the most prosperous and strategically important region in Iran. Azarbaijan, in contrast to the Kurdish and Baluch areas, was not intermittently ruled, it was a natural extension

of the Shah's realm with Tabriz, its capital, as the city where the Qajar Crown Prince was always stationed. At the same time, the Azaris mostly a settled population, demonstrated the same socio-economic characteristics as the Persians. Azarbaijan, thus, as an integral part of the Shah's realm not only did not have to be conquered or subdued, it was an organic continuation of the center or part of the "core."

In the 20th century, when the "nation-state" became the most viable and globally relevant form of political organization, Reza Shah Pahlavi [1925-1941], the founder of the Pahlavi dynasty, created a modern state in Iran. The advent of the modern state entailed the emergence of a nation. The concept of "nation-state" was derived from the political restructuring of the world system during 19th and 20th centuries. The nation-states of today as members of the United Nations are all creations of this system and most of them did not even exist either as names or as administrative units more than a century or two ago. Iran, however, was one of those few that not only could trace a name but a continuous political entity and a rich culture, in roughly the same geographical location. However, although the idea of the "state," as a political entity, was not novel in Iran, the "nation-state" in its

modern and Western sense was a new phenomenon that appeared with the emergence of the present world-system. It was indeed the modern territorial state that attempted to forge an integrated "Iranian nation" out of the heterogeneous population that inhabited the territory.

The modern political entity emerging in Iran, in order to create the corresponding "nation" had to deal with problems of cohesion. These problems ranged from internal disintegration to external aggression. To precipitate the emergence of the "nation" the state had to develop and promote a "national" sentiment that would help the state legitimize its claims and increase the efficacy of the state administrative policies due to the emerging uniformities. An ideological framework, thus, had to be created on the basis of which political integration could be pursued since after 1914 and the onset of the WWI, Iran was on the brink of disintegration, motivated, in part, by actions and interventions of the foreign powers. The nation-building attempts of the state, therefore, entailed the promotion of an "official nationalism" as the ideological foundation of the Pahlavis' modern state. A sense of national identity was promoted by glorifying Persian language, history and culture. It can be argued that initially the main impetus for these policies was the

desire to preserve the territorial integrity of Iran and not much thought was given to the emerging Persian hegemony over a number of ethno-linguistically diverse groups. The consequences, however, entailed the emergence of such hegemony. The Persians dominated the central authority while showing little interest in the cooptation and incorporation of the local political leaders. Military force was used to subdue centrifugal elements such as the Kurds and the Baluch while political participation was denied to the population as a whole. Indeed, the modern state in its zeal to forge a corresponding nation had begun to use force freely. The consequence was the emergence of an oppressive political system in which the group or groups in control eliminated all possible political rivals in order to maintain power. This, of course, does not mean that the traditional political structure was not oppressive or despotic. Indeed it was. However, there was an important difference. The traditional political structure lacked the ability and the resources for the range of control which the modern state exercised. The result was that although the modern state was able to consolidate smaller and diverse communities into the territorially larger unit of modern government, it did not succeed in replacing

local loyalties with allegiance and support of the larger unit. Moreover, it seems that the modernizing and centralizing policies of the state helped stimulate the growth of ethnic identities, thereby replacing the inactive and static "ethnic categories" with active and dynamic "ethnic communities." At the same time, unlike the traditional political structure in which the cultural or ethnic characters or attributes of different groups were not significant, in the modern political structure, as a result of particular policies adopted by the state, these attributes became increasingly important for the maintenance of group boundaries.

Initially the demise of the Qajar dynasty and the advent of the modern state meant displacement and alienation for the Azaris. Such displacement which had begun with the occupation of Azarbaijan by the Russians in 1909, was reinforced through the policies implemented by the modern state. Thus, for the first time since 1800 the Azaris had lost their particular form of identification with the "dynastic realm" while they could not readily define themselves in the new scheme of things. This crisis in the case of the Azaris did not last long. Although Azaris did demonstrate their discontent through an uprising mostly supported and sponsored by the Soviet

Union, they soon found their niche in the new socio-political structures of Iran. During the rule of the second Pahlavi Shah, the Azari political elite were incorporated into the national/state elite while the Azari rank and file faced no discrimination and were easily integrated into the civil and military bureaucracies as well as the economic institutions of the country.

Other groups such as the Kurds and the Baluch were not so fortunate. Their initial resistance to the intrusive policies of the modern state was demonstrated in different forms of tribal unruliness and banditry that resulted in their military suppression by the state. But through time as the process of change generated political consciousness among the newly emerging strata, a combination of intimidation and appeasement, cooptation and suppression, i.e., "carrot and stick," were the basic means through which the state dealt with these groups with almost no power sharing at the national/state level. The modern state had indeed followed in the footsteps of its traditional predecessor.

The Pahlavi state, however, was toppled before it had time to confront the social forces that itself had helped create among these communities. It was the Islamic Republican regime that began where the Pahlavis had left

off. Despite the universalist, Islamic pronouncements of the regime, the Islamic state demonstrated intense nationalistic sentiments and mostly followed the policies of the ancien regime in respect to the various ethno-linguistic groups. Again Azaris were accommodated -even more so than before- with their elite sharing power at the national/state level and no discrimination for the rank and file, while "carrot and stick" -with more emphasis on the stick- was used to subdue the Kurds, the Baluch or any other group who had communal demands.

The Azarbaijanis, the Kurds and the Baluch provide three interesting cases for comparative analysis. While Iranian Azaris are Shii Muslims as are the Persians, the Kurds and the Baluch are both Sunni Muslims. On the other hand, the Azaris as Turkish speakers and thus as "Turks" are said to belong to an ethnic stock different from the Persians while the Kurds and the Baluch, by virtue of the languages they speak, i.e., Kurdish and Baluchi [both Indo-Iranian languages and thus akin to Persian] as well as other ethnographic and historical data, are considered to be of Indo-European stock similar to the Persians.³ Given the fact that the data presented by ethnologists and anthropologists regarding the ethnic origins of these groups are valid, it seems that ethnicity as common

origins and descent plays no role in binding together such groups as the Persians, the Kurds and the Baluch and genetic approach in explaining group relationship is thus irrelevant. This argument can best be substantiated by the closeness and comraderie of the Persians and the Azaris although the two groups are linguistically and supposedly ethnically distinct.

To have a better understanding of the evolution of the three groups' identities, this study has benefited from a model of evolution of ethnic identity presented by Paul Brass. Brass places ethnic groups on a "continuum of growth and decline" of ethnic identity.⁴ There are three critical points on this continuum, according to Brass who designates them as "ethnic categories," "ethnic communities," and "nationalities" or "nations." Ethnic categories are those groups who do not attach any political significance to their ethnic markers that differentiate them from other groups. An ethnic category is thus a socio-politically inactive and dormant group. Ethnic communities, on the other hand, are not only conscious of their objective differences but pursue socio-economic and political goals based on such differences. An ethnic community is, thus, a mobilized ethnic group whose ethnic characteristics have become a focus of

political behavior. Demands for equal individual rights is one aspect of this behavior. The movement from ethnic community to nationality, according to Brass, takes place when the group begins to aspire "corporate recognition" for the group as a whole, such as self-rule within or without an existing state.⁵

Brass's model makes the complex process of identity formation easier to pinpoint and thus understand. Indeed when Azaris, Kurds and Baluch are placed in the context of this model one can recognize the junctures in which each group has moved ahead and evolved from one point to the next or more interestingly when one group has moved back or declined from one point to another. Although it is almost impossible to see a group decline from the point of an "ethnic community" to the point of an "ethnic category," it is easier to see how a group can change its demands for "corporate recognition" to "equal individual rights" which is basically a decline from Brass's "nationality" to "ethnic community." This, indeed, has been the case with the Iranian Azarbaijanis who have altered their demands in different historical junctures depending on how they were perceived and treated by the state. Based on Brass's model, at this juncture the Azaris may be considered an "ethnic community" while the

Kurds who have struggled for autonomy or independence since the advent of the Islamic Republic fit into the category of a "nationality." It is, indeed, difficult to pin point the evolution of the Baluch on this continuum since the abject poverty and backwardness of Baluchistan have effectively prevented the growth of political consciousness based on ethnic identity among the masses of peasantry and nomadic population. However, things are changing and as will be explained the Baluch communal leaders and the small middle and lower middle classes have articulated demands both for "equal individual rights" and "corporate recognition" depending on the circumstances. However, it may be more plausible to consider the Baluch also a "nationality" not only on the basis of the demands voiced by their communal leaders but by virtue of the psychological barriers that exist between them and the Persians that will not allow for an easy assimilation into the Persian society.

The recent changes in the international political arena the most important of which is the demise of the Soviet Union will require an analysis of the patterns of relationships that may develop in future due to these changes. One of the most significant aspects of such change has been the emergence of an independent Azari

state in the former Azarbaijan SSR. Also the Gulf War of 1991 drastically weakened the Iraqi central government which in turn resulted in the revival of the Kurdish struggle in Iraq and a de facto autonomy in Iraqi Kurdish areas. At the same time the disintegration of the Soviet Union has removed the potential Soviet threat to the Baluch-inhabited areas both in Iran and Pakistan. Many Baluch nationalists who were hopeful that the Soviets will extend helping hands now have to come to terms with the new realities of global politics. This study will also provide a forward look analyzing the consequences of the recent transformations.

The study will begin by an introductory chapter that will examine the cultural and territorial characteristics of each group and its homeland. The geographical and topographical conditions of the homelands and the methods of adaptations as well as the socio-political and economic structures and the particular language and religion of each groups will be described.

The traditional state and the relationship between the center and the periphery will be studied in the chapter devoted to the pre-modern state in Iran. In order to contrast the role of the traditional state with that of the modern state, each group will be considered in the

context of its particular relationship with the state. This chapter will describe the historical background on the basis of which future relations are formed.

The Constitutional Revolution of Iran [1905-1911] was the first of its kind among the Muslim countries of the Middle East -with the exception of Turkey. Indeed, the Constitutional Revolution was a turning point in the political development of modern Iran. Each group and its relations with the state within the context of this important political event will be studied. As a natural extension of the Iranian socio-political forces the Azaris behaved similar to the Persians, i.e., the community was divided among those who advocated change [revolutionaries] and others who remained loyal to the Qajars [royalists]. However, the chaotic conditions of the country and the weakness of the center as well as the subsequent occupation of Azarbaijan by Russia severely affected the ties between Azaris and the Iranian state the legacy of which can be observed in the following periods. This chapter will pay particular attention to the linkages and ties between the Azaris and their co-ethnic in Russia. These ties, to a large extent, determined the future evolution of an Azari identity as well as the emergence of leftist tendencies in Iranian Azarbaijan. The inactivity

of the Kurds and the Baluch, in this period, will be considered as both a reflection of their internal socio-political structures and lack of meaningful ties with their co-ethnics.

The centrifugal forces in Iran have usually responded to the weakening of the central control by uprisings and struggle for autonomy or independence. The periods of WWI and WWII are the prime examples. Before WWII, however, the advent of the modern state and emergence of Reza Shah Pahlavi was another watershed event. This period will be analyzed with specific attention paid to each group and its response to the changing political environment. Of special importance are the emergence of nationalist/secessionist uprisings by the Azari and Kurdish modern segments of the urban population. In this section the role and intentions of foreign powers -mainly the Soviet Union- and the significance of foreign intervention as well as the penetrative power and homogenizing practices of the modern state in fostering nationalist/secessionist movements will be examined.

The periods of Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi and the Islamic Republic, one as the culmination of modernization and Westernization of Iran and the other as an alternative to Westernization will be studied with each group

considered specifically and separately. The modernization policies of the Pahlavis created drastic change in the lives of many Iranians. As the rate of urbanization, literacy, per capita income, industrialization, etc., increased in the ethnic homelands, various modern strata with a different kind of political consciousness emerged. This consciousness, however, did not signal the appearance of communal conflict. Although there were grievances due to the uneven distribution of resources and cultural policies, the state was able to put a cap on the communal demands and thus play an important role in the management of conflict. The chapter on the Islamic Republic will examine the continuity of the Islamic state's policies despite the dramatic change in the socio-political structures and the state ideology. The last chapter will present the findings of this study.

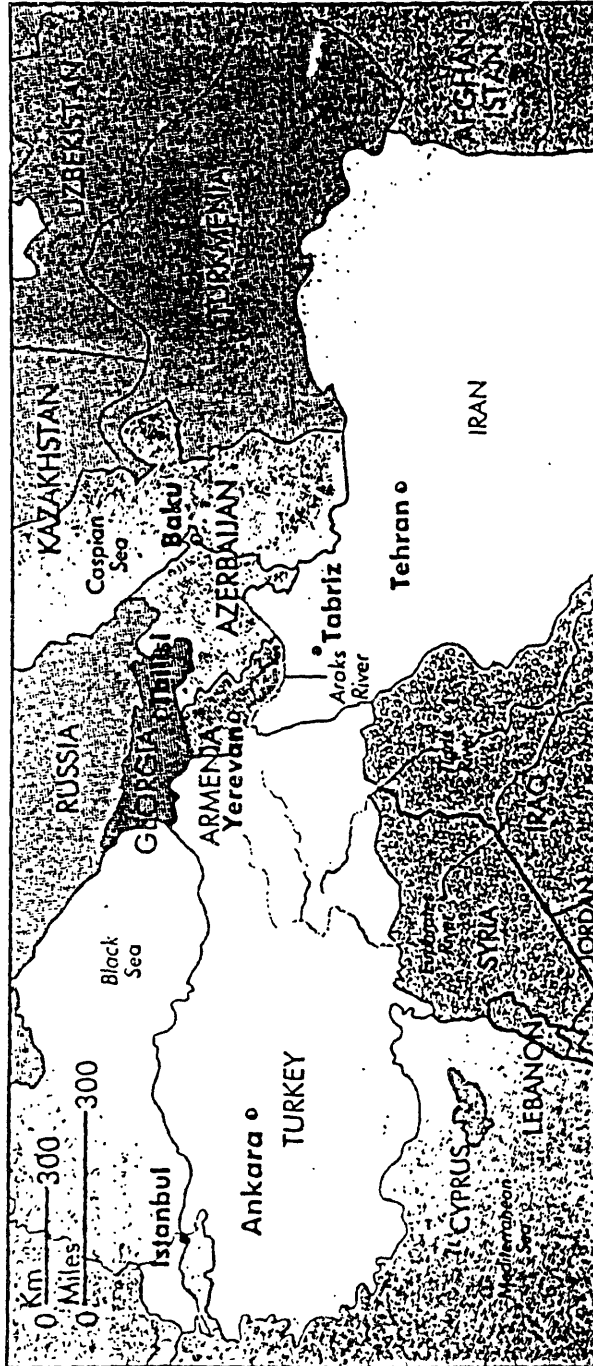
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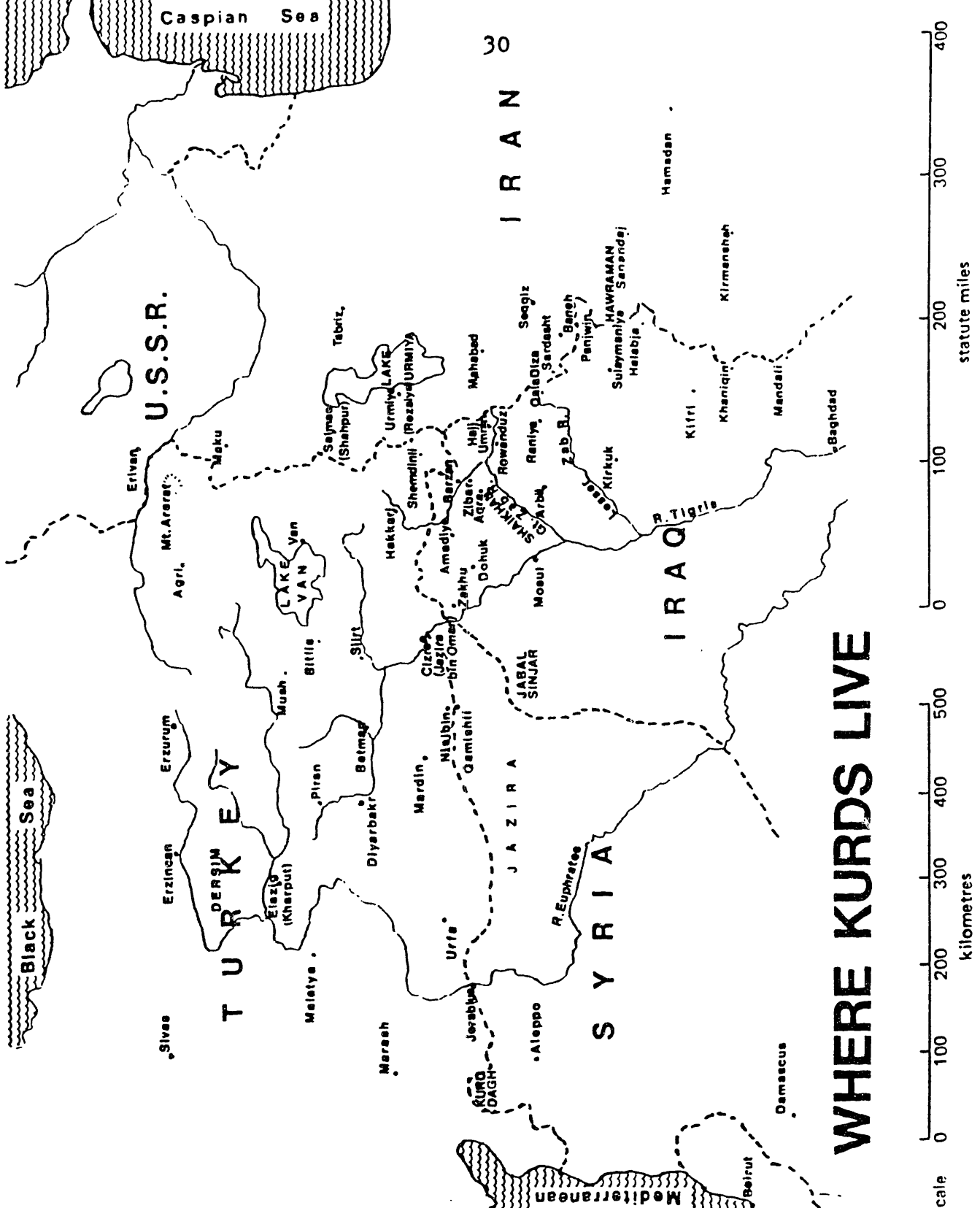
- 1- Iran Times XXII. No. 1. Friday, March 20, 1992.
- 2- Since data on the ethno-linguistically diverse population of Iran is lacking, most estimates are based on conjectures and educated guesses. For different sources please see the endnotes of the next chapter.
- 3- For sources see endnotes of the following chapters.
- 4- Brass, Paul. 1976. "Ethnicity and Nationality Formation." Ethnicity 3. P. 226.
- 5- Ibid.

CHAPTER ONE

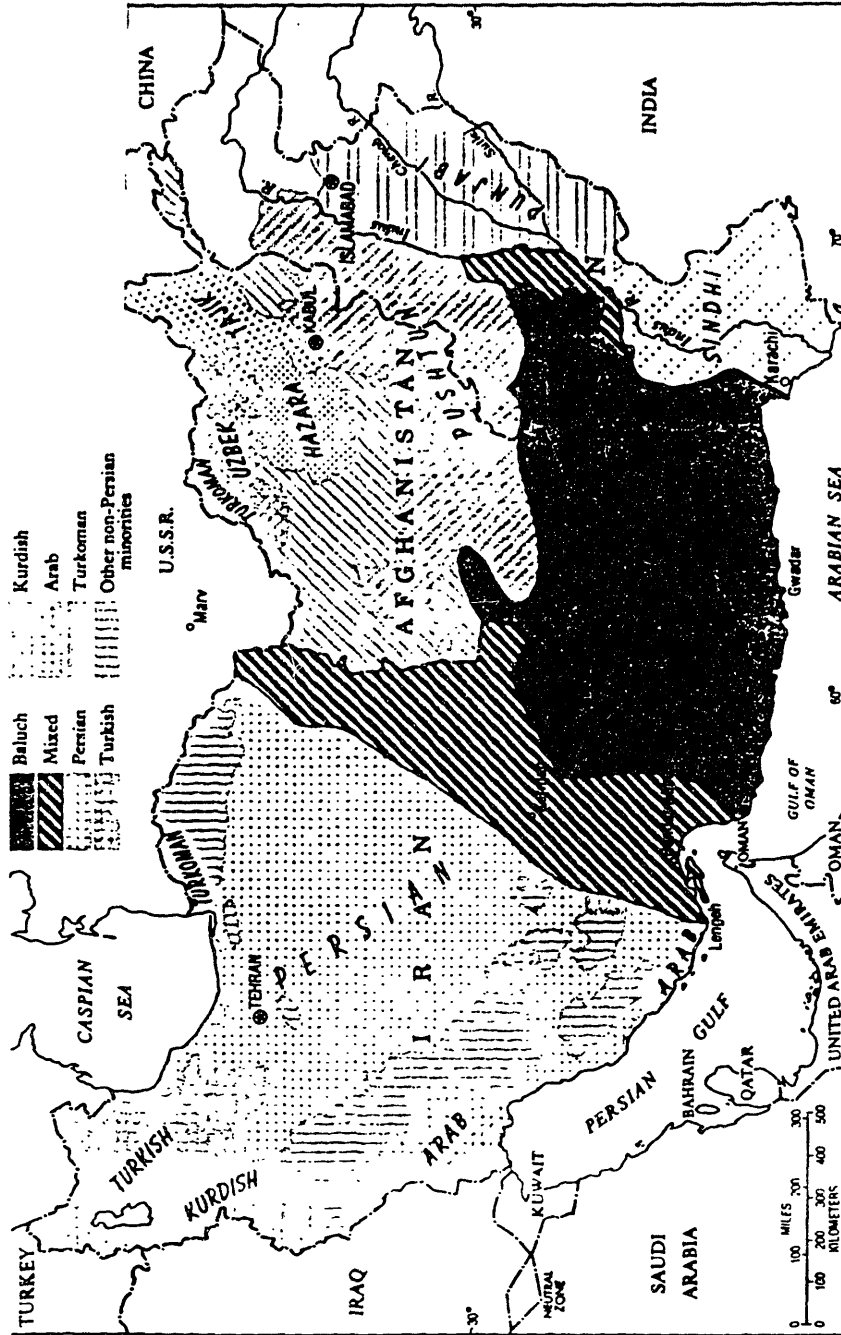
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TERRITORIAL AND CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS:
AZARIS, KURDS, BALUCH

Azaris: General Observations:

The ethnic marker that differentiates Azaris from other Iranians or more specifically from the Persians is their language, Turki, as it is called by all Iranians and the Azaris themselves. Azaris who are quite conscious of this differentiating factor have played a significant role in the political destiny of Iran. The seemingly curious phenomenon that has emerged is that while the Azaris possess a high level of ethnic/national consciousness they have not ceased to be "Iranian." Indeed, the Azaris of Iran have demonstrated that they simultaneously possess and claim an "Iranian" and an "Azari" identity without one being contradictory to the other.

It is important to note that ethnic boundaries, although extremely important, are fluid and flexible. Ethnic boundaries may thus be subjectively drawn or may be manipulated to serve given ends at a particular place and time.¹ A group may thus use their identity at different times to identify or contrast themselves with another group.²

The extent of boundary change in the case of the Iranian Azaris is, indeed, remarkable. The Iranian

Azaris, at certain historical junctures in the 20th century, have championed the cause of the "Iranian nationalism" while at other times, depending on the circumstances, they have acted as Azaris and become involved in what may be identified as "politics of Azari nationalism."

Numerically less than one half of the Persians, the Azaris occupy a privileged position among various ethnic groups of Iran. Their relations with the Persians, however, have been at times precarious; usually based upon a delicate balance of mutual cooperation and tension. Iranian Azaris, however, have proven that if accommodated and treated as partners they are more than willing to be regarded as members of an "Iranian nation."

There are a few factors which may be enumerated to explain the Azaris' identification with and loyalty to the Iranian state. Among these the most important are:

- 1-The overwhelming majority of the Azaris are Shia Muslims. In a Muslim society where religion is and has been one of the most important sources of group identification and ethnic-linguistic and/or national loyalties are relatively recent phenomena, this factor seems to be of the utmost significance.

- 2-Before the Pahlavi era (1925-1979) Iran was mainly

ruled by dynasties of Turkic origin. Azaris of Iran, thus, do not have a collective memory of humiliation, and degradation; a characteristic that is usually exclusive of oppressed peoples.

3-In respect to social stratification and social structure, Azarbaijan seems to be an extension of the Persian inhabited areas of Iran. The region and its inhabitants have been tightly connected and integrated with the central authority in the country since the Safavid period (16th century). This fact has, undoubtedly, eased Azari identification with the Iranian state.

4-The last and by all means the most important factor has been the willingness of the Persian majority to share power with the Azaris. Both during the Pahlavi era and at present the political elite of Azarbaijan have been readily integrated into the national political elite of Iran. Indeed, some very powerful and politically important individuals have come from Azarbaijan. And it is interesting to note that the Persian rank and file have never questioned or doubted such power distribution. Thus, it seems that as long as the Azari political elites have closed ranks with their Persian counterparts, the average Azaris have considered themselves as part and

parcel of one community; that of a Shii Iran.

Geography

The term Azarbaijan refers to two political units in today's political discourse. The newly independent state of Azarbaijan, the capital of which is Baku and was formerly a constituent republic of the Soviet Union. And the Iranian Azarbaijan, the capital of which is Tabriz, as one of the provinces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Iranian Azarbaijan shares frontiers with the Republic of Azarbaijan and Turkey in the north and west respectively. To the east it is bound by the the same republic and Caspian Sea and to the south by the Province of Kurdistan in Iran. The boundaries of Azarbaijan, it is believed, have not changed much since the time of the early Arab geographers.³

Azabaijan is covered by mountain ranges with high peaks and considerable plains and high plateaux.⁴ While in comparison to other Iranian provinces it is considered a well-watered province, the regions's basic characteristic is said to be its aridity.⁵ Precipitation, varies in different parts of the province. Western Azarbaijan, for example, enjoys a relatively sufficient

rainfall even during the three summer months.⁶

The climate thus represents the basic features of Azarbaijan's landscape. Summers are mild in places that are subjected to the "moderating influence" of the Caspian Sea⁷; while in winters the difference between the areas in the interior of Azarbaijan and those near the Caspian shore is less pronounced. Sub-zero temperature in winter is thus common in most of the region.⁸

According to the administrative division of the country, Azarbaijan is divided into two provinces of East and West Azarbaijan. The province of East Azarbaijan which is the larger part of the two is populated overwhelmingly by the Azari Turks. The province of West Azarbaijan, however, contains other elements such as the Kurds, Assyrians and Armenians. The Kurds are particularly numerous in the cities of Mahabad and Urumiyah, the capital of West Azarbaijan.

Azarbaijan probably ranks highest among the Iranian provinces for wheat and many other agricultural productions. There are also extensive garden and orchard cultivations.⁹ As a result of favorable and fertile agricultural conditions, Azarbaijan, particularly the eastern part, has been inhabited mostly by a settled population. It should be noted, however, that both in

East and West Azarbaijan various nomadic peoples such as the Shabsavans¹⁰ and some Kurdish tribes lived a migratory life. Pastoralism has been dominant in the mountains where natural conditions support a nomadic way of life.

Azarbaijan historically has enjoyed a flourishing urban life. Such cities as Tabriz and Ardabil were important caravan stops.¹¹ Tabriz was once one of the most prosperous and important cities of Iran and at times the capital of the ruling dynasty. It not only enjoyed strategic and military significance, it has been an important commercial and communication center particularly with the countries to the north and west of Iran. The greater growth of Tabriz and its population was achieved between 1800-1890 when caravans going toward Trebizond used the city as an important stop. The construction of the trans-Iranian Railways in the 1920s made the Persian Gulf a commercially viable route and from then on the prosperity of Tabriz and its population was on the decline.¹²

Ethnic and Historical Origins

The territory of present Azarbaijan has been inhabited since ancient times. The Medes who founded the Median state in the early 8th century B.C. ruled Azarbaijan. It is said that even a century after the rule of the Medes, Azarbaijan did not have a unified language and the language of the Medes was a tribal language among many others. Yet, Azarbaijan was the cultural and economic center of the Medes.¹³

The Persians who established the Achaemenid Empire ruled Azarbaijan after the Medes until they were toppled by Alexander in the early fourth century B.C. From here, there are different accounts regarding the ancient history of Azarbaijan. Apparently, at this time in Azarbaijan, one "Atropates" or "Atropaten" or "Atropate" came to power and the term Azarbaijan is derived from his name.¹⁴ There are, however, some disagreements about the "ethnic origins" of "Atropate." Ahmad Kasravi, a prominent Iranian historian, himself an Azarbaijani yet an "Iranian nationalist," contends that "Atropate" was a native Iranian who rose up against Alexander and while keeping Azarbaijan free from the Greek encroachment, ruled

independently and his descendants actually governed Azarbaijan for 300 years without interference.¹⁵

Many others also agree that "Atropate" was an Iranian who actually compromised with Alexander and was appointed by that ruler as the governor or "satrap" of Azarbaijan.¹⁶ And, of course, those who write that Atropate was, in fact, a Greek who became a vassal of Alexander in this region and the term "Azarbaijan" is derived from "Atropates" via Arabic and Turkish.¹⁷ Scholars such as Kasravi vehemently disagree with this point of view. Kasravi argues that the name "Atropate" had been a common name among Iranians and there are innumerable individuals named "Atropate" in Iranian history;¹⁸ thus trying to prove that "Atropate" is an ancient "Iranian" name.

There is, of course, a logical reason for such debate. By arguing that Azarbaijan from time immemorial was inhabited by "Iranian" peoples, most Persian/Iranian writers and historians have made an attempt to prove that this region and its inhabitants have always been an inseparable part of Iran. This line of argument was stressed by Iranian scholars in order to invalidate the Soviet claims as to the uniqueness and distinct national identity of the people of Azarbaijan.

Until the Arab invasion of Iran in the mid-seventh

century, Azarbaijan was ruled by dynasties of Iranian origins. The Arabs are said to have moved to Azarbaijan in great numbers; the reasons being first the periodic insurgency of the inhabitants and second the productivity of the land and its attraction for the nomadic peoples.¹⁹ Arab historians and geographers have stressed the linguistic and racial heterogeneity of Azarbaijan.²⁰ However, Azarbaijan seems to have been predominantly Iranian at this period; the population speaking a "dialectical form of Persian" (called by Mas'udi, al-adariya [Azari]) "as well as standard Persian."²¹ The Arabs seem to have been gradually incorporated into the indigenous population.²² Arabic, thus, became one of the languages used by the population of Azarbaijan particularly urban dwellers.²³

The subsequent population movement to Azarbaijan, however, tended to change the character of the indigenous population much more drastically than before. This important movement was carried out by Turkic tribes from the north. The first group of these peoples consisted of Oghuz Turks who appeared in the eastern regions of Azarbaijan as early as the 7th century. The main movement, however, happened in the 10th and 11th centuries with the Seljuq-Oghuz invasions. These invasions had long

lasting effects; gradually changing the ethnic and linguistic character of the population. The Seljuq's influence, however, was not one sided. It is said that:

...The Saljukate had begun to use Persian as the language of the court; the Turkic language was used among the commoners.²⁴

Another important Turkic onslaught was by the Mongols who entered the region in the early 13th century and laid claim to Azarbaijan. An Iranian writer contends that Qazan Khan Mongol had proclaimed in Tabriz that any one who spoke Persian and/or Azari would lose his/her tongue. This way, it is said, hundreds of people had their tongues cut off because they were not speaking Turkish and therefore "the rough vernacular of foreign peoples was forced on the Iranian people of Azarbaijan."²⁵ This, of course, does not mean that Azarbaijan did not prosper under these rulers. Tabriz, in particular, became one of the greatest centers of commerce and economic activity.²⁶

Azarbaijan continued to prosper and be Turkified also under Timur (another Turkic ruler) who conquered southern Azarbaijan in 1386, while in the north power passed into the hands of Shirvanshah of Derbent. After Timur's death in 1405, the Shirvanshah briefly managed to unite the two halves, but they were soon divided again, the north remaining under the Shirvanshahs and the south falling to

Oghuz-Turkoman tribes, first the Kra-kuyunlu and then the Ak-kuyunlu.²⁷ In 1502 Shah Ismail founded the Safavid dynasty, took Tabriz, and established Azarbaijan as the nucleus of his empire. Although himself of a Turkic-speaking clan, Shah Ismail by declaring Shiism as the state religion of Iran, laid the foundations of Iran as a nation-state.

Religion and Language:

As was mentioned earlier Iranian Azaris are Shii Muslims and they speak a language called Azari Turkish. There is, however, much debate about Azari Turkish and its origins.

Using the above-mentioned historical accounts, some Iranian historians have argued that the inhabitants of Azarbaijan were of Iranian stock who in pre-Islamic and even Islamic periods spoke a language called "Azari" or "Azari Pahlavi,"²⁸ and that there exist some evidences that the people of Azarbaijan even during the Safavids still spoke this language which was one of the Iranian dialects.²⁹ Yet, the Safavid courtiers and aristocracy preferred Turkish language due to the fact that most of their tribal supporters were Turkish speaking. Indeed,

Turkish was the language of the court and even poetry in Turkish was encouraged by the Safavids. This as well as the subsequent rule of the Qajars, themselves of Turkic stock, helped to strengthen and spread Turkish more and more in Azarbaijan. Indeed, various dialects of "Azari Pahlavi" that were being spoken in different towns and villages withered away by being absorbed into the dominant language. And thus emerged a language which is a combination of Turkish, Ghuzi, and dialects of Azari Pahlavi and is spoken today in Azarbaijan as "Azari Turkish."³⁰

Mashkour, an Iranian historian, points out that although the grammatical principles of Ottoman Turkish and Azarbaijani language are similar there are great differences in pronunciation. He maintains that Azarbaijani Turkish is a middle road between literary Ottoman Turkish and Turkoman dialect. Also, he argues that Azari Turkish is grammatically much simpler than Ottoman Turkish while there are a great many Persian words in Azari Turkish and more Arabic words in Ottoman Turkish.³¹ Mashkour, then, enumerates several characteristics of the Azari Turkish to prove its original distinction from other Turkic languages and its affinity with Persian:

- "Azari Turkish is a mixture of Azari, Persian, Arabic and Turkish.

- Turkish words comprise only 20-30% of the Azari Turkish.

- There is no limit in the usage of Persian and Arabic words and combinations common in Persian language depending on the level of literacy and culture of the speaker. These words are mostly used by urban dwellers, merchants and people of culture and science.

- The terms related to administration and bureaucracy are the same as the ones prevalent in Persian.

- Many colloquial terms are identical with Persian.

- There are some terms that are considered highly bookish in Persian and are not in common usage among average Persians but are used among average Azaris.

- Although some words are considered Iranian they do not have equivalents in Persian and thus can be considered remnants of the "Azari Pahlavi" language.

- There are also words with ambiguous roots which are definitely non-Turkish.

- Azarbaijanis have a peculiar way of pronunciation which distinguishes their Turkish from other Turkish-speakers and their Persian from other Persian-speakers. This peculiarity can still be observed in the remnants of

the ancient Azari language. Thus it can be argued that it has been transmitted from Azari Pahlavi to the present language and although Azarbaijanis speak Turkish they still preserve their ancient Iranian accent."³²

As was mentioned, most of the foregoing usually is argued and heavily documented by Iranian historians; some Azaris themselves. Most non-Iranian sources just mention the fact that the language spoken by the people of Azarbaijan belongs to the South Turkic³³ or Southwestern Turkic³⁴ group and is closely related to Ottoman Turkish and the language spoken by the Turkomans; in fact some scholars consider the Turkoman Turkish and Azarbaijani Turkish as belonging to the same group.³⁵

It should, however, be noted that the Soviet historians, particularly some intellectuals of the former Azarbaijan SSR, refuted the argument that the Azaris are Iranians who were Turkified by force. David Nissman writes:

In Azarbaijan SSR there has been a recent effort to establish a Middle Eastern and Caucasian origin for the Turks and to assert that the Azari language was formed prior to the Seljuk invasion..... The assertion that the recursors to the Azari Turks were originally from the Transcaucasus and Near East serves to strengthen a Soviet claim to the land of Azarbaijan, including that part situated in Iran....³⁶

Indeed, in the former Soviet Azarbaijan any reference

to the Iranian Azarbaijan was objectionable and the phrase Southern Azarbaijan was utilized in the Azari literary circles and publications.³⁷ Today the nascent state of the Republic of Azarbaijan has to deal with different and numerous problems. However, once consolidated, the above-mentioned argument may be used by those Azaris with irredentist claims to southern Azarbaijan.

To counter Soviet claims some Iranian historians asserted that the lands located north of Aras River (the present border between Iranian and former Soviet Azarbaijan) were called Albania and Arran.³⁸ Calling those territories "Northern Azarbaijan," has thus been a conspiracy, these historians assert, by the Soviet authorities to detach the "real" Azarbaijan from Iran.³⁹ There are, of course, those Azaris who refute these theories and contend that the lands south and north of Aras River had been one land; indeed the homeland of a Turkic-speaking people who were divided in 1828.⁴⁰

This has been an ongoing debate; its contents usually depending on the ideological orientation of the participants. The reality, however, is that at present there are Turkic-speaking peoples who have lived in the territories north and south of the Aras River for centuries and have considered these territories as their

homeland, "Azarbaijan." These people are overwhelmingly Shii Muslims. The land on the north of Aras used to be a constituent part of the former Soviet Union and is now an independent state while the territory located on the south of Aras is a political unit of the Islamic Republic of Iran and is divided into two parts for administrative purposes; East and West Azarbaijan.

POPULATION

It is difficult to give a precise estimate of the Azari population of Iran. Prior to 1950s population data on Iran were not available and if anything the estimates are mainly guessworks of the foreign travellers and diplomats. Since 1956 general censuses have been undertaken every decade; yet they do not break the population into ethno-linguistic groups. Therefore, to arrive at an approximate figure for the population of the Iranian Azarbaijan different sources are consulted and compared because ethnic origins of the population have not been documented. The following figures are thus estimates and conjectures:

1850	2,000,000
1950	5,000,000

1985 10,000,000-15,000,000.⁴¹

Kurds: General Observations:

The Kurds are the largest ethnic group in the Middle East who do not possess a "state." They are mainly divided between three countries; Iran, Iraq and Turkey. Small enclaves of Kurds can be found in Syria and the former Soviet Union. This division has played a significant role in the development of Kurdish identity. Since in each country the Kurds have shared certain historical and cultural experiences with the population of their host countries, the development and evolution of their identity have not been uniform. The historical separation may have accentuated the differences among an already fragmented Kurdish community. This fragmentation was, particularly, in evidence throughout the bloody war between Iran and Iraq with the Kurds caught between the rock and the hard place. Many Iraqi Kurds fighting with the Iraqi forces helped Iranian troops and some Iranian Kurds were recruited by the Iraqis to destabilize the Iranian government. At the same time in both countries various Kurdish factions fought each other; contesting control of certain districts.⁴²

Today the Kurds comprise a highly politicized but so

far politically ineffective ethnic group whose conditions have deteriorated due to an unstable international environment. Indeed, international politics, or interstate relations, historically has been a significant factor determining the destiny of Kurdish people.

Geography

Originally the Kurds were a mountain people who led a nomadic or semi-nomadic life before the 20th century. But most Kurds are now settled agriculturalists who belong to various Kurdish tribes.

The area where the Kurds have inhabited consists mostly of the rugged mountains of Zagros range; forming the frontiers of the three countries of Iran, Iraq and Turkey. This mountainous area which stretches from southeastern Turkey through northwest of Iraq and well into the eastern Iran is only part of the area inhabited by the Kurds.⁴³ In Iran, for example, the province called "Kordestan" signifies an administrative division; representing only a part of the Greater Kurdish area in Iran. The Kurdish inhabited areas in Iran are estimated to be 125,000 kilometers.⁴⁴ The Pahlavi regime, however, divided these areas among three provinces. The Iranian

Kurds, thus, live in western parts of the province of Azarbaijan; as well as in the province of Bakhtaran (former Kermanshahan) and, of course, the Kordestan province proper. Small Kurdish communities can also be found in Ilam, Zanzan, Hamadan as well as province of Khorasan in eastern Iran.⁴⁵ It should, however, be noted that with possible exception of Kordestan province, other Kurdish inhabited provinces are heterogeneous areas; containing various elements such as the Azari Turks, Persians and others.

In Iranian Kurdistan, the climate together with the rainfall vary from place to place. The climate is continental and the annual rainfall, in some areas, rarely exceeds 400mm, while in the fertile valleys it reaches 2000 to 3000mm. The variation in temperature between the summer high and the winter low is about 70 Or 80 degree centigrade.⁴⁶ Several rivers flow in this region; therefore the shortage of water is not as acute as some other parts of Iran.

Parts of Kurdish inhabited areas of Iran are covered by forests. Qasemlu contends that the forests are not very dense because the mountain people, having no other source of fuel, use a great deal of wood and are thus exhausting an irreplaceable resource.⁴⁷

Some writers argue that Kurdistan, as a whole, is very rich in natural resources and such minerals as coal, copper, even gold and silver and allegedly uranium are in abundance.⁴⁸ In Iran, Kermanshahan has been an oil producing province although with a negligible production.⁴⁹

The Kurdish areas in Iran are predominantly agricultural and most of the active population is engaged in some sort of agricultural activity. Wheat, barley, tobacco and fruits are produced. Cattle and sheep raising provide daily products and wool.

Both Iranian Kurdistan and the "Greater Kurdistan"⁵⁰ are noted for their remoteness. Even valleys in this area are surrounded by high rocky mountains and end in narrow gorges, so that they are not easily accessible particularly in winter months when the entire land is covered with snow. These natural barriers, through time, have also acted as barriers to the expansion of cultures surrounding the Kurdish inhabited areas. Indeed, the distance and inaccessibility of Kurdish mountains from major urban centers of surrounding empires endowed the Kurdish people with an independent life in the periphery; autonomous and with little interference from the central powers whose interests were occasionally demonstrated by

taxing and conscription.

Ethnic and Historical Origins:

The Origins of the Kurdish people have been a matter of debate. Indeed, few scholars agree on any one explanation. Claiming to be the "heirs of the Medes"⁵¹ the Kurds themselves contend they held a privileged position in the Persian Acheamenid and Sassanian dynasties.⁵²

Some sources describe the Kurds as "Iranicized tribes" who either assimilated in, or displaced, the original inhabitants and settled in "the heart of Kurdistan,"⁵³ while other sources believe that the Kurds were indigenous to the area.⁵⁴ It is, however, more reasonable to assume that the Kurds are an amalgam "formed through a fusion of Iranian conquerors with earlier inhabitants of the mountains."⁵⁵

It is written about the Kurds:

....[they] participated in the continuous wars between the Parthians and Sassanians on the one hand and the Romans and Byzantines on the other, fighting alternately with the Persians and the Romans, and sometimes with both sides at the same time, some tribes supporting the Persians and others the Romans.⁵⁶

It thus seems that playing the role of a "buffer" is a time-honored practice among the Kurds who have been manipulated by, or themselves manipulated, the powers surrounding them since time immemorial.

The Kurds appear to have allied with the Sassanians against the Arab onslaught (637-641) with debilitating consequences.⁵⁷ Some Kurdish tribes, however, sporadically kept rebelling and defying the Arab rule well into the 9th century.⁵⁸ Yet acceptance of Islam by the Kurds injected a new cultural element into Kurdish life; and that was the adoption of Arabic script to help transform Kurdish that was until then only an oral language into a literary one.

As Islam reached its zenith and the Arabs ruled over vast areas and disparate peoples and cultures, the Kurdish tribes with their chiefs, enjoyed local autonomy.⁵⁹ These petty chiefs usually enhanced their power and prestige when the central power was somehow weakened although they nominally acknowledged the suzerainty of the central power. From the 9th to the 16th centuries a series of Kurdish principalities were formed which numbered 30 or 40 by the Middle Ages.⁶⁰

From the Arab invasion to the Safavid attempts at the unification of Iran, the country was mainly fragmented and hardly resembled a unified kingdom. During this period,

Iran was subjected to debilitating invasions by Turkic tribes who were apparently reluctant to infiltrate the inhospitable mountains where the Kurds lived. It is thus explained that between the two Turkish-speaking regions of Azarbaijan and Anatolia, there remains an extensive area where the Kurds were able to preserve their language, customs and their autonomous way of life.⁶¹

Indeed, thanks to the inaccessibility of their mountain fastnesses, the Kurds remained basically isolated and on the fringes of the governments surrounding them. Difficult terrain made communication difficult even between Kurdish villages and tribes thus helping increase fragmentation. It is interesting to note that when one or two dynasties of Kurdish origins gained prominence, their Kurdishness was never stressed; they were either Arabized or Persianized.⁶² Salah ud-Din Ayyubi (1138-93) an Iraqi Kurd, educated in Syria and founder of Ayyubi dynasty who fought the Crusaders and drove the Christians from almost all of Palestine is revered and remembered proudly by the Kurds only today. The fact remains that Salah ud-Din's Kurdishness, at that time, and its significance was never stressed by himself or any one else. Indeed, Salah ud-Din who ruled an Arab state was a symbol of Islamic unity and greatness rather than a champion of Kurdish aspirations.⁶³

The Kurds, indeed, missed many opportunities for unification due to a lack of group solidarity and absence of ethnic consciousness. However, an awareness of a distinct identity existed among them. They usually demonstrated intense hostility towards their ethnically diversified neighbours. Minorsky writes that if they (the Kurds) were not fighting with the Turkomans, they joined hands with them against the Christians.⁶⁴

As was mentioned, the invasion of Iran by Turkic hordes left the Kurds relatively unaffected. Some Kurdish inhabited areas, however, came under the rule of two Turkish dynasties. The Kurds, when invaded, did not put up much resistance and thus were spared the catastrophic results of ruthless massacres.⁶⁵ However, the Turkic onslaught brought Turkic-speaking peoples to neighbouring proximity of the Kurds. This proximity has resulted in intense hostility between the two ethnic groups. Nevertheless, at that time, neither group juxtaposition nor the fragmentation of central powers surrounding them could induce the Kurds to try to establish an independent polity based on Kurdish identity since national awareness on the basis of such identity did not exist.

The advent of the Safavid dynasty (16th century) in Iran and establishment of Shiism as the official religion

of the country had an important impact on many Kurds who chose not to convert and remained faithful to the Sunni Islam.

The Safavid emergence coincided with the eastward push of the Ottoman Turks and subsequent struggle of the two powers for Kurdish inhabited areas. In the ensuing military campaigns between the Safavids and the Ottomans, the Sunni Kurds, caught in between, played one power against the other and switched loyalties. The overall tendency, however, was to cooperate with the Ottoman Sultans and this, it is said, enabled the Ottomans to defeat the Safavids in their many wars.⁶⁶ There is emphasis on the issue of religion as the reason for this cooperation.⁶⁷

The safavids themselves zealous Shiis, felt no great sympathy for the Sunni Kurds. Shah Ismail Safavi, for instance, imprisoned a handful of Kurdish chieftains who came to pay homage to him at Khoy and appointed governors from the Turkic Qizil-bash tribes in their place.⁶⁸ And Shah Abbass Safavi resettled some Kurdish tribes in the northeastern Iran to guard the frontiers against the Turkoman forays. These tribes, mainly Shii Kurds, gradually have lost much of their Kurdish identity, being incorporated into the neighbouring groups. Even their

Kurdish language is undergone significant changes; borrowing heavily from surrounding groups, i.e., Turks and Persians.⁶⁹

In their struggles with the Safavids the Ottomans utilized the assistance of a talented and able Kurdish statesman, Mullah Idris Bitlisi, who himself had switched loyalty from the Persian to the Ottoman ruler. Mullah Idris Bitlisi helped the Ottoman Sultan woo many Kurdish chieftains; sent them imperial decrees; proclaiming them "beylerbeys" of their respective territories in return for an annual tribute and a fixed number of armed recruits in case of war. Idris was also able to convince the "undecided" chieftains that it is in their best interest to be loyal to the Ottoman Sultan. Through these efforts Bitlisi succeeded to give Kurdistan a feudal organization and secure the predominance of the Kurdish nobility.⁷⁰ His endeavours also helped the Ottomans in the sense that the loyal Kurds acted as the guardians of the frontiers against future Persian invasions. The Turks also dispersed some tribes and encouraged them to emigrate to some strategic areas where the Armenians lived. One reason for this was that the Turks thought of Armenians as historically sympathetic to the Persians.⁷¹ This arrangement worked for nearly two centuries although as

Safrastian contends the long and exhausting wars (1514-1516, 1534-1565, 1587-1628, 1636-1638, 1724-1732) between the Persians and the Ottomans also exacted a heavy toll among the Kurdish youth.⁷²

The most important of Safavid-Ottoman wars, "The Battle of Chaldiran" marks the division of the Kurdish inhabited areas between Ottoman and Persian empires. This battle was not only a blow to the prestige of the Safavid dynasty, it caused the loss of considerable territory west of Zagros range for the Iranians.⁷³

By the end of the 16th century, most of the Kurdish inhabited areas were under the Ottoman control. The treaty of 1639 which was concluded between Shah Abbass Safavi and Sultan Murad formalized and/or finalized the partition of Kurdistan, leaving the eastern part to the Persians.⁷⁴ Since then the frontiers are little changed.

Safrastian contends that after the distribution of the Kurds between the two Empires one can more clearly distinguish between the Kurds who inhabited in Iran and Turkey and thanks to the works of Bitlisi, it became easier to recognize the Kurds' "geographical distribution, their subdivisions and the names of tribal areas and chiefs."⁷⁵

The division also helped consolidate the status and

position of many Kurdish chiefs in their fiefdoms and principalities. These principalities or emirates were of varying size and different organizational sophistication. Each of these principalities was ruled by a chiefly family that was granted hereditary rights by the government which determined the member of the family who could rule as Amir. And although this meant that every principality had great autonomy, the central government was able to play an important role in Kurdish politics due to the conflict and rivalry prevalent within ruling families.⁷⁶ This fact notwithstanding, the autonomy of these local rulers was so extensive that they struck coin and the Friday prayer was recited in their names. They did not pay tribute; neither did they provide the Ottoman ruler with conscripts. Their only duty towards the Turks was not to rise against the Sultan and not to change the frontiers.⁷⁷ It is said that this state of local independence contributed to the flourishing of civilization, culture, commerce and economy in the Ottoman Kurdistan.⁷⁸

This period of prosperity and independence, however, did not last long. During 19th century the tendency of the Ottoman rulers was toward more centralization and by the turn of the century most of the Kurdish principalities in Ottoman territories had been stripped of their

independence while the same thing was more or less happening in Iran.

This transformation, however, was not easily achieved. Kurdish chieftains who were indignant over the loss of their power and status embarked on a series of revolts mostly carried out in Ottoman territories. World War I and the subsequent disintegration of Ottoman Empire did not endow the Kurds with the opportunity to establish a state of their own not only because of the necessities of the international environment but also due to the incompetence of Kurdish political elite and historical tribal rivalry that had kept the Kurds fragmented for centuries. Now the Kurds were divided between Iran and the newly created states of Turkey, Iraq and Syria; an arrangement that has not changed since then.

Religion and Language:

The Kurds are Sunni Muslims of the Shafi'i school. There are, however, Shii Kurds mostly in Iran and some in Iraq and Turkey. Although the Kurds seem to be religiously homogeneous, even in this respect they are not unified. There exist a number of sects and Sufi brotherhoods among whom Ahl al-Haqq, Yazidis, Alevi and

the adherents of the two famous brotherhoods of Qadiriyya and Naqshbandiyya are the most important.

The language of the Kurds is Kurdish. However, language also has helped further divide the Kurds. There are three or four major variations of Kurdish to which one scholar refers as "languages" rather than mere dialects.⁷⁹ These variations all belong to the northwest Iranian branch of Indo-European languages. However, the difference between them resembles "the difference between Spanish and Italian."⁸⁰

The speakers of these languages and dialects have great pride in their particular language and culture and believe that their language could only provide a lingua franca for all Kurds. It is thus easy to understand the extent of division that the language issue could create. Indeed although many dedicated Kurdish intellectuals have endeavoured to find a solution to this problem, the emergence of a Kurdish lingua franca does not seem probable in near future.

Population:

Population has always been an important issue to the Kurds. Kurdish nationalists tend to exaggerate and the

respective governments minimize the Kurdish population. After consulting and comparing different sources the following estimates seem pertinent in regards to the Iranian Kurds:

19th century	800,000
As of 1985	4,000,000-5,000,000 ⁸¹

BALUCH: General Observations:

Baluchistan is a region divided between Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan. This region is inhabited by an ethnic group called Baluch. The Baluch, like the Kurds, are a mountain people. Yet unlike the Kurds who are almost all settled, a considerable number of the Baluch still lead a pastoral, nomadic or semi-nomadic existence. Baluchistan occupies the southeastern part of the Iranian plateau to the western borders of Sind and the Punjabs. The Baluch also live in Sind and Punjab in Pakistan and a small number in the former Soviet Union.

It should be pointed out from the outset that it has been the Pakistani Baluch who have taken the lead in the Baluchi national struggle. The Iranian Baluch, who live in one of the most backward regions of the country and are probably the most deprived among the Iranian population,

have lived a marginal life not only in relation to the Iranian politico-economic structures but even to the Baluchi national struggle in Pakistan. It is only after the overthrow of the Shah that one can observe a nascent national movement emerging among the Iranian Baluch. This movement, however, has been subdued since the advent of the Islamic regime in Iran.

Geography:

Iranian Baluchistan covers 155,000 square kilometers.⁸² It is a mountainous region with valleys ranging from relatively fertile to absolutely sandy and useless for agriculture.⁸³ Although there are rivers flowing through this region, none is large enough to be of fertilizing value.⁸⁴ Baluchistan is thus very arid and not suitable for large scale agriculture; though in some areas where there is cultivable soil and sufficient water supply, small scale irrigated agriculture is possible.⁸⁵

Due to the large size of the region, the climate varies from place to place. In the highlands the climate is continental and on the lowlands tropical.⁸⁶ It is interesting to mention that the terrain is described by geologists as the closest thing to Mars on earth or 'the

dump where Allah shot the rubbish of creation' as described by the Pakistani Pathans.⁸⁷

Except in the south, Baluchistan is surrounded by massive mountains which have helped further isolate the region. These natural barriers not only have made communication difficult and settlements small, they have placed limits on agricultural and pastoral activities. Agriculture has been limited to certain areas endowed with a more fertile soil. At the same time, although pastoralism seems to have been a more suitable way of adaptation to the natural environment,

the limits to pastoralism are in terms of overall productivity. The Baluch have obviously pushed against these limits and since at least the beginning of the last century there has been continual migration in search of more ample resources.⁸⁸

Iranian Baluchistan possesses a diverse geography. The area may be divided into five regions. The Sarhad which constitutes the northern highland region and the four regions of southern Baluchistan. The ecology of Sarhad is more suitable for grazing of livestock while in southern Baluchistan agriculture as well as pastoralism is practised. The Baluch who inhabit the Sarhad are tribally organized usually headed by a sardar (chieftain) while in the south the political structure is more feudal like and the head of the community is called hakom

[governor, ruler].

The sharp contrast between the topography of the northern Baluchistan and that of the south may thus explain different modes of adaptation and political organization among the Baluch. The Sarhad (which is the northern part and literally means borderland) is a high plateau of about 5,000 feet (1,500-2000m) above the sea level. Kuh-e Taftan (Taftan mountain) and Kuh-e Bazman (Bazman mountain) are two dormant volcanos located in the Sarhad.⁸⁹ The area is mountainous and broken; thus unsuitable for agriculture. However, attempts have been made to develop a certain amount of agriculture.⁹⁰ The plains are quite suitable for pastoralism particularly if there is sufficient rain in the spring. Thus sheep and goat pastoralism is pervasive throughout the area.

Ethnic and Historical Origins:

There is much debate about the ethnic origins of the Baluch. Pottinger who travelled in Baluchistan in 1800s believed that the Baluch were of Turkoman stock arguing that "their institutions, habits, religion and, in short, everything but their language are the same!"⁹¹

It is also said that the Baluch pride themselves in

being of Arab origin, belonging to the clan of the Prophet himself.⁹² This claim has far-reaching political ramifications and is supported by Iraq and some other Arab states. Many of the Baluch, however, refute this claim and insist that they belong to the Aryan stock.⁹³ There are also other speculations as to the Rajput and the Afghan origins of the Baluch.⁹⁴ The idea of the Iranian origin, however, is the most widely accepted.

Most of these conjectures and suppositions tend to be based on the physical attributes of the Baluch such as color of skin, facial and nose bone structure, texture of hair, etc.⁹⁵ Dames argues that even if we base our proofs on similarities of institutions and habits of nomadic life, "on the whole, the resemblance to the Turkomans seems the strongest, but that to the true Persian nomads is strongest of all."⁹⁶ Thus according to Dames anthropological and historical inquiries and the evidence derived from the "legends and language of the Baluch" which is classified as a "northwestern Iranian language" indicate that "they are of Iranian stock."⁹⁷ It is also believed that the Baluch's original movement can be traced from northwest (Caspian Sea area) to southeast Iran (present-day Kerman) which is another indication of their Iranian origins.⁹⁸

Whatever their origins, the inhabitants of the territory called Baluchistan seem to have moved to this area basically as a response to several great conquests that had affected most of Asia. With each invasion the Baluch moved further east. Dames writes:

The last movement corresponds in its commencement with the conquests of Taimur, and in its later developments with the invasions of India by Babar and the Arghuns.
99

The Baluch thus seem to have moved to this "refuge area" through periodic immigrations.¹⁰⁰ And the area as a "cultural borderland" was constantly exposed to the influence of economic and political forces in both Iran and India.¹⁰¹

What comes to us about the Baluch through the writings of early Muslim writers is their independent spirit and the inconvenience they caused the travellers.¹⁰² Indeed not much is known about the political organization of the Baluch in the past. Brian Spooner, a British/American anthropologist who has done extensive field work in Baluchistan, contends:

...The name Baloc (Baluc) appears to have been a name used by the settled (and especially the urban) population for a number of outlaw tribal groups over a very large area.¹⁰³

Spooner, thus, speculates:

....The Baluch may have entered the historical records as the settled writer's generic nomads..gradually..recognized as the nomads par excellence in this particular part of Islamic world....¹⁰⁴

Today the Baluch themselves refer to the tent-dwelling nomadic pastoralists of the region as "Baluch."¹⁰⁵

The Baluch identity or what we know of it today thus may be the product of relatively recent history. Spooner writes:

Their history may have been a product of the insecurity of a vast desert area which the governments of the period did not care to control despite their need for secure communications across it.¹⁰⁶

It is interesting to note that the historical texts written about the Baluch lack information on the Baluch who occupied the "intermittent zones of influence" of the Iranian Shahs, i.e., those Baluch who lived in the present-day Iranian Baluchistan. What is known, however, is that during the Safavid period although many Baluch tribes paid homage and owed allegiance to the Safavid Shahs, they led an independent life.¹⁰⁷ It is also said that with the Afghan overthrow of the Safavids and ascendance of Ashraf Afghan to the Persian throne, some Baluch chiefs cooperated with the foreign invaders. Indeed Ashraf Afghan dispatched a Baluch chief by the name

of Muhammad Khan as his envoy to the Ottoman Court. With the defeat of Ashraf and rise of Nadir Shah to power in Iran, the same Baluch chief while returning to Iran was awarded by the Shah.¹⁰⁸ Nadir Shah captured Qandahar in 1739 and appointed Nasir Khan who was the Sarawan leader as the beglerbegi (governor) of Baluchistan. Nasir Khan like Mir Chakar Rind is upheld as a great national hero. He came very close to establishing a centralized system, appointing a prime minister and a wakil in charge of revenue collection. Since Nadir Shah had assisted his succession as Khan of Kalat, Nasir Khan paid homage to the Persian Shah. However, after Nadir Shah was assassinated in 1747 Nasir Khan rebelled; aspiring independence. In a dispute between Nasir Khan and Ahmad Shah Durrani who founded the kingdom of Afghanistan based on Qandahar, a treaty was signed according to which Nasir Khan retained his independence but agreed to render military service to Ahmad Shah.¹⁰⁹ Kalat thus remained an ally of Afghanistan till the rule of the British. Roads and mosques were built. Indeed this was a period of stability and political unification for those tribes who were willing to accept Nasir Khan's hegemony. Spooner writes:

For a short period the Khans of Kalat were able to exploit this situation and extend their hegemony over most of what is now Pakistani Baluchistan and even

into parts of what now lies on the Iranian side of the border. But the chiefs of the small agricultural settlements scattered throughout the area, and the nomadic groups, continually rebelled against any imposition of taxes or other feudal requirements, and even marriage alliances were not reliable for long. One chief was played off against another and Qandahar and Kalat competed for allegiance...¹¹⁰

Nasir Khan died in 1795 and his successors proved unable to hold their own in the face of the British onslaught. The British commenced their rule of the Indian sub-Continent in 1764, soon realizing that Afghanistan would serve as a good buffer region against the expansionist designs of the Russians. In 1876 the British finally defeated the Kalat Confederacy and through the Sandeman System or "Forward Policy" were able to control the region.¹¹¹ The boundary between Kalat and Persia was laid down in 1872 and revised in 1895-6; but it was, for the most part, disregarded by Baluch tribes.¹¹²

From then until 1928 when Reza Shah Pahlavi subdued Baluchistan as part of his overall policy of political integration of Iran, Baluchistan mostly remained autonomous and only nominally controlled by the Iranian state. Complete integration of Baluchistan into the Iranian political and economic structures, however, occurred later during Mohammad Reza Shah's era.

RELIGION AND LANGUAGE:

The Baluch are Sunni Muslims of the Hanafi School. They speak Baluchi; an Indo-Iranian language which is considered one of the oldest living languages. The Baluch have a rich oral literature that can be traced back to the 15th century.¹¹³ Baluchi as a script was developed relatively recently.¹¹⁴ The absence of a written literature has been considered an important reason impeding the formation of Baluch national identity.¹¹⁵

POPULATION

After consulting different sources, the following estimates are arrived at:

1850	250,000
1980	1,000,000-1,500,000 ¹¹⁶

* * * *

Examining the geographical and environmental characteristics of the three group's homelands one can easily recognize that the natural environment has been partly responsible in shaping the future developments of each group. For instance, a natural environment more conducive to urbanization in Azarbaijan is in sharp

contrast to the hostile and difficult terrains of the Kurdish and Baluchi areas. Such "environmental" factors have undoubtedly had different ramifications.

The natural environment, for example, has had an impact on the emergence of various urban strata who could better articulate communal aspirations in Azarbaijan. Also the geo-strategic location of Azarbaijan created a crossroad of cultural and political movements that were eventually translated into a more developed cultural environment in contrast to what we may call the "neglected areas" of Baluchistan which in reality are vast stretches of desert and mountains not exposed to much communications. The Kurds, on the other hand, were "trapped" in a region that, throughout the past several centuries, was contested between central powers of Iran and Ottoman Empires, not to mention others. Thus the constant disruption in the overall process of development contributed and reinforced the inherent fragmentations of a tribal society.

It is thus important to note the significance of the natural environment not only in the evolution of self-consciousness among these groups but in the type of the relationship that was developed between these groups and the Iranian state.

NOTES

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- 3- De Planhol, X. 1989. "Azarbaijan I. Geography." Encyclopaedia Iranica. vol. 3, part 1. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. P. 206. See also: Minorsky, Vladimir. 1960. "Azarbaijan." In Encyclopaedia of Islam. Vol. I. New edition. London: Luzac and Co. P.191.
- 4- Minorsky, ibid.
- 5- De Planhol, ibid., p. 208.
- 6- Fisher, W. B. 1968. "Climate." In Cambridge History of Iran. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press. PP. 239-241.
- 7- De Planhol, Encyclopaedia Iranica, p. 209.
- 8- Ibid.
- 9- Amouzegar, Jahangir. 1977. Iran: An Economic Profile. Washington, D.C.: The Middle East Institute. P. 33. See also: De Planhol, ibid, p. 212.
- 10- For details see De Planhol, ibid., pp. 210-211. Also Tapper, Richard. 1979. Pasture and Politics: Economics, Conflict, and Ritual Among Shabsavan Nomads of North Western Iran. London: Academic Press, 1979.
- 11- De Planhol, Encyclopaedia Iranica, p. 213.
- 12- Issawi, Charles. 1971. The Economic History of Iran: 1800-1914. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. P. 27 and P. 74.

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- 14- De Planhol, Encyclopaedia Iranica, p. 205.
- 15- Kasravi, Ahmad. 1352/1973. "Azarbaijan." In Karvand-e Kasravi [Kaseavi's Essays]. Tehran: Jibi Publications. PP. 314-315. See also: Kavian Pour, Ahmad. 1346/1967. Tarikh-e Omoumiye Azarbaijan [The General History of Azarbaijan]. Tehran: Asia Publications. P. 36; also Bakikhanov, Abbas-Qoli. 1970. Colestan-e eram [History of Azarbaijan]. Baku: Elm Publications.
- 16- Mashkour, Mohammad Javad. Nazari be tarikh-e Azarbaijan, p. 95. See also Schippmann, K. "Azarbaijan III. Pre-Islamic History, Encyclopaedia Iranica, p. 222; also Barthold, W. 1984. An Historical Geography of Iran. Trans. Svat Soucek. Ed. C.E. Bosworth. Princeton: Princeton University Press. P. 214.
- 17- Akiner, Shirin. 1983. Islamic Peoples of the Soviet Union. London: Kegan Paul International Ltd. P 105.
- 18- Kasravi, "Azarbaijan," pp. 314-315. See also Omid, Hussein. n.d. Tarikh-e farhang-e Azarbaijan [The Cultural History of Azarbaijan]. Tabriz: Farhang Publications. P. 1.
- 19- Kavian Pour, Tarikh-e Omoumiye Azarbaijan, p. 64.
- 20- schappmann, K. Encyclopaedia Iranica, p. 225.
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- 22- Akiner, Shirin. Islamic Peoples of the Soviet Union, p. 104.
- 23- schappmann, Encyclopaedia Iranica, p. 225.
- 24- Nissman, David B. 1987. The Soviet Union and Iranian Azarbaijan: The Use of Nationalism for Political Penetration. Boulder: Westview Press. P. 8.
- 25- Khalili Iraqi, Mohammad Reza. 1327/1948. Khaterat-e safar-e Azarbaijan [The Memoirs of the Trip to Azarbaijan]. Tehran: Artesh Publications. P. 249.
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- 27- Kavian Pour, ibid., p. 106.
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- Tehran: Jibi Publications. See also Mashkour, Nazari be..., pp. 203-210.
- ²⁹11- Mashkour, ibid., pp. 224-250.
- 30- Ibid., pp. 251-252.
- 31- Ibid., p. 252.
- 32- Ibid., pp. 261-263.
- 33- Barthold, An Historical Geography, p. 224; also Akiner, Shirin. Islamic Peoples, p. 117.
- 34- Zenkovsky, Serge A. 1960. Pan-Turkism and Islam in Russia. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. P. 36.
- 35- Ibid.
- 36- Nissman, David B. The Soviet Union and Iranian Azarbaijan, p. 10.
- 37- Ibid., p. 11.
- 38- For details see: Kasravi, Ahmad. 1335/1956. Shahriyaran-e gumnam [The Unknown Princes]. Tehran: Amir Kabir Publications. P. 265; also Reza. Enayatollah. 1360/1981. Azarbaijan va Arran: Albaniya-ye Qafqaz [Azarbaijan and Arran: Caucasian Albania]. N.p.: Iran Zamin Publications. P. 6.
- 39- Reza, Ibid., pp. 6-9.
- 40- See Hey'at, Javad. 1990. "Azarbaijan: Peyvandhaye qomi va farhangi," [Azarbaijan: Ethnic and Cultural Ties]. In Iran Times. December 28, 1990, p. 9.
- 41- For 19th century: Curzon, George. 1892. Persia and the Persian Question. London: Longmans, Green and Co. Also Field, Henry. 1939. Contribution to the Anthropology of Iran. Chicago: Field Museum Press; also Issawi, Charles. 1971. The Econom History of Iran: 1800-1914. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. For 20th century: Aliyev, S.M. 1966. "The Problem of Nationalities in Contemporary Persia." Central Asian Review 14; also Smith, Harvey. 1970. Area Handbook for Iran. Washington, D.C.: The American University. For both periods: Abrahamian, Ervand. 1982. Iran Between Two Revolutions. Princeton: Princeton University Press. See also Bennigsen, A. and Wimbush, S. 1986. The Muslims of the Soviet Empire: A Guide. Indiana: Indiana University Press. P. 36. Also David Nissman in a 1987 publication contends that the number of Soviet Azaris, according to the 1971 Soviet census, totaled 5,477,000. He considers the absence of data in the case of the Iranian Azaris and continues that "it is safe to assume that there are approximately two Azaris in Iran for every one in the Soviet Union." See:

Nissman, David B. 1987. The Soviet Union and Iranian Azarbaijan: The Use of Nationalism for Political Penetration. Boulder: Westview Press.

42- For an excellent discussion of recent Kurdish predicament in Iran, Iraq and Turkey see two articles by Van Bruinessen, Martin. 1986. "The Kurds Between Iran and Iraq." MERIP; MIDDLE EAST REPORT July-August. PP. 14-27; and Van Bruinessen, Martin. 1988. "Between Guerrilla War and Political Murder." MERIP: MIDDLE EAST REPORT. July-August. PP. 40-42.

43- For details see: Chaliand, Gerard. 1988.

"Introduction." In People Without a Country: The Kurds and Kurdistan, ed. Gerard Chaliand, London: Zed Press. P. 11.

44- Qasemlu, A.R. "Kurdistan in Iran," in ibid., p. 107.

45- The Kurds who inhabit Khorasan and Kermanshahan are mostly Shiis and may not share the same political aspirations as do the Sunni Kurds. The Kurdish tribes in Khorasan were settled there by the orders of Shah Abbass Safavi in order to protect the frontiers against the Turkoman forays and to create fragmentation among the Kurds themselves.

46- Qasemlu, A.R. "Kurdistan in Iran," p. 107.

47- Ibid.

48- See, for example, Short, Martin. and Anthony Mcdermott. 1975. The Kurds. London: The Minority Rights Group, Report no. 23. P. 5.

49- Qasemlu, "Kurdistan in Iran," p. 105.

50- For a geographical description see: Edmonds, C.J. 1957. Kurds, Turks and Arabs, Politics, Travel and Research in North-Eastern Iraq: 1919-1925. London: Oxford University Press. PP. 15-21.

51- Arfa, Hassan. 1966. The Kurds. London: Oxford University Press. P. 6. See also Lambert, John. 1968.

"The Origins and Appearance of the Kurds in Pre-Islamic Iran." Iranian Studies I. p. 45. Also Kahn, Margaret.

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53- Kinnane, Derk. 1964. The Kurds and Kurdistan. London: Oxford University Press. P. 21.

54- Safrastian, Arshak. 1948. Kurds and Kurdistan. London:

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55- Barthold, W. An Historical Geography of Iran, p. 197.

56- Arfa, The Kurds, p. 5.

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58- Ibid.

59- Arfa, The Kurds, p. 7.

60- See: O'Blance, Edgar. 1973. The Kurdish Revolt: 1961-1970. London: Faber and Faber, Ltd. P. 16; also Short, Martin. The Kurds, p. 7.

61- Arfa, The Kurds, pp. 7-9.

62- For details see: ibid.

63- Eagleton, William. 1964. The Kurdish Republic of 1946. London: Oxford University Press. P. 3.

64- Minorsky, "Kurdistan," in Encyclopaedia of Islam, p. 1139.

65- Arfa, The Kurds, p. 12.

66- See for example: Kendal, "The Kurds Under Ottoman Empire," in People Without a Country, p. 221; also Mardukh-e Kordestani, Muhammad. n.d. Tarikh-e Mardukh (Mardukh's History). Vol. II. N.P.: Artesh Publications. P. 3; and Elphinston, W.G. 1948. "Kurds and Kurdish Question." Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society XXXV. P. 42.

67- Safrastian, Kurds and Kurdistan.

68- Minorsky, Encyclopaedia of Islam, p. 1142.

69- For details on these tribes see: Van Bruinessen, Martin. 1978. Agha, Shaikh and State: On the Social and Political Organization of Kurdistan. Rijswijk: Europrint. PP. 215-220.

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- 77- Kendal, People Without A Country, p. 22.
- 78- Ibid.
- 79- Izady, Mehrdad. 1988. "A Kurdish Lingua Franca?" Kurdish Times. II. P. 13.
- 80- Ibid.
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- 83- Hughs, A.W. 1877. The Country of Baluchistan. London: George Bell and Sons. P. 4.
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- 88- Spooner, Brian. "Who Are the Baluch?" p. 94.
- 89- Spooner, Brian. "Baluchistan," Encyclopaedia Iranica, p. 601. See also Salzman, Philip C. 1971. "Adaptation and Political Organization in Iranian Baluchistan." Ethnology 10.
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- 92- Hughes, A.W. 1877. The Country of Balochistan. London: George Bell and Sons. P. 26. See also Curzon: George. Persia and the Persian Question, vol. I., p. 258; also Baluch, Muhammad Sardar Khan. 1958. History of Baluch Race and Baluchistan. Karachi: Process Pakistan. P. 263.

- 93- See, for example, Janmahmad, 1982. The Baluch Cultural Heritage. Karachi: Royal Books Co.
- 94- Ibid. See also Dames, M. Longworth. 1904. The Baloch Race. London: Royal Asiatic Society. P. 7.
- 95- Ibid.
- 96- Ibid., p. 90.
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- 98- Frye, R.N. 1961. "Remarks on Baluchi History." Journal of the Central Asiatic Society 6. PP. 44-50. See also Dames, ibid., p. 13.
- 99- Dames, M.L. The Baluch Race, pp. 33-34.
- 100- Spooner, Brian. "Who are the Baluch?" pp. 97-98.
- 101- Ibid.
- 102- Spooner, Brian. "Baluchistan, I. Geography, History and Ethnography," Encyclopaedia Iranica, p. 607; also Dames, The Baluch Race, pp. 32-33.
- 103- Spooner, ibid.
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- 105- Spooner, Brian. 1975. "Nomadism in Baluchistan." In Pastoralists and Nomads in South Asia, ed. Lawrence Saadia Leshnik and Gunther Sontheimer. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz. P. 171.
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- 115- For details see ibid., p. 276.
- 116- Abrahamian's estimate is 264,000 for 1850 and 500,000 for 1950; see Abrahamian, Ervand. 1982. Iran Between Two Revolutions. Princeton: Princeton University Press. P. 12. Curzon's estimate for the last decade of the 19th

century is 250,000; see Curzon, George. Persia and the Persian Question, vol. II., p. 264. Soviet sources estimate Iranian Baluch in the 1960s to number 600,000; see Akiner, Shirin. Islamic Peoples of the Soviet Union, p. 363. According to U.N. Demographic Yearbook, 1983, the population of the "Baluchistan and Sistan Province" of Iran is 662,677. Robert Wirsing in The Baluchis and the Pathans, (London: Minority Rights Group, 1983), p. 6, gives a figure of 500,000-750,000. And Selig Harrison gives an estimate of 1,000,000; see his In Afghanistan's Shadow, p. 177.

CHAPTER TWO

THE TRADITIONAL POLITICAL STRUCTURE
AZARIS, KURDS, BALUCH

To analyze the relationship between the traditional state and the three groups under study here we begin with the 19th century Qajar period. This chapter will examine the inherent weakness of the Qajar's socio-political structures and the subsequent power fragmentation that made it possible for the ethno-linguistically distinct groups to lead insulated and autonomous lives. It will also be explained that even the Qajar's meager attempts at centralization and modernization did not help bring local and communal magnates under their full control. However, analyzing the relations of the Qajar state and the three groups, we will observe interesting differences. It will be noted that the Azaris and their home province, Azarbaijan, were an integral part of the Qajar's socio-political and economic structures while the other two groups literally constituted the "periphery." This chapter will attempt to elaborate these differences on the basis of which later relationships evolved and it will be argued that both the historical context in which these relationships were played out and the institution of state, even in its traditional and non-modern form were

important factors in shaping these relationships.

General Observations:

Before the emergence of the Qajars, Iran was plagued with chaos and tribal fragmentation. The Qajars were the first rulers after the Safavids (16th century) who succeeded to give a semblance of "unity" and "integration" to an otherwise chaotic and turbulent political scene. Indeed, the 18th century was a period of intense tribal warfare, minimal security and stability. During the decades of warfare and depredations many cities and towns lost much of their prosperity not to mention their inhabitants either to the epidemics and famine or to the tribal onslaught.¹

The Qajars attempted to assert the authority of the central government and succeeded to bring different autonomous groups under, at least nominal, control. This, however, does not mean that the Qajar state was a "nation-state" in its Western and modern sense. Indeed, there are such scholars as Bernard Lewis who argue that the concept of "nation-state" should not be utilized for such Muslim societies as Ottoman or Persian Empires in which religion was the principal source of loyalty and identification.²

In a Muslim society the ruler evokes religious symbols in his claims to power and the subjects' primary identity is basically derived from the membership in the Islamic community. The Shah of Iran was thus called "The Shadow of God on Earth," and although he exercised his authority in the temporal realm, he used religion and religious symbolism to legitimize his rule.

Thus, such concepts as "nationalism," "ethnicity" and "nation-state" seem not to be relevant to the functioning of a traditional political structure such as that of the Qajar dynasty. Indeed, neither Qajar Iran was a "nation-state" nor the people who inhabited the Iranian territory a "nation." The utilization of such concepts as "nation" and "nationality" has been a by-product of the modern socio-political structure of Iran; an attempt by modern Iranian intelligentsia to define and/or redefine a heterogeneous society. The term mellat (nation) as was used in the literature of the Qajar period signified the community of faithful who inhabited the Iranian territory. But the much more contemporary term melliāt (nationality) connoting those diverse groups inhabiting Iran other than the Persians was probably unknown and if used at all it was not so laden with Marxist ideology as when used by the Iranian intellectuals today.

In the traditional structure, "ethnic" or "national" identification was socially irrelevant and people primarily identified themselves with their religious community. This, of course, does not mean that there were no minorities. In Iran, for example, minorities usually consisted of those who adhered to other religions; much smaller in number and weaker in terms of access to power and privilege. Most of these people (Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians) were "theoretically" protected. Those minorities who were not considered legitimate (such as the Baha'is in the Qajar and Islamic Republican Iran) were persecuted.

There is no doubt that awareness of objective differences existed. There were differences in physiognomy, languages, life styles and customs. These differences or awareness of them, however, never became a politically significant issue in the relations between the state and various groups or the relations of different groups with each other. For the same reasons it was not important to what ethnic group the ruling elite belonged. As was mentioned before Iran for centuries was ruled by dynasties of Turkish stock and the ethnic origins of the ruling dynasty was never a subject of public concern.

Referring to the groups inhabiting Iran in the 19th

century one can hardly talk about "ethnic communities." Excluding the Azaris, the relationship between the Qajar state and most "ethnic categories" occupying Iran was that of a center and the periphery. The periphery usually contained centrifugal elements who welcomed any opportunity for complete independence.

The Qajar Shah as the "King of Kings" and "The Shadow of God on Earth" had, in theory, absolute power and ruled without interference. In practice, however, this rule over the periphery was often intermittent and sporadic; limited to tax collection and military conscription. The Qajar state, thus, only demanded political allegiance from its subjects and was not concerned with socio-cultural demands. At the same time, since most of the subjects were Shii Muslims, the political allegiance and religious loyalty often coincided. The Sunni Muslims inhabiting Iran such as the Baluch, the Kurds, and the Turkomans fell in the category of the nomadic or semi-nomadic tribes and constituted the population of the periphery.³ For most of these tribal groups there was no need to define identity on a broad scale. Loyalty to the local and immediate community was the norm; and political allegiance was usually given to the local headmen or tribal chieftains.⁴

The Qajar founder and his successors had to fight

several campaigns in order to assert their control over the peripheral areas of Iran. This periphery, indeed, was a colorful one; composed of many different groups with their distinct languages and cultures and sometimes religions. The Qajar state, as was mentioned, only demanded political loyalty. No one supposed that uniformity was desirable or that assimilation to a common style of life or pattern of culture was possible or normal.

However, the Qajar Shahs, within the traditional socio-political structure of Iran, were able to devise policies to deal with diverse groups inhabiting the country. These "tribal" and/or "provincial" policies were mostly aimed at increasing the central government's influence in the peripheral areas and reducing the possibility of tribal unruliness and rebellion.⁵

Tribal leaders, undoubtedly, were among the most important social groups due to the fact that they could provide military forces when demanded by the Shah. It is said that in the beginning of the Qajar period, the Shahs were more inclined to appoint tribal leaders as administrators of the tribal areas because the consensus of the community was important to them.⁶ Thus an ilkhan or an ilbeg was appointed who was either a tribal chief or

related to the chiefly family and assumed the responsibility of collecting taxes and care of the general affairs of the tribe. The office was usually hereditary.⁷ However, the Shah had the authority to alter the succession. This created tension among the family members; making their manipulation easy by the state and thus giving the Shah an important hold over the tribes.⁸

The Qajar Shahs, themselves belonging to Turkic tribes of Caspian Sea area,⁹ were acutely aware of unsettling effects of tribal unruliness. The autonomy of tribes in their remote regions as well as their forays and raids into the settled areas was a thorn in the side of the central authority in Iran. For this reason, Fath Ali Shah (1797-1834), the second Qajar Shah, set out to strip the tribes of their powers. Gradually, as the power of the tribal chiefs declined, Qajar Shahs more and more appointed royal princes to the provincial governorships. Indeed, the administrative authority was delegated to the sons and brothers and cousins of the Shah as well as other members of the royal family who ruled as governors and felt only responsible to the Shah himself.¹⁰ Also later during the Qajar period, one can find some high ranking members of the bureaucracy as the governors of the provinces which was an indication of administrative

expansion.¹¹

Most official appointments, particularly in the second half of the Qajar period, were sold by the Shahs to the highest bidders. Shaul Bakhash contends that the political offices of the Shah's realm were farmed out among the members of his household whom the Shah selected:

On the basis of his personal confidence in them and without establishing any consistent limitations on their authority and obligations.¹²

This, of course, further weakened the power of the tribal chiefs who, under smallest pretexts, were either kept in Tehran as hostages, or executed. The Qajars also resorted to "divide and rule" as well as "transplantation" of the tribes in order to control them.¹³

The tendency of the Qajars was thus towards more centralization although their efforts in this respect was very rudimentary. To centralize there was a need for expansion of the administration and modernization of the army.¹⁴ Also this was a period in which the "Great Game" brought Iran into the arena of the international politics. The British had an important role in the development of the means of transportation and communication in Iran. This development not only affected the Iranian intelligentsia who became acquainted with the ideas of Western Enlightenment, but it also induced the Qajar Shahs

to take steps towards modernizing and/or westernizing the country. However, these policies which ranged from modernization of the military to the sophistication and expansion of the bureaucracy, did not prove to be lasting and effective as a result of several factors the most important of which was the reluctance and self-interestedness of the Qajar elite. Nikki Keddie writes:

It is important to note that reform and modernization in general in Iran have been almost exclusively post-1905 phenomena. Despite impressive-sounding lists of attempted reforms under the Qajars, what is really striking about the Qajar period is the relative lack of meaningful government-sponsored reform, even of the self-strengthening variety....¹⁵

Thus it seems that at the same time that the Qajars were willing to expand the framework of their state, they were not ready to allow for anything that would interfere with or endanger the source of their power. As long as modernization meant any change in the traditional power structure, the Qajars did not welcome it. But the corruption and excesses of the Qajar Shahs and their elite as well as the exploitation of the country by two great powers eventually created a popular upheaval at the turn of the century which resulted in the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911. This revolution that helped the phenomenon of "Iranian nationalism" emerge, was perceived differently by the three groups under study here. But

before we deal with the Constitutional Revolution we should observe the evolution of each group throughout 19th century and within the traditional socio-political structure of Iran. This will help us understand why these groups reacted differently to the events of the 20th century.

a) Azaris:

As was mentioned before, Azarbaijan was always a prosperous region. Historically it possessed a large population and during the Qajar period its revenues ranked highest among Iranian provinces [table I]. The Qajars, indeed, paid particular attention to the province, a fact that can be explained both in terms of their affinity to the people and their language and also Azarbaijan's geo-political significance as a gateway to Turkey and Russia.

An English military officer, Lieut. Colonel Stuart, who travelled to Iran in mid-19th century, writes about the sorry conditions of the Iranian army. He, however, adds that:

...Those only from Azerbaijan were armed and clothed with any pretension to regularity...¹⁶

He also mentions that Turkish language,

now that the Court is filled with Azerbaijanis, is equally useful at Tehran...¹⁷

Tabriz, the capital of the province, was the most important commercial center of Iran during 19th century.

A Russian traveller writes:

...The bazaar of Tabriz deserves attention because of its extent and the number of its shops.....The variety of goods available in it is hardly matched in any other Persian town except Tehran; as for the quantity of goods, in this respect Tabriz has undoubtedly no rival in Persia..¹⁸

In addition to Tabriz, Azarbaijan also possessed such historically significant urban centers as Maragheh, Ardabil, Urumia and Khoy and boasted a thriving commercial class that rivalled its Persian counterpart. Also Azarbaijani social stratification greatly resembled that of the Persian population of Iran. Like the Persians, the Azaris possessed a political and economic elite who were composed of tribal khans, landowners and government notables; a religious class constituting both ulama and lower levels of clergy and religious students; artisans who were usually members of different guilds and the peasantry.¹⁹

The Qajars, indeed, began their modernization attempts from Azarbaijan. Taqi Zadeh, the famous Iranian politician, himself an Azari, narrates that Abbas Mirza, heir-apparent to Fath Ali Shah, in order to modernize the Iranian army sent some students from Tabriz to England to

learn new techniques. The first factory for making weaponry and the first printing press were also established in Tabriz at this period.²⁰ Indeed the number of industrial plants and modern schools was highest in Azarbaijan than in any other province in Iran by the turn of the century. At the same time Tabriz had become the exclusive center of Iranian foreign relations since foreign ambassadors usually came to Tabriz and Iranian envoys went out of Tabriz. Taqi Zadeh stresses the fact that during a great part of the reign of the Qajars, almost nine-tenth of Iranian representatives abroad were Tabrizis or Azarbaijanis²¹ which is a clear indication of the identification of the Azari elite with the Qajar power structure.

It was, however, during early Qajar period that part of Azarbaijan was ceded to Tsarist Russia. The Russians had long standing interests in their southern flank. Not only the idea of lucrative trade with Iran via Azarbaijan was attractive but the strategic situation of southern borders was of utmost importance. The Russians had started their southward drive as early as 1722 at the time of Peter the Great. However, the more serious campaigns began in the first decade of the 19th century when Abbas Mirza, heir-apparent to Fath Ali Shah (the second Qajar

Shah) moved against the Russians in an attempt to stop them from making protectorates out of various principalities in northern Azarbaijan.

The first period of Russo-Persian wars ended with the Treaty of Gulistan (1812) according to which Iran lost several principalities to the Russians. The second period of Russo-Persian wars flared up when Fath Ali Shah attempted to retrieve the lost principalities. The result was the treaty of Turkomanchai (1828) which not only confirmed the provisions of the Golistan Treaty but ceded more territory to the Russians. It was the Treaty of Turkomanchai that fixed Aras River as the boundary between the two countries.²² The Treaty of Turkomanchai confirmed the political and economic presence of Russia in Iran and gave the Russians the status of "the most favored nation" which bestowed upon them unprecedented political and economic privileges.²³

The Russians, indeed, took complete political and economic advantage of the Persian defeat. By the year 1833 the balance of trade was greatly in favor of Russia²⁴ and Russian political pressure could be felt in Tabriz, the seat of the heir-apparent to the Qajar throne.

With the division a smaller part of Azarbaijan was annexed by Tsarist Russia together with its 500,000 Azari

speaking Muslims. It is said that two-third of the Azaris remained under Persian sovereignty.²⁵ Of those who passed under Russian control about half were Sunni Muslims. However, through time and due to migration, Russian Azarbaijan became mostly the homeland of the Shii Azaris.²⁶

In the short run, the division slowed down the emergence of an Azarbaijani national identity, which was to emerge later and first in the Russian Azarbaijan. Indeed, considering parochial and tribal identifications and affiliations, the people of Azarbaijan had no reason to possess national awarness. In Iran, they were subjects of the "Shah of Islam;" and the over-arching identity of "Iranian" was not very meaningful even for a Persian. Also by virtue of the "Turkishness" of the Qajars, the Azari political elite itself was part of the Qajar ruling elite. At the same time, the average Azari peasant only came into contact with the government when taxes were being collected and soldiers conscripted. Many of these peasants were greatly oppressed and exploited by their Azari landlords and the Royal family. But no class or socio-political consciousness existed either.

In the long run, however, this division had profound impacts on both Azarbaijans. One of the immediate effects

of this division was an increasing Russian encroachment which subsequently entailed intense Russo-British rivalry in Iran.²⁷ This rivalry was particularly felt in Tabriz which until 1834 was home to both Russian and British diplomatic missions.²⁸ Even after the transfer of foreign political emissaries to Tehran, Tabriz did not lose its political significance. As the seat of the Crown Prince, Tabriz remained the focus of Russian penetration and infiltration.

The increasing commercial activity enlarged the Azari middle class while the enhanced foreign influence mainly from Russia's Caucasian provinces and Ottoman Turkey through cultural exchange exposed Azarbaijan, and particularly Tabriz, to the penetration of ideas from the West. Taqizadeh writes:

...Modern civilization came to Azarbaijan primarily from two sources: through knowledge of the Turkish language there were intellectual ties first with Istanbul and Ottoman territories and second with Russian territories, especially trans-Caucasia...²⁹

On the other hand, during the same period in the Russian Azarbaijan, a new type of imperial relationship was emerging which greatly resembled a colonial relationship. This relationship created conditions that were bound to cause the rise of greater ethnic awareness and nationalism as a means of resisting the Russians.

Furthermore, the method of Tsarist exploitation of Azarbaijan brought Russian Azarbaijanis into conflict with other groups.

The initial consequence of Russian "divide and rule" policy manifested itself in the split between Azarbaijani Shiis and Sunnis. The result was the mass migration of Sunni Azarbaijanis, who had participated in the early revolts against the Russian rule in Azarbaijan,³⁰ to Ottoman Turkey.

The discovery of oil in Baku (capital of Russian Azarbaijan) and particularly the oil boom of the 1870s created socio-economic change of great magnitude in Russian Azarbaijan. The economic boom caused the influx of Russians and Armenians into the region. And although most Azarbaijanis comprised the lower classes a few became wealthy and a modern intelligentsia also emerged.³¹

The last decades of the 19th century witnessed a proliferation of Azarbaijani writers, poets and journalists as well as an Azari press in the Russian Azarbaijan. The majority of the Russian Azaris, however, remained impoverished with a gulf between the masses and the intelligentsia. Economic development was an uneven phenomenon and while the oil boom in Baku meant sudden economic growth for the city, the economy of the

countryside lagged behind.

The Azari intellectuals in Russian Azarbaijan, at this juncture, made attempts to bridge the divisions within their nation by seeking legitimacy for an Azarbaijani identity through ethnic identification. This, however, was a difficult task since they could not agree upon a vision for their nation because they were not yet comfortable with the cultural identity of that nation. While education allowed national ideas to be communicated to broad sectors of society, there was no consensus as to what those ideas should be. Almost all visions for Azarbaijan depended upon an outside country for leadership.

Their impulse to federalized, and with various partners, was to remain a constant rather than transitory trait in their political thinking and it was rooted in the doubts as to the viability of their existence as a fully independent state....³²

Paradoxically, the intellectuals in the Russian Azarbaijan feared domination by the same countries which they turned to for security and cultural leadership. The Shii and pan-Azarbaijani identities were important to most Azarbaijanis, but the Persian cultural dominance excluded recognition of their Turkish, ethnic identity and was resented. Intellectuals such as Ahmed Agaev followed the teachings of Ernest Renan who defined a nation as a

"natural group determined by race."³³ This racial-linguistic type of identification, however, a powerful force, was rejected by mullahs in Azarbaijan who sought a more universal, pan-Islamic vision for Azarbaijan over the narrow Turkic association. Pan-Islamism appealed to the umma, the worldwide community of believers in Islam irrespective of sectarian affiliations.

Some intellectuals favored a direct federation with the Ottoman Empire and thus advocated a pan-Turkic movement that aspired to unite all the Turkic peoples of the world.³⁴ Most of Azarbaijanis, however, as Shiis had reservations about a movement that placed emphasis on Sunni Ottoman Turkey.

Among the intellectuals the towering figure of Mirza Fath Ali Akhund Zadeh (1812-1878) shines. Akhund Zadeh who was born near Tabriz and raised in Russian Caucasus, not only helped revive Azari Turkish but he is considered as the most important among the few pioneers who attempted to modernize the Persian prose.³⁵ Indeed, Akhund Zadeh who described himself as "almost Persian"³⁶ was greatly influenced by the pre-Islamic heritage of Iran. It is, however, an irony that as Persian writings of Akhund Zadeh is said to have "helped form in Iran the ideals of both nationalism and secularism,"³⁷ his Azari works "led to

Azerbaijani emancipation from centuries long Persian cultural domination."³⁸

The revival of the Azari language in the Russian Azarbaijan came to a full bloom by the turn of the century. Soon modern theatre and modern press appeared in Azari Turkish. Among the press the Baku newspaper Akinchi (the plowman), the first Turkish publication in Russia, was crucial in the growth and development of the Azari literary language. Yet because of its anti-Persian, anti-Shii pronouncements the paper was not received favorably among the Shii elements³⁹ and became mostly a forum for secular intelligentsia. After the demise of Akinchi in 1877 mainly because of its pro-Ottoman sentiments at the time of the Russo-Ottoman war, other papers began publication among which Kashkul is the most important. Swietochowski narrates an imaginary dialogue published in Kashkul which presents a vivid picture of the identity crisis prevalent among the Russian Azarbaijanis. The article written by M. Sultanov presented the problem and a possible solution for an Azarbaijani Muslim:

"Q: What is your nationality (millat)?

A: I am a Muslim and also a Turk.

Q: Are you an Ottoman?

A: No. I am bijanli (a play of words in which the corrupt

form of Azarbaijani means 'soulless').

Q: Where is the land of the bijanli?

A: As far as I can tell, on the other side of the Araxes⁴⁰ live the Azaris -on this side the bijanlis. Together it makes Azarbaijani. But separately we are bijanlis.

Q: Your language is Turkic so you are a Turk?

A: There is no word to describe my position. I am a Turk, but a bijanli.

Q: Instead of a bijanli Turk, why don't you solve your dilemma by calling yourself an Azarbaijani Turk?"

This imaginary and revealing dialogue not only is indicative of an identity crisis among the Russian Azari intellectuals but it also demonstrates a nostalgic regret about the division of Azarbaijan. The dialogue presages the rise of ethnic awareness beyond simply that of being a Turk. Indeed the writer rejects an identification with the Ottoman Turks and refers to a desire for reunification with the rest of the Azarbaijanis, the Azarbaijani Turks. This is, indeed, the beginning of a series of literary works titled the "literature of longing" in the Russian Azarbaijan which implicitly or explicitly alludes to a wish for the unification of the two Azarbaijans.⁴¹

These developments could not leave the Iranian Azaris unaffected. Among the population of Iran, the Iranian

Azaris had a better access to information due to their proximity to Russia and Ottoman Turkey and throughout the 19th century there was close contacts and some interdependence between the peoples of the two Azarbaijan.

The Iranian Azaris, by the end of the 19th century, were greatly affected by economic misrule of the Qajars. After the Russians had consolidated their power in Transcaucasia, the economic interaction between northern provinces of Iran and Russian Azarbaijan was promoted. As we noted, Tabriz had become the leading trade center in Iran.⁴² During the rule of Muzaffar al-Din Shah (1896-1906), however, economic policies of the government favored Tsarist Russia in regards to tariffs and brought about economic loss and unemployment in Iranian Azarbaijan.⁴³ This subsequently resulted in the migration of large numbers of the Iranian Azaris seeking work in Baku. Baku, as the urban center of oil industry of Russian Azarbaijan attracted many Iranian Azaris who worked in the oil fields and factories. Samad Behrangi, a talented Iranian (Azari) writer, contends that poverty and unemployment in Iranian Azarbaijan usually prompted the villagers and urban dwellers alike to travel to the "other side." Indeed, he mentions that there are many stories in the Azari literature of that period about the lives and

times of the Azari or other Iranian migrants in Caucasus who engaged in trade, smuggling or other activities between the two countries.⁴⁴ Nissman writes:

Between 1800-1890 some 30,000 Iranians a year applied for and received visas...And it has been estimated that if one took into consideration those entering Russia without passes, this number would be closer to 100,000. The former Russian Consul in Tabriz noted that between 30,000-60,000 passes were issued a year in Tabriz between 1891-1904. As a result of this immigration into Russian Azarbaijan, 50 percent of all Muslim workers in Baku were from Iran during the last years of the XIXth century and the first years of the XXth.⁴⁵

These contacts exposed these workers to the economic and political struggle in Tsarist Russia and indeed many of them became the transmitters of information and ideas to the Iranian Azarbaijanis. Among these people were also educated groups and merchants who had the capability of mobilizing urban masses.

It is, however, interesting to note that although the division and subsequent economic and socio-political change created fertile grounds for an Azari national identity to emerge in Russian Azarbaijan, in Iranian Azarbaijan the propagation and dissemination of the ideas coming from the north created more political consciousness on a general level. Iranian Azaris were becoming more aware of the corruption and misrule of the Qajars. The educated and middle classes were indignant about Russo-

British interventions in their country's affairs and held the Qajar regime responsible for the excesses of the two powers in Iran. These groups together with their Persian counterparts believed the rule of law should replace the Qajar reign of terror.

This, of course, does not mean that impetus for an Azari identity to emerge was not present. For it was; particularly among the educated and middle strata. The basic difference that existed between the politically aware groups in the two Azarbaijans was that those in the north were getting rid (or perhaps had already gotten rid) of their attachment to Iran and Persian culture while this attachment not only was very strong in Iranian Azarbaijan at the time, it is still well and alive today.

a) Kurds and Baluch:

Within the traditional socio-political structure of the 19th century Qajar Iran, the Baluch and the Kurds lived under similar conditions. As tribal peoples they lived an independent or autonomous life and their response to the policies of the Qajar Shahs was alike. This section, therefore, treat the two groups as one unit of analysis.

There does not exist an extensive literature on the Kurds and the Baluch who inhabited the Iranian territory during the Qajar period. What we have is mostly memoirs and travelogues of foreign travellers -some very interesting accounts by British diplomats and secret agents- who briefly dealt with the two groups. To a great extent what is written revolves around two important themes; the independent spirit of the Kurds and the Baluch and the extent to which tribal loyalties dominated their societies.

Independence or autonomy is important to tribal peoples particularly those whose adaptation involves nomadic-pastoralism.⁴⁶ Nomadic pastoralists need to be mobile. Mobility not only provides them with much needed grazing pastures, it enables the tribesmen to defend themselves against the state or other hostile elements.⁴⁷ Mobility and autonomy thus go hand in hand particularly because economic stability, even at the subsistence levels, depends upon such political control.⁴⁸ This condition of independence or autonomy makes for an uneasy and at times problematic relationship between the nomadic tribes and both traditional and modern states. In a traditional political structure, however, there seems to have been more room to maneuver by both the state and the

ethnic group in the periphery. In such a structure, the tribes who constituted the centrifugal elements in the periphery paid nominal allegiance and sometimes more -in the form of taxes and troops- to the center. But, whenever the center became too weak or its demands became too excessive, they withheld these resources and rebelled which was usually manifested in banditry.

Each group was divided into numerous different tribes. In the case of the Kurds sometimes even the languages spoken by these tribes were mutually unintelligible. There existed no feelings of solidarity and identification among these tribes. Each individual identified with his/her own tribe, considering the rest as either enemies or at best strangers. This does not mean that alliances were non-existent. It is said about the Kurds that they would gather around a tribal chief as long as he remains strong. With the slightest sign of weakness, however, "they pull him down, and give him the bow-string."⁴⁹ The Baluch society also suffered from internal strife and inter-tribal rivalries.⁵⁰ The fragmented tribal environment meant that both societies lacked a political elite with a mandate to represent the whole group; an elite that could enter into negotiations and bargaining on behalf of the group. There are, of

course, instances in both Kurdish and Baluch history that strong tribal confederacies emerged with the specific aim of representing different tribes to the state.⁵¹ However, such unifications were transitory and never represented ethnic or national solidarities.

The tribal socio-political organization is much smaller in scale and more limited in regards to the range of various relationships within the society. Among both the Kurds and the Baluch the tribal socio-political organization is a highly diverse phenomenon. The Kurdish tribal structure, for example, is embedded in a web of complex relationships which is different from tribe to tribe and thus it is very difficult to find a common denominator in socio-political organization of different Kurdish tribes.⁵² Indeed, during the Qajars and much of the Pahlavi period, among both the Kurds and the Baluch diversity ranged from tribally organized nomadic pastoralists to peasants living under feudal-like structures.⁵³

The tribal organization of both groups was based on lineage system, i.e., on patrilineal descent⁵⁴ which determines political rights and access to resources. Kinship, which is usually the criterion for membership, thus becomes important because it is politically

functional. It is an important basis for peaceful human discourse and it helps sustain economic cooperation that is vital for the survival of the tribe.⁵⁵ Each tribe usually contained nomadic, semi-nomadic and sedentary segments. In the case of the Kurds, the non-tribal settled population of the surrounding areas were usually controlled by the nomadic tribes.⁵⁶ In the case of the Baluch the agriculturalist tribes of southern Baluchistan have possessed a different socio-political organization resembling more or less a feudal structure.

In both groups the chiefs usually belonged to chiefly lineages more prestigious and different from the rank and file. The rigid tribal structure usually created a very stratified tribal society. The practice of endogamy, particularly, perpetuated this system. Frederik Barth writing about southern Kurdistan, maintains:

The general practice of Father's Brother's Daughter [FaBaDa] marriage and other close family endogamy makes any rapprochement impossible between conqueror and conquered and encourages caste separation....⁵⁷

Among the Baluch a very stratified system predominates the social hierarchy of the agriculturalist tribes of southern Baluchistan with the ruling [hakomzat] families usually marrying the ruling families of other areas and thus creating political alliances. In the

northern areas of Iranian Baluchistan where the inhabitants are mostly nomadic pastoralists, the class structure and hierarchy is somehow mitigated with the chief [sardar] having more or less the same life style as the rank and file, with less control over resources. Endogamy, here, also is the rule.⁵⁸

Each tribe was also divided into smaller units [clans] with their own chiefs. The tribal pastures as well as the agricultural lands were usually owned communally. However, the tribal rank and file, both in Kurdish and Baluch system, provided the chieftain with a certain amount of 'reward' in cash or other forms to compensate for his services. Also the nomadic tribes, in one way or the other, were linked with the settled population in their surroundings.

Considering the importance and relevance of tribe and tribal structure in the lives of individuals, tribal identification was thus the most salient form of identification. For the average Baluch or Kurdish nomad tribal loyalty was always more meaningful than the abstract idea of Kurdish or Baluch nationalism. One writer, a kurds himself, elaborates:

The concept of 'I' hardly exists in the context of tribal culture's value system: 'we' (the tribe) predominates. Individuals define themselves entirely

in terms of their tribe. They are first the member of this or that tribe, then a Muslim, a Yezidi, or a Christian. The sense of being a member of a national group, a Kurd for instance, comes a very poor third. Any other tribe whatsoever, even one which is of the same religion and nationality, is inferior to their own, and its members will be seen as necessarily potential and intrepid adversaries or even enemies.⁵⁹

The tribal ideology, worldview or way of life not only sets the tribal society apart from the settled population -with whom the tribesmen usually have an ambivalent relationship; one of interdependence and tension- it also creates conditions in which divisions and political fragmentation are predominant.

In tribal societies where inter-tribal jealousies, rivalries and conflicts reign supreme, overarching identifications are difficult to form. Both Kurdish and Baluch tribes were afflicted with inter-tribal hostilities before and during 19th century. Rivalries between different tribal chiefs made Qajar's "divide and rule" policy pay off. The Kurdish society, particularly, was plagued by political fragmentation which even today effectively impedes a unified national struggle. Also the extent of inter-tribal hostilities not only made manipulation by external sources of power easier but induced the players to actively seek such external interference in order to increase their power and status

vis-a-vis each other.⁶⁰ The chieftain who was betowed with titles, robes of honour and stipends, had the support of the state and thus could overcome his opponents. Such conditions, indeed, helped Muhammad Shah Qajar (1834-1848) when he decided to pacify Persian Baluchistan.⁶¹

To all this one should add the topography of both Kurdish and Baluch inhabited areas. The mountainous nature and difficult terrain of these areas made settlements sparse and scattered. Indeed the same factors that kept both groups on the fringes of central powers around them, also made communication and interaction difficult between different tribes. And although at different junctures, the Kurds and the Baluch both did create tribal confederacies, unlike many other nomadic groups who throughout history have been able to conquer settled populations and create states, they were incapable of expanding their authority and creating viable and unified political entities.⁶²

Thus topography and rigid tribal structure may be considered as the two most important factors that contributed to the persistence of parochial loyalties and tribal identities which in many ways are still strong among the members of both ethnic groups. The Qajars and the traditional framework within which they operated also

helped keep tribal ideology and way of life intact. Both Kurdish and Baluch tribes enjoyed a relatively independent or autonomous existence during the Qajar rule. They were able to maintain their status by virtue of their military prowess and capabilities. Both were notorious raiders and robbers. The targets of these raids were usually travellers or the settled populations of neighbouring villages or towns. For example, a British subject who travelled in Iran in mid-19th century wrote about the Kurds:

The Kurdish chief of Rewandooz had made an inroad in the direction of Ooroomiah with some thousand of excellent irregulars horse and infantry..... The Meer after collecting as much plunder as he could carry away, retired...⁶³

Or, it is written about the Baluch:

Politically they have but two feelings: an intense passion for tribal independence, with all its murderous accompaniments of blood feuds and border raids, and an outspoken dislike of the Persians, whom they call Gajars, the Baluch version of the name of the reigning dynasty....⁶⁴

Muhammad Sardar Khan, a Baluch himself, confirms this:

True to their native element, the Baluchis pillaged the caravans; trade routes became unsafe and the travellers were so much terrorized that they huddled together like a herd of panic struck deer.⁶⁵

It is, however, maintained that at times the Qajars tacitly approved of a state of "endemic tribal disorder"

in the frontier areas in order to prevent an incursion by the neighbouring state.⁶⁶ The neighbouring state whose possible incursions worried the Qajars was the Ottoman Turkey. These worries were allayed in 1847 when with the mediation of Russia and Great Britain a treaty was signed between Iran and Ottoman Turkey that resolved certain territorial disputes over Kurdish areas⁶⁷. Later, one can observe a series of centralization policies being initiated in Iran which entailed curtailment and restriction of tribal leaders including Kurdish and the Baluch chiefs. Soon Kurdish chiefs were replaced by administrators appointed by the center. Indeed, the Amir of the last Kurdish principality, the Prince of Ardeland, was stripped of his power in 1865.⁶⁸ Also, it was Muhammad Shah Qajar (1834-1848) who dispatched a formidable military force to Baluchistan which "pacified" most of the Persian Baluchistan. Ibrahim Khan, an able administrator who is credited with establishing law and order in the area, was appointed as governor of Baluchistan.⁶⁹

However, consolidation of Qajar authority in Persian Baluchistan prompted the British to interfere. The British who were apprehensive about the Persian drive toward the east which seemed to threaten districts

belonging to the Khan of Kalat -then in alliance with the British government- appointed a mixed commission to settle a frontier to prevent Iran from pushing eastward.⁷⁰ The British, thus, were able to enforce the division of Baluchistan between Iran, Afghanistan and British India (later Pakistan). As we noted, the main division of the Kurds had happened in the 16th century as a result of the wars between the Ottoman Sultans and Safavid Shahs.

These divisions failed to create any trauma or identity crisis among either group. to the pastoralists who continued to traverse to the "other side" to graze their animals, the borders had no significant meanings. At the same time The heterogeneous nature of these societies and lack of any centripetal force or any unifying institution perpetuated fragmentation. Indeed, in 19th century Iran, both groups may be considered as "ethnic categories" without any ethnic or national consciousness that could hasten the emergence of over-arching identifications and loyalties.

Ironically, 19th century was a time when an incipient national awareness was beginning to emerge among a very small number of Kurdish and Baluch intelligentsia in the Ottoman and British controlled territories respectively. This was a result of the policies implemented by the

states ruling these territories.

The modernization and later centralization policies in the Ottoman Turkey directly affected many Kurds who inhabited Ottoman controlled Kurdish inhabited areas. The modernization of the military in which many Kurdish youth were conscripted and served, particularly, left deep impressions. Indeed, many Kurds served in the new Hamidiya cavalry, established in 1891 by Sultan Abdul Hamid II. As auxiliaries to the Turkish army, Kurdish tribesmen filled the ranks of Hamidiya and were officered by their own tribal chiefs. Through the assistance of this tribal cavalry, the Ottomans succeeded to decimate a great many Armenians whose nationalistic aspirations and revolutionary activities threatened the security and stability of the Ottoman Empire.

There were also other policies pursued by the Ottoman rulers that hastened the emergence of a nascent Kurdish intelligentsia. On the one hand, a large number of Kurdish youth were selected and sent to Constantinople to be educated in special schools.⁷¹ Constantinople was the 'center of ferment' of the Empire and the Kurdish youth became acquainted with the European ideals of nationalism and self-determination. This small intelligentsia later became the spearhead of the Kurdish nationalist movement

in Turkey. On the other hand, a series of centralization policies were implemented by the Ottoman rulers which entailed curtailment of the power of the tribal chiefs and sometimes their replacement with Turkish governors.⁷² These policies which provoked rebellions and uprisings among the chieftains that were mostly aimed at retrieving or reestablishing their power and can hardly be qualified as "nationally" inspired. It is interesting to note that the same policies that the Ottoman rulers implemented in order to curb the authority of the tribal chiefs helped augment the ranks of the emerging small intelligentsia. Among these the introduction of private property ownership was, particularly, important because it encouraged settlement and detribalization.⁷³ Settlement, of course, has its concomitant economic and socio-political conditions that require new leaders and new approaches to economics and politics. At the same time, the political vacuum left by the weakening tribal chiefs began to be filled by a new breed of political leaders; the Shaikhs or men of religion.⁷⁴

The Kurdish Shaikhs who headed many uprisings and invoked respect and admiration of the rank and file, filled the political vacuum among the mostly non-urban Kurds while the nascent intelligentsia followed the

example of the Young Turks to stir their co-ethnics into a nationally inspired struggle. Unfortunately, the fragmentation inherent in the Kurdish society and the requirements of the international environment made these and other efforts appear futile. From then on, Kurdish national struggle in Turkey and later in Iraq followed two different paths. One led by Shaikhs and tribal leaders and the other spearheaded by the members of the emerging urban intelligentsia and Kurdish intellectuals. The conflict between these two groups has had tragic consequences for the Kurdish society ever since.

The experience of the Baluch in "Greater Baluchistan" has, more or less, been similar to that of the Kurds. The British commenced their rule of the Indian Sub-Continent in 1764, soon realizing that Afghanistan would serve as a good buffer not only against the eastward drive of the Qajar Iran but against the expansionist aspirations of the Russians. They fought with the Baluch for 40 years to gain access to the strategic positions of Baluchistan. Once under the British, Baluchistan would serve as a military flank and allow the British access into Afghanistan. In 1876, the British finally defeated the Kalat Confederacy.⁷⁵

Under the Sandeman System (Forward Policy) the feudal

and tribal system of Baluchistan were strengthened. The Khan of Kalat (the paramount chief of the confederacy) and the tribal chieftains (sardars) retained their positions. Indeed, the Viceroy and the Khan resembled feudal lords while the chiefs vassals.⁷⁶ The British also took advantage of the fragmented tribal society in Baluchistan by instilling rivalry between the sardars as part of their "divide and rule" policy.⁷⁷ It should be noted that political rather than economic considerations were the key factors shaping British interests in Baluchistan. Therefore, measures that could lead to the socio-economic change or modernization of the region were hardly undertaken and the limited transportation and communication network established was meant to benefit the British only and in reality these measures only facilitated British control over Baluchistan and, of course, India. Change, however, did take place for a very small minority among the Baluch. These few who belonged to the chiefly families benefited from educational and other institutions established by the British. The result was the emergence of a small group of individuals who later formed the nucleus of the Baluch national movement in British India and Pakistan. Like the Kurdish intellectuals these individuals began publications of

nationalist journals and newspapers and hoped to create national awareness among the Baluch rank and file.⁷⁸

Thus, while the seeds of Kurdish and Baluch national consciousness were taking roots in the areas under Ottoman and British control, in Qajar Iran both ethnic groups were stagnating. Tribal socio-political structures dominated these societies and there existed no other loyalties above and beyond that of the tribe. Even at times when the Qajar Shahs were not strong enough to extend their political control to the periphery, inter-tribal conflict perpetuated fragmentation and hindered a unified political and military strategy. The limited and small-scale modernization policies of the Qajars in no way affected the Kurds or the Baluch. Even with the centralization of the administration and appointment of the local governors from the center, some members of the indigenous elite continued to enjoy power and status in order to remain loyal. Thus, social stratification and socio-political structures in both societies remained unchanged.

One difference, however, can be observed in the relationship between the Qajar state and the two groups. Notwithstanding the Qajar's seemingly identical treatment of the Kurds and the Baluch, there seems to have existed a fundamentally different attitude towards the two groups.

It seems that the Qajar rulers perceived the Kurds as more worthy than the Baluch and thus they were more inclined to utilize political means to deal with them. They even married Kurdish women.⁷⁹ On the contrary, their encounters with the Baluch were usually manifested in military expeditions. Their military brutality and the excesses and corruption of their officials in Baluchistan had a great influence on the perception of the Baluch toward the center and the group that dominates it. In fact some metaphors in Baluchi language depict the magnitude of Qajar's savagery in Baluchistan. For example: "he has done me such wrong that even the Qajars couldn't do!"⁸⁰ Even today the Persians are known to the Baluch as the "Gajars."⁸¹ This kind of perception is one that has continued well into the 20th century and undoubtedly has had an impact on the development of a relationship between the Baluch and the group or groups who have dominated the state apparatus in Iran.

The stagnation and backwardness of various ethnic groups in Iran during 19th century was indeed a reflection of the overall situation of the country. Iran, herself as a whole, was in a state of decay and backwardness. It was the corrupt and despotic rule of the Qajars and the extortionate policies of Russia and Great Britain that

eventually stirred the Persian and Azari middle strata to an uprising. In the following chapter the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911 as a critical point in Iranian history and its impact on the Azaris, Kurds and Baluch will be analyzed.

* * * *

In this chapter, we noted that the Qajar state, although structurally weak and unable to exercise full control over the periphery, was able to devise certain policies in order to deal with various groups. These policies were basically different as directed towards the Azaris and the other two groups. This difference was not only a reflection of each group's particular socio-political structure, it was an indication of the state's capabilities as well as its priorities. The Azarbaijanis, for reasons that were explained in this chapter, were a privileged group and should not only be placed in the category of the "periphery," but considered as part of the "core." Azarbaijan was an extension of the "dynastic realm," a natural continuation of the empire while its people were an integral part of the polity with their socio-political structures and social stratification closely resembling those of the Persian population. The Shah never had to resort to coercion in order to be able

to rule Azarbaijan. The Turkic character of the state also helped enhance the identification that existed between the Qajars and Azaris

The situation of the Kurds and the Baluch, on the other hand, was different. The rule of the Qajars over the Kurdish and Baluch areas was precarious and intermittent. The relationship of the Qajar state with the Kurds and the Baluch was thus based on a combination of military force and diplomacy with slight differences. The Baluch, particularly, were dealt with brutally and kept under tight control as long as it was possible. At other times, when the central government was weakened both groups enjoyed de facto autonomy. Indeed, the Kurdish and Baluch inhabited areas had to be kept within the Shah's realm. The tribal socio-political organization among both groups also precluded loyalty and identification with the state that was considered an alien and imposing structure. These aspects of the relationship were to remain important factors that helped shape future mutual perceptions and expectations of the two groups and the Iranian state and to a large extent what followed was a consequence of such foundations.

External influences are important in this period only with regards to Azarbaijan because the division of

Azarbaijan and the twofold influences of Tsarist Empire and the communication with the co-ethnics on the Russian side were beginning to lay the foundations of an Azari distinct identity in Iran. This identity was at the formative stage at this juncture and the socio-political environment of Iran at the time did not and could not precipitate its emergence.

NOTES

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- 2- Lewis, Bernard. 1981. "Loyalties to Community, Nation and State." In Middle East Perspectives: The Next Twenty Years, ed. George S. Wise and Charles Issawi. Princeton: The Darwin Press, Inc., p. 16.
- 3- The proportion of the nomadic population of Iran in the early 19th century is estimated to have been between a half and no more than a third of the population. See: Gilbar, Gad. 1977. "Demographic Development in Late Qajar Persia: 1870-1906." In Asian and African Studies II. P. 145. Gilbar estimates the total population of Iran between 9 to 10 million in the 19th century. See also Curzon, Persia and the Persian Qestion, p. 492; also Bharier, Julian. 1968. "A Note on the Population of Iran: 1900-1966." Population Studies 22. PP. 275-6.
- 4- Scholars of Iranian history have adopted different approaches when analyzing Qajar's rule over a heterogeneous society. Among these two are the most pertinent. One is "Oriental Despotism" which depicts the Iranian society under the Qajars one in which the ruler ruled by virtue of the total socio-economic fragmentation of the social structure. See, for details, Abrahamian, Ervand. 1974. "Oriental Despotism: The Case of Qajar Iran." International Journal of Middle East Studies 5. Another approach elaborates on Weber's model of patrimonialism and portrays Qajar's Iran as an example of a patrimonial state, however, one in decline. See: Ashraf, Ahmad. 1969. "Historical Obstacles to the Development of a Bourgeoisie in Iran." Iranian Studies II.; also idem., 1981. "The Roots of Emerging Dual Class Structure in Nineteenth Century Iran." Iranian Studies XIV. PP. 5-27.
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- 7- Lambton, A.K.S. 1953. Landlord and Peasant in Persia. Oxford: Oxford University Press. P. 159.
- 8- Lambton, A.K.S. "Ilat," Encyclopaedia of Islam, p. 1104.
- 9- For details see: Shamim, Ali Asghar. 1342/1963. Iran dar dowreh-e saltanat-e Qajar, [Iran During the Qajar Rule]. Tehran: Ebn Sina Publications. PP. 7-10; also Fasa'i, Hassan. 1972. History of Persia Under the Qajars. Trans. Herbert Busse. N.Y.: Columbia University Press. P. 1; and Markham, Clement R. 1847. A General Sketch of the History of Persia. London: Longmans, Green and Co. P. 339.
- 10- Sheikholeslami, A. Reza. 1971. "The Sale of Offices in Qajar Iran, 1858-1896." Iranian Studies. IV. P. 105.
- 11- Ibid.
- 12- Bakhsh, Shaul. 1981. "Center-Periphery Relations in Nineteenth Century Iran." Iranian Studies XIV. P. 29. See also Sheikholeslami, ibid. For the devastating effects of such system see: Fraser, James. 1838. A Winter's Journey From Constantinople to Tehran. Vol. I. London: Richard Bently. PP. 399-409.
- 13- For details see: Lambton, "Ilat," Encyclopaedia of Islam; and De Bode, Baron C.A. 1845. Travels in Luristan and Arabistan. Vol. I. London: J. Madden and Co. PP. 51-52, 178-181; also Bina, Ali Akbar. 1342/1963. Tarikh-e siasi va diplomasi-ye Iran. [The Political and Diplomatic History of Iran]. Tehran: Tehran University Press. PP. 64-77; and Mostowfi, Abdollah. 1321/1942. Sharh-e zendegani-ye man ya tarikh-e ejtemai va edari-ye dowreh-e Qjarieh, [The Story of My Life or The Social and Administrative History of the Qajar Period]. Vol. III. Tehran: Tehran Mosavvar Publications. PP. 505-513.
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- 16- Stuart, Lieut. Colonel. 1854. Journal of a Residence in Northern Persia. London: Richard Bentley. P. 191.
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- 18- Berezin, L. Putesheslvie po severnoi persii, (Kazan, 1852), pp. 58-66, translated and quoted in Issawi, Charles. 1976. The Economic History of Iran: 1800-1914. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. P. 105.
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- 27- For details see: Kazemzadeh, Firuz. 1968. Russia and Britain in Persia: 1864-1914. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- 28- Bosworth, Encyclopaedia Iranica p. 230.
- 29- Taqizadeh, Middle East Journal, p. 456.
- 30- For details see: Hostler, Turkism and the Soviets, pp.

- 22-23.
- 31- For details see: Swietochowsky, Russian Azarbaijan.
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- 36- Swietochowsky, Russian Azarbaijan, p. 24.
- 37- Berengian, Azeri and Persian Literary Works in Twentieth Century Iranian Azerbaijan, p. 52.
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- 45- Nissman, David B. 1987. The Soviet Union and Iranian Azarbaijan: The Use of Nationalism for Political Penetration. Boulder: Westview Press. P. 16.
- 46- There is a general misconception that equates 'tribalism' with 'nomadism.' Tribes are not necessarily nomadic. However, as Richard Tapper contends: 'tribalism is more necessary to nomadism than nomadism to tribalism,' at least in the case of Iran. See: Tapper, Richard. 1983. "Introduction," in The Conflict of Tribe and State in Iran

- and Afghanistan, ed. Richard Tapper. New York: St. Martin's Press. P. 8.
- 47- See for details: Irons, William. 1969. "The Turkmen of Iran: A Brief Research Report." Iranian Studies II. PP. 27-38.
- 48- See for details: Salzman, Philip Carl. 1980. "Processes of Sedentarization as Adaptation and Response." In When Nomads Settle, ed. Philip Carl Salzman. New York: Praeger Publishers. P. 9.
- 49- Fowler, George. 1841. Three Years in Persia With Travelling Adventures in Koordistan. Vol. II. London: Henry Colburn. P. 21.
- 50- See for details: Baluch, Muhammad Sardar Khan. 1977. The Great Baluch: Life and Times of Ameer Chakar Rind. Quetta: Baluch Academy.
- 51- Richard Tapper defines confederacies as political unification of various tribes under a central authority to "defend and expand their interests vis-avis the state." See: Tapper, Richard. "Introduction," The Conflict of Tribe and State in Iran and Afghanistan, p. 9.
- 52- See for details: Barth, Frederik. 1953. Principles of Social Organization in Southern Kurdistan. Oslo: Brodrene Jorgense. PP. 10-15.
- 53- On the Kurds see: Ibid., and on the Baluch see: Salzman, Philip C. 1971. "Adaptation and Political Organization in Iranian Baluchistan." Ethnology 10. PP. 433-444; also Spooner, Brian. 1969. Politics, Kinship and Ecology in Southeast Persia." Ethnology 8. PP. 139-152.
- 54- Some Baluch tribes have considered descent bilaterally. See for details: Salzman, Philip C. "Political Organization," p. 440. The Kurds, however, are extremely rigid in this respect. See: Barth, Principles of Social Organization, pp. 50-60.
- 55- See for details: Sahlins, Marshall D. 1968. Tribesmen. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, Inc. P. 10. See also idem. 1967. "The Segmentary Lineage: An Organization of Predatory Expansion." In Comparative Political Systems, ed. Ronald Cohen and John Middleton. New York: The Natural History Press. PP. 89-119.
- 56- See for details: Van Bruinessen, Martin. Agha, Shaikh and State.
- 57- Barth, Principles of Social Organization, pp. 50-60.
- 58- Salzman writes that the chiefly families "married 'horizontally' with leaders of other groups and were

- concerned about the social status of mothers." See:
 "Adaptation and Political Organization..," pp. 440-441.
- 59- Kendal, 1978. "The Ottoman Kurds Under Ottoman Empire." In People Without A Country, ed. Gerard Chaliand. London: Zed Press. P. 24.
- 60- This is, particularly, true about the Kurdish society in which the concepts of "leadership and conflict are closely related." See for details: Van Bruinessen, Martin. Agha, Shaikh and State, p. 78 and after.
- 61- See for details: Baluch, Muhammad Sardar Khan. History of Baluch Race and Baluchistan, pp. 255-257.
- 62- For details on Kurds and the Baluch respectively see: Barth, Principles of Social Organization, p. 44 and Spooner, Brian. "Who Are the Baluch," p. 96.
- 63- Stuart, Lieut. Colonel. 1854. Journal of a Residence in Northern Persia. London: Richard Bentley. P. 208.
- 64- Curzon, George. Persia and the Persian Question, vol. II, p. 293.
- 65- Baluch, Muhammad Sardar Khan. 1958. History of Baluch Race and Baluchistan. Karachi: Process Pakistan. P. 256.
- 66- Tapper, Richard. "Introduction," in The Conflict of Tribe and State in Iran and Afghanistan, p. 24.
- 67- Arfa, Hassan. The Kurds, p. 22.
- 68- See for details: Arfa, The Kurds; also McDowall, The Kurds, p. 15.
- 69- Sykes, Percy Molsworth. 1902. Ten Thousand Miles in Persia. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. P. 106.
- 70- Lovell, John. and Smith, Evans. 1876. Eastern Persia: An Account of the Journeys of the Persian Boundary Commission, 1870, 71, 72. Vol. I. London: McMillan and Co. PP. 287-288; also Hughes, A.W. The Country of Balochistan, p. 57.
- 71- Safrastian, Arshak. The Kurds and Kurdistan, (London: The Harvili Press, 1948), p. 68.
- 72- See for details: Davidson, Roderic H. 1963. Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876. Princeton: Princeton University Press. P. 18.
- 73- Pelletiere, Stephen C. 1984. The Kurds: An Unstable Element in the Gulf. London: Westview Press. PP. 37-41.
- 74- Jwaideh, Wadie. 1960. The Kurdish Nationalist Movement: Its Origins and Development. New York: Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation. Syracuse university. P. 214 and after.
- 75- Harrison, In Afghanistan's Shadow, p. 19.

- 76- Sayeed, Khalid B. 1980. Politics in Pakistan: The Nature and Direction of Change. London: Praegers Publishers. PP. 3-4.
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- 80- Askari, Naser. 1357/1968. moghadameh-i bar shenakht-e Sistan va Baluchistan, [An Introduction to the Knowledge of Sistan and Baluchistan]. Tehran: Donya-ye Danesh Publishers. P. 64.
- 81- For a 19th century source see: Curzon, George. Persia and the Persian Question; for a contemporary source: Ghurab, Kamal al-Din. 1364/1985. Baluchistan: yadegar-e matrud-e qarn [Baluchistan: The Abandoned Remnant of the Century]. Tehran: Keyhan Publishing Co.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CONSTITUTIONAL REVOLUTION OF 1905-1911
AZARIS, KURDS, BALUCH

General Observations:

In the following pages the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911 and each group's particular reaction to that important event will be examined. Such factors as indigenous socio-political structures as well as each group's marginality vis-a-vis the mainstream political process played important roles in the different patterns of political behavior that emerged. In this light, the difference in the response of the Azaris to the Revolution and that of the Kurds and the Baluch can better be explained. Participation of the Azaris in the Revolution reflected their centrality in the Iranian socio-political structures and can be contrasted with the behavior of the Kurds and the Baluch that was an indication of their marginal position in the Iranian politics. Azari revolutionaries demonstrated selfless devotion to the cause of the Revolution that aspired not only to rid Iran of Qajar's despotic rule, but to put an end to the destructive Russo-British influence over the Court and the politicians. Indeed, the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911 was the culmination of the popular resentment

and grievances of the nascent intelligentsia of Iran -both Persian and Azari- who with the assistance of some members of entrepreneurial and religious classes were struggling for equity and justice. The Revolution aspired not only to rid Iran of Qajar's despotic rule, but to put an end to the destructive Russo-British influence over the Court and the politicians. This struggle also helped the emergence of the phenomenon of "Iranian nationalism." The idea of "Iranian nationalism" belonged to a small group of individuals, i.e., those secular, urban Iranians who were influenced by the West and whose secularism challenged traditional ideals and who advocated change vis-a-vis the defenders of the status quo. Iranian nationalism was also a direct response to the Russo-British penetration.

This nationalism, however, was by no means an overarching phenomenon. It neither reached nor did it attract masses of the peasantry or nomadic peoples who spoke different languages and possessed diverse cultures. Iranian nationalism was advocated by politically articulate Persian and Azari intellectuals who sincerely embraced it and contributed much to its development. On the other hand, the attachment of the Kurds and the Baluch to the small-scale society or "tribalism" persisted as they entered the 20th century. Indeed, the Revolution and

the subsequent period of anarchy and chaos, not to mention the weakened central control, created conditions in which both groups could lead more independent lives, free of government interference and control while occasionally raiding the settled population or travellers. Trans-border influences and foreign intervention in this period proved particularly significant in the case of the Azaris whose relations with the Iranian state was seriously affected by the Russian occupation of Azarbaijan.

The Azaris:

By the turn of the century, many urban Azaris had begun to demonstrate acute political consciousness. This consciousness which was mostly manifested in their attachment to Shiism and Iran, however, was not left intact. The unprecedented change that Iran experienced in this period also stirred the emergence of a national awakening of the sort among the Azaris. Initially the Azari intellectuals -particularly those who were influenced by the events in the North- gave expression to this new awareness. Gradually the urban middle class together with the Azari intelligentsia and later the urban rank and file particularly the workers followed suit. It

should be emphasized that the Azari national awakening that was, to a large extent, a consequence of contacts and communication with the Northern Azarbaijan as well as the subsequent occupation of the Iranian Azarbaijan by the Russians, evolved and grew together with their attachment to Iran. This "fluidity of ethnic boundaries"¹ explains certain junctures in history when Iranian Azaris have championed an "Iranian" cause and other instances when they have spearheaded Azari communal aspirations. Indeed, throughout the 20th century, the identification with Iran was not abandoned by the Iranian Azaris as they became more conscious of their Azari identity and the growth of Azari consciousness in no way contradicted Azari attachment to Iran.

In the previous chapter, we noted that in the last few decades of the 19th century Iranian Azarbaijan was influenced by the events in the Russian Azarbaijan. This was a time when the Azari intellectuals in the Russian Azarbaijan were striving to define their cultural identity. Their endeavors mostly were manifested in artistic expressions and publications of newspapers and magazines that were also received and appreciated in Iranian Azarbaijan.

By the turn of the century, both Azarbaijans were in

revolutionary turmoil. Many of the magazines and newspapers published in Russian Azarbaijan found their way into Tabriz [the capital of Iranian Azarbaijan].² Some of these publications advocated identification and alliance with the Ottoman Turks and wrote in literary Ottoman Turkish difficult for the Azari masses to comprehend.³ However, the most popular were those that strove to rouse political and national awakening on the basis of an Azari identity.⁴

In the Russian Azarbaijan, political sentiments mostly revolved around the struggle against Russian colonial domination and national awakening. In the Iranian Azarbaijan also political participation involved Azari opposition to the existing power structure. At this time, Russian Azaris were becoming acquainted with such terms as milliatchilik [nationalism] and Azari publications had begun to address their readers not merely as Muslims but more as Turks.⁵ Iranian Azaris were, obviously, not unaware of these developments in the Russian Azarbaijan. However, at this juncture, they were more involved in the politics of Iran as a whole. At the same time, it was evident that the Russian Azaris were looking beyond Russia for political leadership while the Iranian Azaris sought change within Iran itself.

It should be noted that many Russian Azaris were also involved in the political upheaval in Iran. Mohammad Amin Rasoulzadeh, a journalist and one of the leaders of a Marxian party for Muslims called Hemmat (1904), was closely identified with the revolution in Iran.⁶ Meanwhile the revolution of 1905 in Russia and the subsequent Muslim-Armenian wars in the Russian Azarbaijan drove many Azari intellectuals and political activists who were in danger of detention into Iranian Azarbaijan. These individuals, in turn, joined Iranian Constitutionalists and participated in Iranian politics. Thus, the ferment was kept alive not one sidedly. There was intense interaction and communication between "North" and "South." At this juncture, the politics and political activists of the two Azarbaijans overlap to such an extent that at times it is difficult to distinguish Russian Azaris from those who belonged to Iranian Azarbaijan. Every political incident and every provocative publication had its impacts felt on both Azarbaijans.

For the Russian Azari intellectuals and political activists who had fled the Tsarist repressive measures, the Constitutional Revolution of Iran presented another arena in which they could fulfill their otherwise frustrated aspirations. These immigrants assisted Iranian

Azari merchants, civil servants, journalists, the Constitutionalist clergy and other members of the intelligentsia in their struggle against the Qajars.⁷

There is no doubt that many of these individuals were under the influence of Persian language and culture. One of the most influential literary journals, Ganj-e Funun [Treasury of Arts], published in Tabriz, was in Persian.⁸ Also many Iranian Azarbaijanis who lived and worked abroad published newspapers in Persian (such as Akhtar in Istanbul) while wealthy entrepreneurs of Russian Azarbaijan subsidized and helped disseminate progressive newspapers such as Habl al-Matin among religious students in Najaf [an important Shii centers in Iraq].⁹

Meanwhile Iranian Azari poets and writers produced unprecedented amounts of literary work in Azari that basically dealt with socio-political issues of the day. Berengian writes that concepts such as "parliamentarism, constitutional monarchy or a republican form of government, nation, justice, freedom and ministerial cabinet, administrative corruption," etc. were particularly popular.¹⁰ It is interesting to note, however, that most of these works did not contain any reference to a separate Azari ethnic or national identity at this time. The expression of attachment to Iran, on

the other hand, was overwhelmingly present. The concept of vatan [motherland/fatherland] for example, was portrayed in Azari poetry as a beautiful "beloved who is being carried off by a foreigner."¹¹ Even when Azari socialist journalists tried to use ethnic metaphors to enhance the impact of their socialistic messages, the images created did not correspond perfectly to the social realities of the day. Berengian writes that in the caricatures of the magazine Azerbaijan, the dialogues spoken by the cartoon characters were carried out in different languages. Turkish was spoken by the peasantry while the landlords or tax-collectors spoke Persian. She notes, however, that in Azarbaijan most landlords were and are local.¹²

Thus the overwhelming thrust of Azari political activity and intellectual productivity was based on freeing Iran of foreign domination and putting an end to the Qajar rule. Indeed such Azari intellectuals as Abdolrahim Talibof who had travelled extensively in Russia advocated secularization and centralization of authority and creation of a unified Iranian nation.¹³ However, it should be pointed out that proliferation of Azari literary works during this period eventually helped the development of an Azari identity. The multitude of newspapers and

magazine articles written in Azari helped the growth and evolution of Azari literature and opened the door for the creation and development of textbooks in Azari.¹⁴

Literary and intellectual endeavors were not the only means through which the Iranian Azaris were involved in the Constitutional Revolution of Iran. Iranian Azaris were active through various organizational frameworks the most important of which were the anjumans. Anjumans were associations modeled after soviets¹⁵ that emerged during and after the Constitutional Revolution and brought like-minded individuals together and at times helped the administration of some areas during the chaos of the Revolution. Indeed these associations were instrumental in carrying out the day to day business of the government, particularly in northern provinces of Iran, at a time when the weakening of the central government had created a power vacuum in many urban centers. The first of such associations appeared in Tabriz in 1906 and from there spread to Tehran and other cities. In Azarbaijan different anjumans represented the multitude of forces active in the province. Azaris were also active in many anjumans in Tehran where most of the armed volunteers for the defense of the National Assembly were members of the Anjuman of Azarbaijanis.¹⁶ The most important and radical

of these anjumans was anjuman-e eyalatiye Azarbaijan [The State Anjuman of Azarbaijan] that aspired to local autonomy and was very strong.

In the meantime Hezb-e ijtemaiyyun-e amiyyun [social Democratic Party] had emerged that was a branch of the Social Democratic Party of Azarbaijan [Hemmat] founded in Baku in 1904. This party was established by Iranians in Baku and advocated centralization and secularization of Iran and was non-parochial in its approach to politics and economy. It is important to point out that Iranian Azaris had great prominence in the party's membership. Indeed markaz-e gaibi [the secret center] which was the executive committee of the party branch in Azarbaijan with Ali Monsieur at its head, had great influence in the Azarbaijani anjuman in Tabriz.¹⁷ The party also had great impact on the creation of labor unions in Tehran and Azarbaijan.¹⁸ These organizations, together with several others, helped foster the ideas of revolutionary change.¹⁹

The basic demand of revolutionaries (both Azari and Persian) was granting of a Constitution and the inauguration of a "national assembly." Considering the fact that this was a period when Iran was still referred to as the "land of Islam" and the Shah as the "Shah of Islam," it is interesting to note the utilization of such

concepts as "national assembly" by the revolutionaries. The introduction of such concepts as "nation of Iran," "national assembly" and "constitution" was an innovation in the political culture of Iran; novel ideas and thoughts presented by a few secular and Western-educated men who were either among the leaders of the revolt or provided inspiration for them. The fact that the Constitution of 1906 was based on Belgian and French Constitutions and was meant to replace the whimsical rule of the Qajars with a new and more rational structure is a credit to the efforts of these men. This was indeed a momentary lapse of the driving forces of the Shii dogma and the Iranian religious classes, an innovation that did not endure the test of time.

As was mentioned before, the influence of the Russian Azarbaijan in the propagation of these innovative concepts cannot be overlooked. The involvement of the Russian Azaris in this upheaval was to such an extent that when Muzaffar al-Din Shah offered an "Islamic Assembly," a telegram was sent from the Russian Azarbaijan threatening to dispatch armed volunteers because the revolutionaries considered an "Islamic Assembly" unacceptable.²⁰

The Shah eventually capitulated in August 5, 1906. The representatives who were elected to the Constituent

National Assembly to draft a Constitution belonged to urban upper strata. Among them 12 Azari delegates formed the core of the progressive faction and were, indeed, the cornerstone of the resistance and steadfastness in the Assembly.²¹ It seems the requirement of "literacy in Persian"²² was not considered a cause for alarm among these delegates.

This period in the Iranian history is more important in regards to the development and evolution of an "Iranian" identity. Although Iran was still far from becoming a nation-state in the Western and modern sense, the fundamental elements for such an evolution were being introduced. To begin with, for the first time in centuries the boundaries of the territory called "Iran" had become fixed. Although this was an imposition by neighbouring and more powerful states it was the first step in the direction of the emergence of a modern nation-state in Iran. Secondly, the Qajars and their rule, although traditional and weak, had provided Iran with a pervasive authority at the core that could be equated with the concept of internal sovereignty. Thirdly, the geopolitical significance of Iran and the rivalry of the two powers, i.e., the Great Britain and Russia, over Iran, had also endowed the Qajar state with international

recognition. These factors, indeed, facilitated Iran's emergence among the community of the 20th century nation-states. What remained to be achieved was the creation of modern structures and their institutionalization as well as the forging of a "nation," an "Iranian nation" that would provide a meaningful substance for the newly emerging state.

The Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911 was the first step in this direction. Although this over-arching Iranian identity was going to take a much more Persian form in later years, at this juncture the Iranian Azaris were as much a part of this process as were the Persians.

The Shah eventually signed the Constitution called the Fundamental Laws. The Constitution limited the power of the executive branch while giving the legislature more responsibility and authority. The person of the Shah whose power was said to emanate from the people was, however, given wider authority in the amendments to the Constitution in the subsequent year. Shi'a Islam and Persian language were proclaimed as the state religion and its language. Nothing pertaining the heterogeneous population of Iran appeared in the Constitution except that the religious minorities were prohibited to take cabinet positions. Some religious minorities, however,

were recognized and given parliamentary seats later.

It was mentioned that together with the Azari struggle for the achievement of the Constitution an incipient Azari identity also began to emerge among the Iranian Azaris; an identity, that later with more Persianization of Iran, evolved into a full-fledged ethnic consciousness. The historical juncture when this incipient identity demonstrated itself was after the granting of the Constitution and the crowning of Mohammad Ali Shah, the heir-apparent. It has been said about Mohammad Ali Shah that he was perhaps "the most perverted, cowardly and vice-ridden monster that had disgraced the throne of Persia in many generations."²³ The new Shah was a despot who could not tolerate the limitations the Constitution was imposing on him and used every possible means to stifle and intimidate the delegates.

Following the Shah's resistance, riots broke out in major cities particularly Tabriz. It is important to point out that Iranian Azaris were being assisted by 800 men from Russian Azarbaijan.²⁴ It was at this juncture that Iranian Azaris for the first time articulated their demands in communal terms. Kasravi writes that 20,000 individuals gathered in Tabriz and threatened to separate Azarbaijan from Iran if the Constitution would not be

ratified.²⁵ Kasravi contends that in some of their telegrams the Azaris called themselves mellat-e Azarbaijan [the nation of Azarbaijan].²⁶

In his book about Russian Azarbaijan, Tadeusz Swietochowsky considers this episode "the first outburst of `pan-Azarbaijani sentiment....'²⁷ a sentiment that was strengthened by the presence of many Azari immigrants fleeing Russian repressive measures. He quotes an official Russian newspaper:

....Semi-intellectuals from Caucasus, forgetting that they are Russian subjects, involve themselves eagerly in the Tabriz disturbances and send there their volunteers.²⁸

This was, indeed an interesting point in the history of national awakening in both Azarbaijans. Tabriz functioned as a safe haven for the Azari dissidents from Russia. The Iranian Azaris who were fighting for a Constitution could not but be affected by national sentiments of their co-ethnics in Russia. However, the pan-Azarbaijanism that Swietochowsky writes about was shared only by a small number of intellectuals and urban intelligentsia. There are no indications that rural masses of both Azarbaijans were in any way aware of such sentiments. Swietochowsky also considers this episode as one in which Ottoman Turks were considered as a viable

alternative by the Azarbaijanis.²⁹ This may be true for some Russian Azari intellectuals who followed a pan-Turkish dream and, of course, later were disillusioned. But the Iranian Azaris still had great attachment to Shiism and Iranian culture and the use of their ethnic identity was a means to an end. They were merely threatening the Qajars as best as they could. What is, however, important is that for the first time Azaris of Iran referred to themselves and their homeland as separate entities. Thus, the Constitutional Revolution, as important as it was for the creation and growth of an Iranian identity had a significant bearing on the emergence of an Azari identity. Subsequent events functioned as a catalyst which consolidated and solidified communal awareness among the Iranian Azaris.

The euphoria of the Constitution did not last long. With the rapid rise of Germany, the British and the Russians came to new understandings regarding Iran and thus in 1907 divided Iran into British and Russian spheres of influence.³⁰ This and the success of reactionary forces in Russia prompted Mohammad Ali Shah, who was supported by the Russians, to retrieve the power of the throne. He, with the assistance of Colonel Liakhov, the Russian commander of the Persian Cossack Brigade, launched

a coup, bombarded the Majles [the parliament] and reinstated his absolutist rule. What happened later is a clear manifestation of the centrality of Azaris in Iran's constitutional revolt.

The center of revolutionary activity was moved from Tehran to Tabriz where a bitter civil war ensued between the Constitutionalists and the Royalists. The Constitutionalists were mainly comprised of various urban strata from the lower middle to the aristocracy while the Royalists were made up of Shabsavan tribes and urban poor, the pro-regime clergy and the peasantry.³¹ The Shah's forces, in the meantime, laid siege to Tabriz and blockaded the city for 9 months.³² There is much written about this siege both by Iranian and Russian [Azari] writers depicting the courage, sacrifice and suffering of the population of Tabriz.³³ This courageous resistance, however, provided a pretext for the Russians to occupy Azarbaijan (April, 1909); apparently to get food to the city, open the highways,³⁴ and rescue foreigners entrapped by the siege.³⁵ But this intervention failed to keep Mohammad Ali Shah in power. The Shah was deposed on July 16, 1909. Yet, the Qajar dynasty retained the throne with Asad al-Mulk as regent and Constitution restored.

The occupation of Azarbaijan by the Russians

confronted the Iranian Azaris with a different kind of struggle. Before they were fighting, along with the Persians, against the Qajar's tyranny. Now they were left alone to defend themselves against an alien occupier. The Russians committed many atrocities in Azarbaijan and the Azaris, although fought hard, were no match for them. At the same time the new parliamentary government of Iran, facing innumerable economic and political problems, was incapable of extending any assistance.³⁶

Azaris' helplessness vis-a-vis the Russians and the absence of any assistance from the central government created feelings of isolation and abandonment. This was indeed a new political environment, one that required new adaptations. Azarbaijan under the pressure of the Russian occupation was naturally losing its centrality in the Iranian power politics. The center although not oblivious to Azari distress was unable to render any assistance. The consequence was a psychological rupture that in the short run not only affected Azari attitudes towards the Iranian state but helped strengthen Azari self-perception as distinct from the Persians.

The feeling of sheer desperation and abandonment is apparent in the telegrams Azari activists sent to Tehran. Kasravi documents the last of such telegrams to the center

by the Azari Provincial Society:

With the predicament Tabriz is facing no money has been sent to the city. All the cash and taxes of other towns and villages are being extorted by Samad Khan [the governor who was a Russian lackey]...The salaries of gendarmes and law officers and armed guardians of the city are delayed. So far we have kept them with a lot of promises but gradually they are putting down their weapons and leaving. With all these what do you think is going to happen to Tabriz?³⁷

Kasravi, himself, echoes this sentiment as he writes that Iranian Azaris while sacrificed a great deal for the sake of Iran, did not receive solidarity from the rest of the country; they were forgotten and abandoned.³⁸

Another important impact of the suppression of the Iranian Azaris by the Russians was the emerging non-contested Russian rule in the northern Iran. Firuz Kazemzadeh quotes the British Ambassador to the Court of the Tsar:

Unforeseen events had led to the occupation of certain districts in north Persia by Russian troops, and little by little, the whole machinery of the administration had been placed in the hands of the Russian Consul-General, and the same might be said of the governors at Resht, Kazwin and Julfa. They were, one and all, agents of the Russian government.....³⁹

From then on Russian influence reigned supreme in Iranian Azarbaijan. Many nationalists and political activists were arrested, tortured and executed by the Russians who remained in Azarbaijan until 1914 when they

withdrew after the War only to return in 1915. With the victory of the Bolsheviks the Russians evacuated Iranian Azarbaijan by 1918. Their occupation, however, helped the emergence of several trends in Iran. An initial trend was the anti-Tsarist feelings and activities of many Azaris that lasted until 1917. The other was the emergence of indigenous movements, particularly in the northern Iran, with nationalistic and leftist overtones, overtly or covertly influenced and/or encouraged by the Russians. The last, but the most significant trend, was the fact that the prolonged occupation of Iranian Azarbaijan by the Russian forces helped set the stage for future Soviet encroachment in the Iranian Azarbaijan. However, it should be emphasized that despite all that had happened to Azarbaijan, Azari masses still felt a great deal of attachment to Iran

The Kurds and the Baluch:

As we noted the Constitutional Revolution was a bourgeois nationalist movement which was urban based and basically alien to the thousands of nomadic or semi-nomadic tribal peoples or masses of the peasantry who at times happened to belong to different ethnic origins and

in no way identified with the Persian or Azari urban population and their aspirations.

Most of the Kurdish tribes of Iran, for example, supported the status quo and demonstrated hostility toward the Constitutionalists.⁴⁰ Some such as the powerful Kalhor tribe of Kermanshah [a Shii tribe] even supported Mohammad Ali Shah's attempt to overthrow the constitutional government in Tehran.⁴¹

There is no evidence of this kind of collaboration with the weakening central authority by the Baluch who had been repressed and brutalized by military expeditions and extortionate tax officials. After the death of Naser al-Din Shah (1896) and the weakening of the center a Baluch revolt led by Husain Khan Narui, the chief of the Narui tribe, was crushed through a joint operation of the British and Qajar forces.⁴² However, the Constitutional Revolution and subsequent chaos allowed a Baluch chieftain, Bahram Khan of Baranzai tribe, to rise to power and even manage to defeat the Qajar's expeditionary forces.⁴³ Bahram Khan and his independence proved too costly for the British who could not tolerate his raids into Eastern Baluchistan [the British zone of influence]. The British eventually defeated Bahram Khan and his tribal allies.⁴⁴ Subsequently, Bahram Khan's nephew, Doust

Mohammad Khan, succeeded him. He ruled most of Iranian Baluchistan until 1928 when Reza Shah's forces ended the Baluch independent era.

As we noted in the previous chapter, at this juncture, the Kurds and the Baluch present us with slightly different situations as to their relationship with the Qajar state. Indeed, the Kurds were not only in more interaction with the state, some Kurdish chiefs were also held in high esteem by the Qajar rulers. The fact that a considerable number of the Iranian Kurds were Shii Muslims perhaps made for an easier interaction. This may also explain the support extended to the falling Qajar Shah by some of these tribes. The Baluch, on the other hand, occupied the remotest corner of the Iranian territory and their contacts with the center may be summed up either in warlike confrontations or dealings with more peaceful yet extortionate Qajar officials. This, of course, does not mean that the Kurds did not experience the tyranny of the Qajar state. Yet, while the Kurds had learnt to deal with the state in a myriad of ways -from hostile confrontation to marriage to the Qajar Court- the Baluch had no way but to base their perception of the Qajars or the Persians [as they were synonymous to the Baluch] on fear and hatred.

However, more important for the two groups is their connections with their co-ethnics on the other side of the borders. Here again the Kurds and the Baluch demonstrate relatively different experiences. There is no doubt that both groups were in constant contact with the "other side." Indeed, at times, the same tribe was divided between two countries. The difference in experience, however, has to do with the different nature of society on the other side.

At the turn of the century the Kurds in the Ottoman territories lived under different conditions than the Baluch in the British dominated territories of the southwest Asia. The Baluch society and its traditional socio-political structures were left fairly intact by the British.⁴⁵ The Baluch society remained a traditional world in which social relationships stayed static and the socio-political structure was cemented by an established order. The Imperial power, in this case was content to leave the traditional rulers more or less in control. The British, while subdued the rebellious tribal leaders, came to some sort of understanding with the compliant ones. This "indirect rule" worked out very well for the British who although were acutely aware of the "tribal" resistance, had no reason to fear "nationalis aspirations"

among the Baluch. Indeed, the growth of ethnic consciousness and emergence of Baluch nationalism did not depend upon the resistance of some tribal leaders for independence. It depended upon the development of a new social complex: the urban, Westernized Baluch. This stratum, however, came to its own after the partition of the British Raj into India and Pakistan.

There are both similarities and differences between the situation of the Kurds and that of the Baluch during 19th century. Both groups were, of course, dominated by a so-called alien group. Both enjoyed autonomy; at times in a feudal structure in which the tribal chiefs had won, in return for their support and compliance, rights and privileges.

The Kurds who lived in the Ottoman territories, however, had begun to feel the tide of change in mid-19th century. We noted the emergence of a small Kurdish intelligentsia in the Ottoman territories. This small intelligentsia, however, was confronted with intense rivalry and hostility of the tribal leaders who perceived them as a threat to their power and status.⁴⁶ Many members of the Kurdish intelligentsia participated in the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 with great hopes for freedom and self-determination of the Kurdish community. However,

subsequent events, particularly the program of forcible Turkification launched by the Young Turks ended Kurdish euphoria. The participation of Kurdish urban intelligentsia in the revol, nonetheless, had a great impact on the growth and development of Kurdish identity.

Thus, during the early decades of the 20th century, the Kurdish leadership in the Ottoman territories was embarking on a challenging task while the Kurds who lived on the Iranian side of the border led a relatively inactive political life. Tribal loyalties reigned supreme; there was little urbanization and no articulate voice among the elite. The overall conditions of the Kurds reflected the all-encompassing backwardness and poverty of the country as a whole.

The conditions of the Baluch, in terms of the articulation of communal consciousness was probably worse. Iranian Baluch were "freewheeling and a law unto themselves"⁴⁷ at this time.

* * * *

In this chapter the background to the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911 was briefly discussed. Subsequently the impacts of the Constitutional Revolution on each group and their specific reactions to that event were examined. The Constitutional Revolution was a

significant event in the Iranian political history. It was, however, a turning point for political awakening of the Iranian Azaris. Azarbaijan's proximity to Europe, the division of its population between Iran and Russia, its economic prosperity and the centrality of its elite in Iranian politics had endowed the province and its population with a pivotal position in Iranian socio-political structures at the turn of the century. In this light, the active participation of the Iranian Azaris in the Constitutional Revolution is not surprising. What is important is that at this juncture, together with a general political awareness a communal consciousness also began to appear. The emergence of this awareness was a consequence of different factors the most important of which are: contacts and communications [these included a significant amount of literary and cultural activity in Azari Turkish] with the Russian Azarbaijanis who, at this time, had begun an earnest attempt to define themselves, occupation of Iranian Azarbaijan by Russian forces, and the subsequent decline of Azarbaijan's economic prosperity. These factors all reinforced the dissatisfactions and disappointments generated by the despotic rule of the last Qajar Shah. The Russian occupation of Azarbaijan and the inability of the state to

defend the Azaris, however, seems to have been the most important factor that helped emergence of a nascent Azari identity. As the Iranian state was struggling for survival, the Iranian Azaris under brutal Russian domination were searching for a psychological anchor. In such a situation the Iranian Azaris not only became available for trans-border influences but they were able to translate these influences into a new form of identity; an identity shared with their co-ethnics in the Russian Azarbaijan. Although this emerging identity never became contradictory with the Azaris' Iranian identity, the legacy of the rupture between the Azaris and the Iranian state at this period was going to be manifested soon in different movements of communal nature in Azarbaijan.

The situation of the Kurds and the Baluch, again, was identical at this stage. Since the link between the state and both groups was basically one of domination and resistance, the Qajars could only control the Kurds and the Baluch when the state was sufficiently strong. As the Constitutional Revolution entailed the weakness of the state, a situation was created in which both groups enjoyed complete autonomy. In contrast to the Azaris there was thus no change in the customary ways in which relations were perceived or carried on. This aspect of

the relationship between the state and these groups essentially continued well into the 20th century.

However, the trans-border influences had some impacts on the Kurds. The modernization and centralization policies of the Ottoman Sultans had generated some change in the Kurdish-inhabited areas of the Ottoman Empire. The Kurds who lived in the Iranian territory although aware of this change were little affected by it. The ramifications of this process of change only became manifest in Iranian Kurdistan by the end of WWII while in Iranian Baluchistan the Baluch tribes remained self-contained and static. It is thus plausible to argue that in the Kurdish case the process of change on one side of the borders had impacts, even if slow and gradual, on the other side.

In the following chapters we will analyze the impacts of the two World Wars on Iran, emergence and evolution of a strong central authority and each group's particular response to these developments.

NOTES

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- 2- Among these hayat [life], irshad [guidance] and also the popular satirical magazine Molla Nasr al-Din should be mentioned.
- 3- Swietochowski, Tadeusz. 1985. Russian Azarbaijan: 1905-1920. London: Cambridge University Press. PP. 56-57.
- 4- Molla Nasr al-Din was undoubtedly the most popular Azari publication at the time. For details see: Javadi, Hassan. 1987. "Ali Akbar Saber, the Poet-Satirist of Azarbaijan." In Turkic Culture, Continuity and Change, ed. Sabri M. Akural. Indiana: Indiana University Press. PP. 163-164.
- 5- Swietochowsky, Russian Azerbaijan, pp. 56-57.
- 6- Hemmat Party had connections with the Russian Social Democratic Worker's Party and created a great deal of agitation in both Russian and Iranian Azarbaijans. For details see: Kazemzadeh, Firuz. 1951. The Struggle For Transcaucasia: 1917-1921. Connecticut: Hyperion Press. P. 19. See also Swietochowski, Russian Azarbaijan, p. 51; and Benab, Y. 1978. "Tabriz in Perspective: A Historical Analysis of the Current Struggles of Iranian Peoples." RIPEH II.
- 7- Kasravi, Ahmad. 1340/1961. Tarikh-e hejdah saleh-e Azarbaijan. [The Eighteen Year History of Azarbaijan]. Tehran: Amir Kabir Publications. P. 145.
- 8- For details see: Browne, Edward G. 1983. The Press and Poetry of Modern Persia. Los Angeles: Kalimat Press. PP. 14-15.
- 9- Taqizadeh, Sayyed Hassan. 1960. "The Background of the Constitutional Movement in Azarbaijan." Middle East Journal 14. P. 457.
- 10- Berengian, Sakina. 1988. Azeri and Persian Literary Works in Twentieth Century Iranian Azerbaijan. Berlin:

- Klaus Schwarz Verlag. PP. 38-39.
- 11- Ibid.
 - 12- Ibid. P. 64.
 - 13- For details on Talibof see: Adamiyyat, Fereidun. 1363/1984. Andishehaye Talibof. [The Thoughts of Talibof]. Tehran: Damavand Press.
 - 14- Ibid. PP. 46-47.
 - 15- Spector, Ivar. 1962. The First Russian Revolution: Its Impact on Asia. N.J.: Prentice Hall, Inc. P. 44.
 - 16- See for details: Kasravi, Ahmad. Tarikh-e hejdh saleh-e Azarbaijan.
 - 17- Taherzadeh Behzad, Karim. 1363/1984. Qiyam-e Azarbaijan dar engelab-e mashruteh-e Iran. [The Azarbaijan's revolt in the Constitutional Revolution of Iran]. Tehran: Egbal. PP. 45-46.
 - 18- Swietochowsky, Russian Azarbaijan, p. 66. Also: Abrahamian, Ervand. 1982. Iran Between Two Revolutions. Princeton: Princeton University Press. PP. 76-77.
 - 19- For detailed accounts on Secret Societies during the Constitutional Revolution see: Lambton, Ann K.S. 1987. "Secret Societies and the Persian Revolution of 1905-6." In Qajar Persia: Eleven Studies, ed. Ann K.S. Lambton. Austin: University of Texas Press.
 - 20- Taherzadeh Behzad, Karim. Qiyam-e Azarbaijan dar inquilab-e mashruteh-e Iran. P. 48.
 - 21- Browne, Edward G. 1916. The Persian Revolution. London: Cambridge University Press. P.146.
 - 22- Abrahamian, Ervand. Iran Between Two Revolutions. P. 86.
 - 23- Nyrop, Richard F. 1978. Iran: A Country Study. Washington, D.C.: The American University. P. 49.
 - 24- Swietochowsky, Tadeusz. 1983. "National Consciousness and Political Orientation in Azerbaijan, 1905-1920." In Transcaucasia: Nationalism and Social Change, ed. Ronald Grigor Suny. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press. P. 216.
 - 25- Kasravi, Ahmad. 1340/1961. Tarikh-e mashruteh-e Iran. [The History of the Constitutional Revolution in Iran]. Tehran: Amir Kabir. P. 305.
 - 26- Ibid.
 - 27- Swietochowsky, Russian Azarbaijan, p. 68.
 - 28- Ibid.
 - 29- Swietochowsky, Russian Azarbaijan, p. 68.
 - 30- For details see: Kazemzadeh, Firuz. 1968. Russia and

Britian in Persia: 1864-1914. New Haven: Yale University Press.

31- Kasravi, Ahmad. Tarikh-e hejdah saleh-e Azarbaijan, pp. 127-128.

32- For an interesting account of the defense of Tabriz see: Fathi, Asghar. 1979. "The Role of the 'Rebels' in the Constitutional Movement in Iran." International Journal of Middle East Studies 10. PP. 55-66.

33- Among these the most notable are: Amir Khizi, Ismail. 1338/1959. Qiyam-e Azarbaijan va Sattar Khan [The Revolt of Azarbaijan and Sattar Khan]. Tabriz: Tehran publications. Also Taherzadeh Behzad, Karim. Qiyam-e Azarbaijan dar ingilab-e mashruteh-e Iran; Kasravi, Ahmad. Tarikh-e hejdah saleh-e Azarbaijan; Vijuyah, Muhammad Baqir. 1357/1979. Tarikh-e ingilab-i Azerbaijan va balva-yi Tabriz. Tehran: Amir Kabir; also published in the Soviet Union a famous novel Dumanli Tabriz [the Fog of Tabriz] in Azari by M.S. Ordubadi.

34- Kasravi, Tarikh-e hejdah saleh. P. 36.

35- Spector, Ivar. The Soviet Union and the Muslim World. P. 50.

36- Kasravi, Tarikh-e hejdah saleh, pp. 38-74; also Taherzadeh Behzad, Qiyam-e Azarbaijan dar ingilab-e mashruteh-e Iran, p. 123.

37- Kasravi, Tarikh-e hejdah saleh-e Azarbaijan, PP. 254-255.

38- Ibid., pp. 154-278.

39- Kazamzadeh, Firuz. 1962. "Russia and the Middle East." In Russian Foreign Policy: Essays in Historical Perspective, ed. Ivo J. Lederer. New Haven: Yale University Press.

40- Kasravi, Tarikh-e hejdah saleh-e Azarbaijan, p. 188 and pp.514-516.

41- Kinnane, Derk. 1964. The Kurds and Kurdistan. London: Oxford University Press. P. 46.

42- Sykes, Percy M. 1902. Ten Thousand Miles in Persia or Eight Years in Iran. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. PP. 274-275.

43- Jahanbani, A. 1338/1959. Amaliyyat-e Qooshoun dar Baluchistan. [Operations of the Armed Froces in Baluchistan]. Tehran: Majles Publications.

44- Sykes, Ten Thousand Miles in Persia, pp. 454-456.

45- For details see: Embree, Ainslie T. 1977. Pakistan's Western Borderlands: A Transformation of a Political

Order. Durham: Academic Press. PP. 1-25.

⁴⁶- Kinnane, Kurds and Kurdistan, p. 25. Also Safrastian, Arshak. 1948. The Kurds and Kurdistan. London: The Harvill Press. P. 72.

⁴⁷- Harrison, Selig S. 1981, In the Afghanistan's Shadow. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. P. 17.

CHAPTER FOUR

W.W.I. AND AFTER: AZARIS, KURDS, BALUCH

This chapter will examine the impacts of the War years on Azari, Kurdish and Baluch communities. The first section will discuss the Azaris and the emergence of the first Azari movement with communal overtones in Iranian Azarbaijan that was a consequence of a break that occurred in the relationship between the Iranian state and the Iranian Azaris after the occupation of Iranian Azarbaijan by Russian forces in 1909. This break was reinforced by wartime chaos and near absence of central authority in Iran after the Constitutional Revolution.

The Constitutional Revolution although had succeeded to topple Mohammad Ali Shah, had done little to alter the conditions of the masses. There existed no detailed program for the country and the power structure remained unchanged. As Ann Lambton comments:

....The underlying intention of the constitutional movement was.....that the ruler would be duly warned and restore 'just' government.¹

This may explain the fact that no drastic transfer of power took place after the success of the Revolution.² Those who led the movement were from middle and upper-middle strata of the Iranian society and their victory did not necessarily mean the emergence of a new power

structure.

When the second Majles [parliament] convened the country was subject to political disorder and acute financial problems. The outlying areas were practically independent. The Russians were still in occupation of Azarbaijan while the British exercised a great influence in the southern part of the country particularly in Khuzestan where the majority of the inhabitants were of Arab origins. By the time the W.W.I. broke out, Iran was almost divided to the Russo-British spheres of influence. Indeed, these powers wielded such influence that an attempt to bring in the U.S. into the Iranian political scene by hiring Morgan Shuster to reform Iranian finances was defeated under Russian pressure.³

W.W.I. brought new devastation to the country. Iran's declaration of neutrality was ignored by the belligerent powers. With the onset of the War and withdrawal of the Russians, Azarbaijan was occupied by the Ottoman Turks in the fall of 1914. This chapter will pay particular attention to Russian and trans-border influences in Azarbaijan while Azari response to the idea of pan-Turkism will also be discussed.

The second section of this chapter will examine the situation of the Kurds and the Baluch during this period.

Trans-border influences seem to have begun to affect some Kurdish tribal leaders in Iranian Kurdistan. The movement of Ismail Aqa Simko was partly affected by such influences. The War, however, did not create a significant transformation in Iranian Baluchistan although both German and British agents were active in the region and the British, at one point, launched several military operations in the Sarhad [the northern area of the Iranian Baluchistan] to secure the area and stop the raidings of some tribal leaders into the British zone of influence.

THE AZARIS:

As the events of the War years and after demonstrated, the Constitutional Revolution and the Russian occupation had set the stage for emergence of a political consciousness that was specifically Azari. This form of consciousness was also a consequence of trans-border influences which continued throughout the War years.

Following the fall of Tabriz, Azarbaijani intellectuals, particularly those of the Russian Azarbaijan, began to increase their attempts to spread pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism. The pan-Turkists addressed

themselves to the Young Turks movement in Turkey. The goal was the achievement of Turan, the greater nation of all Turkic peoples.⁴ The Ottoman Turks, before the Kemalist movement, had not shown great interest in the Azaris and their cause.⁵ However, some Russian Azari intellectuals, downplaying the Sunni-Shii split, appealed more and more to ethnicity. Some of these intellectuals, such as Agaev and Hussain Zade, actually went to Turkey to realize their pan-Turkic dreams.

Pan-Turkism, however, did not endure long in Azarbaijan. There is no doubt that the Young Turks' seizure of power in Constantinople was an important factor in strengthening pro-Turkish sympathies between 1908-1914 among the Russian Azari intellectuals. Yet, these sympathies seem to have been more pro-Turkish and not particularly pan-Turkic.⁶ Indeed, one question that at that juncture could not be answered yet was whether the Azaris, Russian or Iranian, could identify with the Ottoman Turks?

There was, also, an important opposing group who looked with disapproval to this growing intellectual sympathy for Turkey. This group was the Shii clergy who still had close connection with Iran and had no sympathy for Sunni Ottoman Turks even though they were Turks and

thus ethnically and linguistically akin to the Azaris.⁷

The Ottoman Turks, on the other hand, encouraged both pro-Turkish and pan-Islamist tendencies since both served to create common denominators for non-Turkish and Turkish Muslims.

When W.W.I. broke out Iranian Azarbaijan was still occupied by the Russian forces. The Ottoman Turks refused to recognize Iranian neutrality due to the presence of these forces in Azarbaijan. Soon the Ottoman forces were in occupation of Azarbaijan as well. There is no doubt that the Ottomans, in their drive towards east, had both pan-Turkic and pan-Islamic objectives. Not only were they intent on reviving the lost power and glory of the Caliphate but they also intended to annex other Turkish inhabited lands such as Azarbaijan.

Considering what Iranian Azaris had endured since 1909 it is not surprising that they welcomed the new invaders. Like most Iranians they sympathized with the enemies of Russia. It is said that "strict neutrality was held to involve hanging anyone who took up arms against the Ottoman invader."⁸

Kasravi writes that the temporary defeat of the Russians by the Ottomans brought relief to the Iranian Azaris:

Azari revolutionaries even before the war had good memories of the Ottoman Turks who had given sanctuary to the revolutionaries and constitutionalists fleeing Iranian Azarbaijan to escape Russian torture and death squads..⁹

Initially the sympathy towards the Ottoman Turks was limited to some Azari intellectuals. Yet the call for holy war moved even those traditional Azari Shiis who looked at the Sunni Turks with suspicion. For many Russian Azari intellectuals Turkey was a saviour who would eventually help them create an independent Azari state. The Ottoman forces were supposed to render this assistance to the "North" from Iranian Azarbaijan.¹⁰

In Iranian Azarbaijan, the war brought some easing of Russian repression. The Russians were forced to focus their attention to other fronts. Again, newspapers and other publications began to resurface and the Azaris resumed their political activities.¹¹ However, the Ottomans were defeated by the Russians in the Caucasus War and the Russians occupied Tabriz again. The political activists either went underground or fled.¹²

These developments changed the situation. In the Russian Azarbaijan the Russian forces tried to show the Azaris that insurrection could have undesirable outcomes by making examples of other ethnic groups. This together with a more favorable attitude by the new Russian Viceroy

and the ensuing economic prosperity due to the war-time boom in oil prices, created a situation in which the Russian Azaris began to show signs of loyalty to the Russian state; even supporting Russia against Germany and Ottoman Turkey.¹³

But in Iranian Azarbaijan, the war years brought economic disaster. The economic link between Russian and Iranian Azarbaijan that had helped the development of Azarbaijan's economy suffered greatly and this caused a sharp rise in the unemployment rate.¹⁴ More important, the image of Ottoman Turks, among the Iranian Azaris, suffered due to the misbehavior of the Ottoman forces during their stay in Azarbaijan.¹⁵ One thing, however, did not change and that was the resentment and anti-Tsarist feelings of the Iranian Azaris. Indeed mujahedin-e Azarbaijan [the Azari fighters], as Kasravi calls them, were actively agitating against the Russians.¹⁶

Thus while Iranian Azarbaijan was struggling against foreign occupiers without a plan and in a disorganized and disorderly fashion, in the Russian Azarbaijan, most intellectuals were striving to create an independent entity in Transcaucasia. To achieve this, different groups and organizations were being formed among which the Hemmatists [socialists] and the Musavatists [nationalists]

were the most important. Turkey, in the meantime, had proven to be an insufficient inspirational motive. Thus, the independent entity to be born either had to be a state separate from Turkey or an autonomous part of the Russian Empire.

It is important to note that in the short period between 1900 to 1918, Russian Azarbaijanis demonstrated a great rise in the evolution of their ethnic consciousness. However, the problem that the Russian Azaris had to confront was the surprising heterogeneity of groups and ideas within the Azari population. In contrast to such ethnic groups as the Armenians who claimed and expressed a national identity for centuries and their fundamentally nationalist party Dashnakistiun was a symbol of their homogeneous nationalist aspirations, Azarbaijanis were only beginning to find ways, albeit different ones, to express themselves.

The October Revolution of 1917 was welcomed by all Iranians particularly the Azaris for it meant the withdrawal of the Russian troops from Iranian Azarbaijan. In the Russian Azarbaijan, the Revolution spurred the resurgence of Hemmat [socialist] and Musavat [nationalist] parties. With the beginning of the Russian civil war (1918) the three Transcaucasian ethnic groups, i.e.,

Azarbaijanis, Armenians and Georgians decided on a Transcaucasian federation and self rule. However, the existence of latent Armenian-Azarbaijani hostilities and the fact that the three states had different goals meant that eventually serious problems would arise. The Transcaucasian federation was soon dissolved with each state declaring its own independence.

On May 28, 1918, the independent state of Azarbaijan was declared. Because of Persian fears of irredentism, the new nation was forced to refer to itself as Caucasian Azarbaijan. Azarbaijan signed its own peace with the Ottomans and it received Ottoman troops in order to suppress Armenian troops in Karabagh and to recapture Baku from the Bolshevik Hemmatists.

The Ottoman occupation of Russian Azarbaijan also drastically changed the attitudes of the northern Azaris towards the Ottoman Turks. The Ottomans began to interfere in the internal affairs of Russian Azarbaijan, and Ottoman officials displayed contempt for Azarbaijani leaders. The Ottomans were still pursuing the goal of a greater Turanian Empire. The result of Ottoman attitudes and behaviour was a steep decline in Azari support for pan-Turkism. The fact also remains that the Azaris considered themselves as superior to the Ottoman Turks.

The diplomatic correspondences of Franz von Papen, German Ambassador to Turkey, addressed to the German Foreign Office are revealing:

...The Eastern Turks [non-Ottoman Turks] feel the Turks amalgamated in the new Turkish republic are not entitled to be included under the term true Turkish 'nationality.' They had lost their real Turkish character, not in the recent past, but long ago. In Baku, the Anatolian Turks are regarded as being simply Levantines who speak Turkish; as little contact as possible with them is encouraged. This evolution has a history of many hundred of years; in the last centuries of Ottoman history the higher officialdom of the court and of the empire were represented by only a small percentage of Turks. At first they were of Hungarian origin, then Albanians, and later, during the regime of Abdul Hamid, they were dislodged by Circassians and Arabs. (This historical fact and political point of view was often confirmed during political discussions with interested persons in Tabriz). The topic is actual since the inhabitants of Tabriz are also Azarbaijan Turks and feel they have parentage with the Baku Turks....¹⁷

Von Papen confirms the decline of pan-Turkic sentiments among the Azaris:

The new Azarbaijan state does not wish to be hampered with other Eastern Turks. The Azarbaijanis maintain that Volga Turks, Tatars, Turkmen, etc., because of their dispersion, cannot claim national independence; they need to pass through a long evolution, and the task of educating them in the operation of state should not fall to the Azarbaijan revolutionary movement....¹⁸

On October 9, 1918 when the Ottoman Turks surrendered to the Allies, they were replaced by the British in the Russian Azarbaijan. The British attempted to establish a

liberal state in Azarbaijan. British administration of the region, thus, resulted in the growth of national institutions along Western democratic lines. The oil embargo placed on Bolshevik Russia by the British created economic problems for Azarbaijan. By August 1919, however, the British had withdrawn from the region, and Russian Azarbaijan, for the first time, was free of any foreign influence and left on its own to face an increasingly victorious Red Army. As the Red Army pushed southward, Azarbaijan proposed a union with Iran. Iran, however, at the mercy of the British herself, refused the offer.¹⁹

For Bolshevik Russia the reconquest of Azarbaijan was essential. Lenin was determined to recover the oil fields of Transcaucasia that were vital for the survival of his nascent revolutionary state. Thus, the Bolsheviks and their Himmatist [Azari socialists] allies who were using effective propaganda to increase their numbers, formed a plan to reconquer Azarbaijan. Himmat would overthrow Musavat [Azari nationalist] within Baku and let the Red Army which was moving southward into the city. On April 27, 1920, the Russians regained Azarbaijan.²⁰

It is ironic that the Azarbaijani state lost its independence at a point when Russian Azarbaijanis had

acquired a well-defined national identity. The political experience they had gained since the turn of the century and particularly the short period of independence had helped this new identity solidify. National awareness was also expressed in Azari claims on Azarbaijan as a national homeland.

THE KHIABANI MOVEMENT IN IRANIAN AZARBAIJAN

The years immediately after the war also witnessed the expression of self-definition in Iranian Azarbaijan. After suffering almost two decades of intermittent occupation, chaos, famine, and extreme hardship, Iranian Azaris could not help but feel that they must fend for themselves. Political instability had created a situation in which the Azaris for the first time perceived themselves separated from the center of power. The "Khiabani Movement" was the manifestation of such perception.

Some Soviet writers argue that it was the October Revolution that gave impetus to what they call "national liberation movement" in Iranian Azarbaijan and thus consider Khiabani, the leader of the movement, as "well-disposed towards the Soviet government."²¹ The October

Revolution, obviously, had inspirational effects on the movement. However, it should be pointed out that the Democratic Movement in Azarbaijan was neither socialist nor did it have a favorable attitude towards the Russians.

Shaikh Mohammad Khiabani, the leader of the movement, was an ex-clergy who had been active as a constitutionalist and was elected in the Second National Assembly as a Tabriz representative. He was a member of the National Democratic minority faction in the Assembly and was considered a staunch Iranian nationalist. In 1911 when the constitutionalists were being persecuted by the Russians he fled to Caucasus and in 1914 he returned to Azarbaijan with the purpose of liberating Iran from foreign domination. During the Ottoman occupation of Tabriz he was arrested and banished. After being released he returned to Tabriz and in 1917 he was one of the major organizers of the celebration for the October Revolution.

The October Revolution encouraged the emergence and growth of Soviet-like political entities in northern provinces of Iran. In Gilan and Azarbaijan the Russians together with the assistance of some members of the Azari population created committees that closely resembled soviets. In Azarbaijan a local committee of Azari Social Democrats with the help of a Russian Azari soldier

sponsored the evacuation of the Russian troops.²² Such committees helped the idea of local self-government take hold. Thus, Khiabani who was the head of the state branch of the Democratic Party in Azarbaijan helped this branch fill the political vacuum in Azarbaijan.

At this time, the Azaris of Iran had a number of grievances. As was mentioned, they were practically abandoned by the central government who not only could not extend any assistance during the Russian occupation but was not even able to protect Azaris against depredations of different Kurdish tribes. Also the fact that Azaris had been completely under-represented in the Third Majles as well as the economic decline of Azarbaijan had caused great resentment in Azarbaijan.

Khiabani had established a daily newspaper called Tajaddud [modernity] that became the organ of his Fergeh-e demokrat-e Azarbaijan [Democratic Party of Azarbaijan].²³ In his newspaper, Khiabani printed provocative articles that accused Prime Minister Vosuq al-Dowleh -who had signed the 1919 Treaty with the British-²⁴ of ineptitude, corruption and treason.²⁵ Khiabani also had oratorical skills and his newspaper mostly printed his speeches that were inflammatory, fiercely anti-British and, of course, critical of Vosuq's regime. The main demands of the

"Democrats" were: equitable representation of Azaris in the Majles as well as creation of local and state committees [anjumans] who would have the responsibility of managing the internal affairs and guaranteeing the provincial security. The "Democrats" also requested the establishment of a new government that would be impartial. Apparently the pro-British nature of the Vosuq's regime made the Azaris feel that the southern provinces of Iran would receive a preferential treatment at their expense.²⁶

By 1920 Khiabani had managed to gather a number of Azari dissidents, people who for one reason or the other were dissatisfied with the state of affairs. These groups ranged from merchants, some members of the ulama, bureaucrats and certain detachments of military police to students and other disenchanted members of the intelligentsia.²⁷

In the beginning the movement limited itself to a series of demonstrations. Yet, soon Khiabani and his followers succeeded to occupy the Post Office, police station and other governmental buildings and proclaimed Tabriz the center of the "national liberation movement" of Iran.²⁸

Although subsequent events and actions by Khiabani and his followers could not be interpreted as anything but

separatist, there is no reason to believe that prior to these events, Khiaban had entertained any secessionist ideas. Indeed, he bitterly opposed the Ottomans when they advocated such ideas while occupying Azarbaijan.²⁹ Also when a Russian newspaper wrote about the movement as one "which is intent on separating Azarbaijan from Iran," Khiabani and his followers vehemently rejected the allegation and proclaimed that they only wanted to "improve things and that Azarbaijan was an inseparable part of Iran."³⁰ However, amidst all these cries for Iran, the communal and parochial overtones of the movement were becoming more discernible. Among the goals proclaimed by the seizure of political power in Tabriz were: replacing state officials with administrators acceptable to the people of Azarbaijan as well as achievement of equitable parliamentary representation and a more adequate budgetary allocation for Azarbaijan.

Khiabani and his followers, thus, soon began to drive the officials of the central government out and took control of other Azarbaijani cities and towns. Subsequently, a so-called "national government" was established and most important of all the name of "Azarbaijan" was changed into "Azadestan" [Land of Freedom]. The "Democrats," thus, argued that "Azadestan"

had always been the center of liberation activities in Iran and now the liberation of "Azadestan" will spread to the rest of Iran and this was just an initial phase of the liberation of the whole country.³¹ Indeed, the "Democrats" considered their government as the only legitimate government in Iran that would eventually eradicate foreign influence and corrupt politicians and create a Democratic Iran with provisions for Azarbaijani autonomy. The "Democrats", in the meantime, initiated a series of reform policies in Azarbaijan that ranged from fixing prices to the creation of educational institutions for the poor in Tabriz and distribution of state lands to the peasantry.

Khiabani, subsequently, severed all ties with the center and proclaimed himself as President of the newly formed Republic of Azarbaijan. When due to this and other pressures the government of Vosuq fell, Khiabani refused to accept any kind of negotiation with his successor Mushir al-Dowleh who was a liberal constitutionalist and a known patriot. Khiabani was, indeed, on an unreturnable path.

There is a debate regarding the "separatist" character of Khiabani movement. Although Khiabani and his followers repeatedly rejected allegations regarding the

secessionist nature of their movement, the fact remains that the movement, mainly advocated by the intelligentsia and the urban poor, was nationalist in character. However, nowhere in Khiabani's speeches one can find any reference to "pan-Azarbaijani" ideals that later surfaced among some Azaris of Iran. Yet, it is important to remember that Khiabani succeeded in actually "separating" Azarbaijan from the domain of the central control for a brief period. And although Khiabani and his followers insisted that they were fighting for Iran and an Iranian cause and had no separatist intentions, to the central government the changing of the name "Azarbaijan" to "Azadestan" could only be interpreted as another indication of their secessionist objectives. Indeed, the government mainly perceived the movement as Soviet inspired. There is, however, no documented evidence to prove that Khiabani was cooperating with the Russians regardless of the Russian interest in him and his movement. In point of fact, different sources agree that Khiabani was not willing to be identified with the Russians and did not accept their assistance.³²

The movement was defeated when the new government of Mushir al-Dowleh utilized the only organ that Khiabani had not been able to subdue, the Iranian Cossack force.³³ The

Iranian Cossack force was headed by Reza Khan who in 1921 carried out a coup and in 1925 proclaimed himself the Shah of Iran and ended several years of chaos and anarchy in Iranian politics. In september 1920 the Iranian Cossacks dispersed the rebels. Khiabani who had taken refuge in a friend's house was killed and his movement collapsed immediately.³⁴

Khiabani's movement is perhaps the first of its kind in the history of Iranian Azarbaijan. It was a response to the forces that -from the last few decades of the 19th century- had begun to penetrate Iranian Azarbaijan. These forces not only were a reflection of change in Iran but to a great extent they had direct relations to the Russian occupation and other changes taking place in the Russian Azarbaijan. Azarbaijanis of Iran, indeed, were among the first groups of the Iranian population who experienced a breach with the old order of things. This challenging experience, however, did not destroy their ties or their attachment to Iran, its culture and Shiism. In point of fact, this may explain the indecisiveness that has been attributed to Khiabani.³⁵ His feelings toward the idea of reform in Iran and his communal proclivities regarding Azarbaijan again exemplify the fluidity of Azari ethnicity and the ambivalence that the Iranian Azaris have felt

throughout many decades of this century. If Khiabani and his followers insisted on the non-secessionist nature of their movement, they were probably honest. There were, however, immediate consequences to the actions that they took to express their grievances. Among the most important of these consequences was the emergence of an independent political entity in Iranian Azarbaijan, an entity whose existence was mutually exclusive with that of the central government's.

The movement also suffered from certain shortcomings the most important of which were internal divisions and lack of grassroots support. Kasravi, an Iranian nationalist and an Azari himself, belonged to one of the factions of the Democratic Party that was expelled. He is very critical of Khiabani in his writings, accusing Khiabani of having made "Azadestan a pretext for his plans."³⁶ This division eventually cost Khiabani his life. The movement's own military force was meagre and the rank and file of the Iranian Azaris were not willing or prepared to put their lives on the line for it. Thus, at a time when Khiabani and his followers were besieged by the Cossacks and the Kurdish and Shahsevan tribes of Azarbaijan, the needed assistance was not forthcoming. Although this movement was an indication of a burgeoning

Azari national consciousness, Azari ambivalence was the greatest impediment to its success.

THE RUSSIAN FACTOR IN IRANIAN AZARBAIJAN:

The impacts of the Russian occupation of Azarbaijan have already been elaborated. Other, less visible but equally important, influence from Russia was the penetration of Marxist ideology. The establishment of leftist influence in the Iranian Azarbaijan goes back to the turn of the century and the presence of many Azari workers in Baku who were attracted to the Russian Social Democratic Workers Party. Hemmat the Social Democratic Party of Russian Azarbaijan that was established in 1904 fostered the creation of an organization of Iranian workers called Ijtimaiyyun-e Amiyyun [social democrats]. These workers who were mostly from Iranian Azarbaijan were organized under the supervision of Russian Azari Bolsheviks. David Nissman quotes an interesting comment by a Soviet historian:

Iranian Social Democracy was founded with the help and direct participation of the Bolsheviks of the Transcaucasus.³⁷

Indeed, the first attempt to establish a political party along Communist lines took place in 1916 by two

Iranian Azari workers in Baku.³⁸ Adalat [justice] Party attracted a great number of Iranian workers in Baku. Seyyed Ja'far Javadzadeh [Pishevvari] who played prominent roles in Gilan Soviet Republic and also in Azarbaijan Democratic Republic in 1945, was the editor of the Party's organ Hurriyat [Freedom] that was published almost entirely in Azari and was particularly popular among the Azari workers.³⁹ Also, at the time, the Bolsheviks and the Russian Army through Soldier's Committees or Soviets of Soldiers Deputies were involved in organizational and propaganda work in Iranian Azarbaijan.⁴⁰

The attempts of the Bolsheviks to influence events in Iran reached its zenith with the landing of the Soviets at Enzeli in the Province of Gilan [Caspian shore]. Analyzing the events that led to the establishment of the Gilan Soviet Republic is beyond the scope of this study. It is, however, sufficient to point out that the emergence of a communist regime in Russia also had an impact on many Azaris who were in frequent interactions and communications with their kin in the Soviet Union. Indeed, most of the early Iranian Communists were of Azari origins, [See table II]. This fact made Azarbaijan more vulnerable to the Soviet ideological influence and politico-military penetration. The emergence of the

Soviet Azarbaijan also changed the character of the Russian plans for Iran and other Muslim countries located in Russia's southern flank.

After the October Revolution and the take-over of the independent government of Azarbaijan by the Red Army, Russian Azarbaijan became part of a highly centralized state within the Soviet Union. The new-found national consciousness of the Russian Azaris had to be repressed and subsequently replaced with a kind of consciousness that would be acceptable to the Bolsheviks.⁴¹ To pursue such an objective, several policies were adopted the most norteworthy of which were language policies that were directed:

at bringing the Azari literary language in line with actual usage and the study of the Azarbaijani past in order to establish and codify it in line with the demands of party and state.⁴²

In 1929 Latin script was adopted for Azari language and on the eve of W.W.II. the script was changed again to a modified form of cyrillic.⁴³ The effect of such a change was that literary communication between Soviet Azarbaijan and Iranian Azarbaijan became much more difficult. Iranian and Soviet Azaris, therefore, could not engage in literary and cultural exchange as easily as in the past when the Russian Azaris used Persian and/or

Arabic script. Indeed, the Soviet authorities by gradual purging of Azari national Communists made sure that the Russian Azari intellectuals could not try to stir nationalist sentiments among the Iranian Azaris since such sentiments could in turn arouse Russian Azaris. It is, however, ironic that these policies eventually helped solidify Russian Azaris' sense of nationhood. Initially, this feeling of nationhood was not, in an explicit way, extended to the Iranian Azaris. It was after the consolidation of the Bolsheviks that the idea of a "united Azarbaijan," integrated under the auspices of the Soviet Union became popular particularly among the Azari intellectuals in the Soviet Union.⁴⁴

For the Russians, however, Iran was important in terms of revolutionary activity. They were, of course, not interested in creating national awareness among the diverse population of Iran. Thus, they paid great attention to the revolutionary movements that were emerging in Iran during the War. Among these movements the Khiabani movement in Azarbaijan and the Jangali movement in Gilan (Caspian shore) were the most important. We have already elaborated on Khiabani movement. The Jangali movement was basically patriotic and anti-imperialist and although the Russians even succeeded to

infiltrate the movement and erected a puppet regime in Gilan the movement eventually collapsed.⁴⁵ Indeed the Russians had "limited objectives" in Iran; objectives that sometimes contradicted the revolutionary and lofty ideals of the Communist ideologues. It is believed that after their disappointing experience in Azarbaijan and Gilan, the Russians decided to refrain from any direct action in Iran ⁴⁶. At this point Soviet policy was more concentrated on preserving Iran as an independent, central state while striving to ward off British influence. The new Communist Party of Iran which had merged Adalat and other leftist groups [1920] basically followed the same line.⁴⁷ The idea was that a bourgeois government in Iran will eventually lead the country to a higher stage of capitalist development and thus prepare her for a proletarian revolution. Thus, uprisings by Azaris and other ethnic groups in Iran were not viewed favorably not only because these would weaken the central control and make Iran more vulnerable to British [imperialist] penetration but [in the case of Iranian Azaris, for example] these uprisings could have demonstration effects in the Soviet Union. However, the Socialist or "revolutionary" revolts should be encouraged and if possible assisted.⁴⁸ The 1922 uprising of Major Lahuti, a

Gerndarmerie officer, is thus attributed to such manipulation.⁴⁹

Lahuti was an Azari Marxist who vehemently opposed the emerging Reza Khan and his Cossacks.⁵⁰ Indeed it was both Khiabani and Lahuti who brought Reza Khan and his Cossack forces to Azarbaijan. The defeat of both movements by Reza Khan and his Cossack army was one of Reza Khan's first achievements in subduing centrifugal elements in Iran and an initial step towards his policies of integration and centralization. Lahuti's uprising was far less popular than that of Khiabani's and it seems personal and ideological reasons⁵¹ and possibly Soviet agitations⁵² rather than an Azari nationalist expression were responsible. The demands of the rebels, for example, were the dismissal of Reza Khan and payment of the much delayed salaries of the Gendarmerie officers.⁵³ The movement seems to have been so unpopular that it is said upon entering Azarbaijan, Reza Khan and his Cossacks were greeted warmly by the Azari population.⁵⁴

Thus, the Soviets were only willing to extend assistance to leftist and non-nationalist movements in Azarbaijan and other Iranian provinces. In 1920, Iranian Azaris, however, do not seem to have been prepared for a nationalist movement. Even Khiabani movement with its

communal overtones failed to achieve grassroots support. Exporting of the Azari national symbols from the "north" to the "south" only began in 1942 when it was considered "safe" to do so.⁵⁵ As we will observe in the following chapters subsequent events demonstrated that such manipulations were not sufficient to create a nationalist movement on a mass scale in Iranian Azarbaijan.

THE KURDS AND THE BALUCH:

We mentioned that the Constitutional Revolution and subsequent weakness of the central government which manifested itself in the rise and fall of cabinets until 1925 [when Reza Khan became Reza Shah] gave both the Kurds and the Baluch an opportunity to practice their full independence. Indeed, Iran was in such chaotic conditions that any organized effort might have fostered Kurdish or Baluch "communal" causes. But both groups failed to demonstrate the kind of awareness that is conducive to political action based on a national cause.

The Kurds and the Baluch, however, had different experiences during the war years. The war closely affected the Kurds both in Ottoman and Iranian territories. In Iran, although the country was supposedly neutral, the

Kurds were dragged into the War since the entire north and western frontiers of Iran were occupied by the belligerent powers.

Most Iranian Kurds demonstrated acute animosity towards the Russians. Thus it was not surprising that almost all Kurds responded to the call for Jihad [holy war] by the Ottoman Sultan; even those who had received money from the Russians.⁵⁶

One can only speculate about the reasons for such a unified response. The great fragmentation and inter-tribal hostility rule out the possibility that ethnic solidarity was a factor. Islam might be considered a factor although other loyalties have sometimes proven to be stronger among the Kurds. Kasravi provides us with some explanations. He contends that even before the Ottomans entered the War, the Iranian Kurds were getting involved in open clashes with the Russians who had invaded and occupied Azarbaijan since 1909. The Kurds felt great resentment toward the Russians and their Assyrian and Armenian supporters who lived in neighbouring areas.⁵⁷ Kasravi attributes Kurdish uprising in the name of Jihad to the Kurds' desire for looting. He maintains that it did not make any difference for the Kurds whether they were looting Assyrians, Armenians, Sunnis or Shiis. In

their forays, he writes, "they just looted and killed."⁵⁸

Here it is important to point out the age-old inter-ethnic hostility between the Kurds and their Azari neighbours in Iran. It seems that geographical proximity, instead of cooperation and friendship, had created suspicion and resentment between the two groups. The Kurds never lost an opportunity to rob and loot Azari villagers. Kasravi depicts the Kurds as savage, warlike and brutal hordes who frequently took advantage of the chaotic political conditions and weakness of the central authority in order to attack the settled population who most of the time happened to be Azaris,⁵⁹ although many Kurds themselves were not immune to these attacks either. Regarding these raids it should be noted that many tribal peoples engaged in raiding activities to supplement their subsistence and economy. Raiding was resorted to particularly during hard times. The Baluch also had a reputation for raiding caravans and settled towns and villages.⁶⁰

The Kurds of Iran, however, suffered greatly from the devastations and famine of the War. The Kurds who lived in the Ottoman territories suffered even more not only because of the War but the subsequent "Turkification" policies of the Turks and the deportations of the Kurds to

Western Anatolia that caused much misery and many deaths among them.⁶¹

One can thus differentiate between the experience of the Kurds and that of the Baluch during the War. The Kurds not only experienced the War closely and were affected by its destruction, they were being culturally and politically repressed by the Ottoman Turks at the same time. Nationalism was thus a reaction to prevent "Turkification" and to achieve independence for the Kurds who inhabited Ottoman territories. Among the Baluch in the British Baluchistan although the idea of independence was supported by the small circle of the Baluch intelligentsia and a few tribal leaders, there was no sustained and organized effort to foster this idea. Although some Baluch tribes became involved in military clashes with the British throughout the years, they did not experience the trauma of the War as closely as the Kurds did and they were not subjected to forced assimilation. The political behaviour of both Iranian Kurds and Baluch is also a reflection of the experiences of their kin on the other side of the borders. The Iranian Baluch remained independent and isolated even from their kin in the British Baluchistan while the Iranian Kurds began to show signs of awareness. Although at this

stage Kurdish struggle in Iran was indeed manifested in tribal unruliness, the ideals and ambitions of some tribal leaders were being altered as a result of their interactions and communications with the Kurds in the Ottoman territories as will be elaborated.

Some scholars contend that the War and subsequent defeat of the Ottomans helped a rapid spread of nationalism throughout Kurdish areas. Van Bruinessen writes:

There was a general awareness of President Wilson's 'fourteen points,' and of British plans for a Kurdish buffer state between Turkey and Mesopotamia. As an independent Kurdish state became feasible, many shaikhs and tribal chieftains suddenly became nationalists and revolted....⁶²

The "British" factor has been stressed by some writers who believe that the British, indeed, had an influential role in "sponsoring" Kurdish nationalism during and after the War.⁶³ The Sevres Treaty [1920] and the Twelfth of President Wilson's points which stipulated conditions for creation of independent political entities in Ottoman Kurdish inhabited areas gave the Kurdish nationalists in Ottoman territories a great hope that the Allies will assist them to achieve their independence in a newly established state.⁶⁴

In all these pronouncements, however, the Iranian

Kurds, as one writer aptly put it, were "carefully ignored."⁶⁵ Arfa explains that the Kurdish representative, Sharif Pasha, who was a former Turkish ambassador to Sweden, was aware of the delicacy of the situation and thus "was clever enough not to antagonize Iran by claims on the Iranian Kurds."⁶⁶

It should be pointed out that even at this stage, the struggle for a Kurdish national cause was limited to the Kurdish intellectuals and the urban intelligentsia in the Ottoman Turkey. At the tribal level although the cries of "Kurdistan for the Kurds" could be heard, as Van Bruinessen observes, the difference between a "national upheaval" and the more traditional type of a "chieftain's unruliness was not a sharp one." Indeed, the social, cultural and ideological differences that existed between the Kurdish intellectuals and the Kurdish tribal leadership persisted well into the 20th century. These differences have been among the most important obstacles to the success of a Kurdish nationalist struggle.

The Treaty of Sevres, after all, proved to be just a piece of paper. The rise of Kemal Ataturk and his victory over the Greeks made further dismemberment of Turkey impossible. For the British, on the other hand, the Kurdish issue was not politically expedient any longer.

Indeed, the British did not insist on writing the Articles of the Sevres Treaty regarding the Kurds into the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. The reason for this change of position is explained by the fact that the British, at this time, were intent on annexing Mosul [in southern Kurdistan] to the newly emerging state of Iraq [under the British mandate]. The British plans and policies, therefore, were designed to serve British national interests and thus had no room for a Kurdish national homeland. The creation of various mandate states out of dismembered Ottoman Empire further divided the Kurds who lived in Ottoman territories. Now, the Kurds were subjects of the states of Iraq, Turkey, Syria and, of course, Iran.

After W.W.I. Kurdish upheavals took a radical turn. These movements began to have more and more nationalistic overtones. The Kurdish intelligentsia in Istanbul and other urban centers as well as those who were in exile in different European capitals were active in the politics of nationalism. Among the tribes political consciousness of Kurdish identity took the traditional form of tribal dominance and independence, although there were signs of emergence of a nationalistic sentiments, particularly among the tribal leadership.

In Turkish and Iraqi Kurdistan, the upheavals of two tribal leaders, Shaikh Said and Shaikh Mahmud, are the most important. The detailed account of these revolts is beyond the scope of this study. It should be noted, however, that both revolts, although they may be characterized as traditional tribal upheavals, proved to be a nuisance for the British and Turkish governments. Indeed, Shaikh Said's revolt which occurred in Turkey cost a great deal for the Ataturk's government and the Turkish regime, thus, deemed necessary to deal with the Kurdish question once and for all. This was a task that the Turks accomplished efficiently through a series of harsh policies ranging from forced settlement of tribes to wholesale removal and dislocation of small tribes as well as fierce "Turkification" which entailed calling the Kurds "mountain Turks who have forgotten their mother tongue!"⁶⁷ From then on, every expression of Kurdish identity from the use of Kurdish language to the use of Kurdish dress, was banned in Turkey.⁶⁸ This suppression has continued well into the present culminating in excessive repression of the Kurds by the government as well as the use of violent terroristic acts on the part of Kurdistan's Workers Party.⁶⁹

Nationalism among the Kurds who lived in Ottoman

territories, thus, emerged as a response to the impact of the West as well as the repressive policies of the Turks. The Kurds of Iran somewhat lagged behind for the obvious reason that the process of change had not yet begun in Iran. The modernization of Iran essentially began with the emergence of the Pahlavis [1925]. It was also the assimilationist policies undertaken by the Pahlavis that curbed expression of Kurdish identity in Iran. Therefore, at this juncture, Kurdish uprisings in Iran were mostly local and hardly threatened the structure of the state. More important, these uprisings lacked the nationalistic overtones present in the movements of the Kurds in the Ottoman territories.

It was after the War that the first large scale movement of the Kurds in Iran with some nationalistic hints took place. This movement was led by Ismail Aqa Simko, the paramount chieftain of the Shakkak, the second largest Kurdish confederacy in Iran.

The Shakkak tribes inhabited the mountainous areas west of Lake Urumiyah in western Azarbaijan. These tribes, mostly transhumant, were infamous robbers and raiders and dominated a settled Kurdish population three times more numerous than themselves.⁷⁰ Arfa estimates the population of the Shakkak around 2000 families in 1920.⁷¹

The Shakkak was an independent, strong and unruly confederacy that paid only nominal allegiance to the Shah.

Ismail Aqa's brother, Jaafar Aqa, was a notorious raider and robber and very powerful in the last decades of the Qajar period. Apparently the government of Mozaffar al-Din Shah Qajar had exhausted all its possibilities dealing with Jaafar Aqa since he was invited to dinner at the home of the governor of Tabriz where he was stabbed to death. Kasravi writes that Ismail Aqa and his brother, Jaafar, and their father always took advantage of the weakness of the central authority and were a nuisance.⁷²

Ismail Aqa, nicknamed Simko, was already in revolt during the War and according to Kasravi he vacillated between "obedience" and "disobedience."⁷³ During the Tabriz uprisings he had fought against the Constitutionals and had been appointed the deputy-governor of a district as a reward. This appointment had been confirmed by the central government despite Simko's unruliness.⁷⁴

Kasravi writes that Simko cooperated with the Russians when they invaded Azarbaijan and then he joined the Ottomans until the Russians left at which time he captured their weapons and continued to harrass the settled Azari population.⁷⁵ Kasravi's accounts shed some

light on different aspects of Simko's revolt. Kasravi contends that Simko's ambitions were not limited to acquiring independence for his tribe or subduing other Kurdish tribes. According to Kasravi, Simko's "disobedience" was different from that of his father's or his brother's. Simko "had separatist ideas in mind and was preparing to achieve his goals."⁷⁶ Kasravi, however, criticizes the Europeans for importing the "seed" of separatist ideology to the East.⁷⁷

As a historian of modern Iran, Kasravi's accounts are indeed illuminating. Although he accuses Simko of ruthlessness, banditry, robbery and blackmail, Kasravi states that Simko was intent to realize the age-old dream of the Kurds; "following the Turks and their endeavors to bring about a 'Turkish gene,' Simko attempted at creating a 'Kurdish gene.'"⁷⁸ This is, of course, Kasravi's way of comparing the Turkish nationalism of the Young Turks with the probable Kurdish nationalism of Simko.

In his quest for independence, Simko attacked, ransacked, looted and massacred many villages and towns of western Azarbaijan mostly inhabited by Azari Turks who refused to accept his authority and pay him taxes. In one instance, Simko's men even attacked and ransacked Mahabad [a Kurdish town in Western Azarbaijan].⁷⁹ He also

succeeded to defeat his Assyrian rivals who had plans to establish a homeland in some districts of Western Azarbaijan for the Assyrians fleeing Turkish atrocities.⁸⁰ These early successes as well as the initial lenient policy of the government encouraged Simko and helped enhance his position and prestige among the Kurds. The stronger he became the more Kurdish forces joined him. Not only his authority over most of the Kurdish tribes inhabiting Iranian territory was unquestionable, he was exercising power over some of the Kurdish tribes of Turkey.⁸¹ Kasravi who witnessed Simko's adventures writes:

Now Simko has risen a flag, demanding the 'freedom of Kurdistan.' What is he doing? Is he preparing Kurds for autonomy and self-determination? No! To him, the freedom of Kurdistan does not mean these things..... He is looting villages, destroying agricultural products, asking money from the poor and miserable people.....The wretched people of Salmas and those areas who had been dispersed due to atrocities committed by the Assyrians, now have returned to their villages and want to earn their livelihood again; but they find themselves caught in the hands of the looting criminal Kurds of Simko. This is the meaning of the freedom of Kurdistan.⁸²

The quoted passage above demonstrates how the Azaris of Iran felt about Simko and his depredations. The central authority in Iran also had become quite weary. Arfa contends that for Simko Kurdish independence simply meant the establishment of his personal despotic rule over

the other Kurdish tribes of Iranian Azarbaijan on the one hand, and control of a large section of non-Kurdish [mainly Azari] regions in west and northwest of Azarbaijan, on the other.⁸³ Indeed, Iranian historians mostly depict Simko as a bandit; a renegade tribal chieftain who was self-interested and arrogant and whose only objective was dismemberment of Iran.⁸⁴

Among Western scholars, Van Bruinessen, for example, contends that Simko was in regular contact with Kurdish nationalist circles and that "nationalist and private ambitions went together in him and cannot be separated."⁸⁵ Indeed, Van Bruinessen believes that Simko's attempts had nationalistic overtones and his brigandage and raiding activities were only part of the tradition of being a Kurdish warlord.⁸⁶ Richard Cottam who calls Simko "colorful and courageous." also writes that his main objective was an independent Kurdistan.⁸⁷

There is, however, no doubt that Simko's revolt did not possess the organization and ideological quality of a modern nationalist movement. The uprising not only lacked organizational sophistication but Simko himself was not able to create an overarching Kurdish loyalty; a "communal cause" for the average tribesman who was attracted basically for possibilities of loot. It is said that most

of his warriors "came and went according to his fortunes, motivated more by pay and loot than by nationalist sentiment and personal loyalty."⁸⁸

The fact remains, however, that Simko's was the first large-scale Kurdish revolt in Iran with an over-arching Kurdish objective. Before then, Kurdish uprisings were mostly short-lived, local disturbances. His revolt was encouraged and nourished by the war time chaos, uncertainties and the abject weakness of the central government in Iran. Although Simko was influenced by his affinity and communications with the Kurdish nationalists in Turkey; the Kurdish tribal structure proved to be his greatest foe. Lack of group solidarity meant Simko's defeat vis-a-vis an organized, coherent, modern army that was dispatched in July 1922 by the central government under Reza Khan. Reza Khan, later Reza Shah, was intent on building a strong, centralized nation-state in Iran and the first steps in this direction were crushing the centrifugal elements who threatened the political integration and stability in the country.

As was mentioned before, the Baluch of Iran, since the Constitutional Revolution and the weakening of central authority in Iran, were independent for all practical purposes. We mentioned in the previous chapter that

Bahram Khan Barakzai had become the most powerful tribal chief in Iranian Baluchistan. By 1910 Bahram Khan ruled over most of Iranian Baluchistan⁸⁹ During the War years the Germans tried to enter into some dialogue with Bahram Khan against the British. The British, in turn, decided to negotiate directly with Bahram Khan not only to ward off the German threat but to stop Bahram Khan's raids to eastern Baluchistan [territory under British influence]. The British, in the meantime, dispatched a military expedition to the Sarhad [the northern part of the Iranian Baluchistan] to pacify the unruly tribes there. The result was military defeat of several tribes of the Sarhad [some tribes actually assisted the British]⁹⁰ and the replacement of Bahram Khan by his nephew Doust Mohammad Khan Barakzai. Doust Mohammad Khan ruled Iranian Baluchistan without much interference until 1928 when he was defeated by the modern army of Reza Shah.⁹¹

Thus both Kurdish and Baluch tribes showed centrifugal tendencies that were a response to the war-time weakness of the central control in the country and may be attributed to tribal proclivities for independence. The Simko's revolt, however, contained elements of a new awareness. A Kurdish identity was becoming crystallized among the Kurds of Iran for many reasons. Iranian Kurds

were obviously being influenced by the developments in the Ottoman Turkey and Iraq. The propagation of nationalist ideology by the Kurdish intelligentsia also was leaving its impressions on Kurdish tribal elite in Iran. These influences, however, were not expressed in an ideological formulation of Kurdish identity. The Kurdish population of Iran was still mostly rural, backward and tribally organized. The tribal chieftain's bid for independence was the only manifestation of a Kurdish identity. However, such chiefs as Simko, were becoming familiarized with new concepts and new expressions of ethnicity. It is not a coincidence that Kasravi, the perceptive historian of Iran, although indignant about Simko's depredations, compares his aspirations with those of the Young Turks. This was the first time among the Kurds of Iran that a tribal chief was revolting in the name of "free Kurdistan" and was articulating Kurdish aspirations in terms of general and over-arching objectives. Although Simko's was a seemingly "tribal revolt", it constitutes the genesis of the Kurdish national struggle in Iran.

In contrast, Bahram Khan's and Doust Mohammad Khan's bid for tribal power in Iranian Baluchistan lack the nationalistic overtones of Simko's revolt. At this time, a very small circle of Baluch "educated youth"⁹² in

Eastern Baluchistan [British zone of influence] had begun to consider possibilities for independence. This group was particularly attracted to the Soviets as a counter balance to the British. The Soviets seemed progressive and as possible supporters they could help the Baluch to get rid of the British and gain independence. Thus the acceptance of a leftist ideology was setting in. And although this attraction did not culminate in the emergence of a Communist party it succeeded to foster Baluch national cause in later years.⁹³ The Baluch of Western Baluchistan [Iranian territory] were hardly touched by any of these developments on the "other side." Even the consolidated rule of Doust Mohammad Khan in Iranian Baluchistan that lasted until 1928 suffered from internal fragmentation. Nationalism was the farthest thing from the minds of the Iranian Baluch. All this, however, highlights the absolute marginal aspect of the position of the Baluch in the Iranian socio-political structures. Such marginality persisted even after the Iranian military was able to bring the Baluch areas under the rule of the Iranian state and indeed formed the foundations of the future interactions between the Iranian state and the Baluch.

* * * *

This chapter briefly examined the overall conditions of Iran before the advent of WWI. The ensuing crisis situation in Iran as a result of foreign occupation helped make an already weak and fragmented political structure in the center more vulnerable. Indeed, the weakness of the central authority led to the emergence of autonomous movements in the outlying areas of the country. Most of these movements, however, were devoid of a communal content and were either inspired by foreign powers or were bids for personal aggrandizement. This period is, however, extremely important for Iranian Azarbaijanis who for the first time articulated their grievances in communal terms. The devastations of the Russian occupation after the Constitutional Revolution, the inability of the central government to prevent such aggression, the misery and economic decline of the War years demonstrated that the historical Azari identification with the Iranian state and the Azari integration in the mainstream political process of Iran are not inexplicable phenomena. Indeed, tangible and objective reasons stood for such a relationship the absence of which meant a break with the past. The Khiabani Movement was, first and foremost, a reflection of such a break. This is a period when Persianization of

Iran had not begun yet. However, the Azaris, by now, understood very well that their status and position as a privileged group may not be guaranteed. The Azari intellectuals and the urban intelligentsia were thus intent to safeguard their position vis-a-vis the group that would control the state.

It is interesting to note that such a break with the past could not be observed among either the Kurds or the Baluch. Indeed there was a continuity that was manifested in the two groups' de facto autonomous or independent existence. As the state was unable to extend its authority to the periphery these groups continued their tribal way of life with internal relations and socio-political structures hardly changed since 19th century.

The trans-border influences, however, seem to have had some impacts on the Iranian Kurds whose largest tribal uprising by Simko, a tribal warlord, had some communal overtones. This aspect of the movement, however, did not alter the perceptions of the politicians in the center who considered such groups as Kurds or Baluch as unruly centrifugal elements who basically had to be dealt with by force. The inability of the government, however, meant that there was no reciprocal exchange between these groups and the state. The political scene resembled that of pre-

Qajar period where different groups were absolutely independent and chaos reigned supreme with one important difference. Now, at least nominally a central authority existed and some political institutions were in place. What was needed was a strong center of power that would rid Iran of foreign occupation and influence and integrate the centrifugal elements.

The emergence of Reza Shah and creation of a modern centralized state signified the dawning of a new era in the history of the development of ethnic relations in Iran. The following chapters will be devoted to the Pahlavis and the modernization of Iran and the form of relationship that developed between these groups and the state in modern Iran.

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE EMERGENCE OF REZA SHAH'S MODERN STATE
AZARIS, KURDS, BALUCH

As we noted, the War years produced chaotic conditions in Iran. The occupation of Iran by Allied forces had aggravated the fragmented social composition of the population. At the same time after the Constitutional Revolution political reform and economic stability had failed to emerge since the political environment was not conducive to such developments. Consequently, by the end of the War the country was on the brink of disintegration.

This chapter will discuss the emergence of Reza Khan, later Reza Shah Pahlavi, as the strong man who subdued various centrifugal elements, integrated Iran and undertook the modernization and industrialization of the country. The advent of Reza Shah Pahlavi is a significant event because it signals the emergence of a modern state in Iran. However, as will be elaborated in this chapter, Reza Shah's nation-building efforts did not match his success at state-building as the rise of centrifugal tendencies after his abdication demonstrated.

General Observations:

Reza Khan, even before he became Reza Shah, was the only man who seemed capable of embarking upon the arduous task of the "integration" of Iran. This, of course, he did by virtue of the efficient armed forces he commanded, the Cossack Brigade. A soldier and self-made man, in 1921, Reza Khan, the commander of the Russian-trained Cossack Brigade, with the support and assistance of the modern intelligentsia of Iran succeeded to stage a coup. At the time, Iran was torn by centrifugal elements and ravaged by the War and foreign occupation. As the War Minister he had control over the armed forces that became the basis of his power. By modernizing and strengthening the army he was soon able to defeat his opponents and thus in 1925 he was proclaimed the "Shah of Iran," establishing the Pahlavi dynasty.

In his rise to power Reza Khan was supported by many members of the intelligentsia and even some of the clergy who realized Iran was in need of a strong central authority not only to prevent its further disintegration and create political unification but to foster economic development. Indeed to many of these reformists it was of utmost importance for Iran to regain her independence and

sovereignty. These individuals who, indirectly or directly, had been familiarized with the West and Western ideals wished for Iran to become a dynamic, modern state, one that would achieve economic progress and possess effective political institutions. At the same time, the humiliation of the War years and unabashed interference of great powers in Iranian internal affairs had created an acute desire for recognition. In order for this recognition to be forthcoming a solid "Iranian" identity had to be created. The search for identity, thus, dominated the efforts of many of these individuals before and after the War years. Iranian intellectuals, particularly, were active in laying out the objective bases and fostering the idea of such identity. Many of these individuals considered Iran as a distinct entity in terms of its history, language, religion, art and literature. Ancient history provided the organizing principle and legitimation for this identity. These intellectuals discovered this common history and through that tried to endow the rest of the population with a sense of unique identity.

Thus Iranian, or more correctly, Persian pre-Islamic history provided a core of historical facts around which other cultural dimensions blossomed and together they

became the rationale and a framework for the growing sense of Iranian/Persian identity.¹ One notes that poets, journalists, writers and historians wrote about the glories, achievements and greatness of pre-Islamic Acheamenid and Sassanian dynasties.² At the same time, although there was no direct attack on Islam, the Arab consequent of Iran was referred to in bitter and resentful terms.³ Persian language and literature were hailed and emphasized as distinctive features of the newly emerging identity. At this stage, no one seems to have worried about or considered the culturally and linguistically diverse population of Iran. Perhaps it was assumed that the population of the periphery would automatically embrace Persian language and other related concepts of ancient Iranian history. The fact that some Azari intellectuals also advocated this trend made the process appear more legitimate.⁴ It is also possible that the utter backwardness of the periphery made its population seem somehow "inconsequential" to the political destiny of the country. What mattered was the emergence of an independent, sovereign state in Iran that could be recognized and function as such in the new international arena. A strong state that could fulfill the desires, hopes, and ambitions of these men for a brighter future.

The relevance of Reza Khan to these nationalistic aspirations was that his character and his modus operandi provided a framework on the basis of which these aspirations could be fulfilled. He was the strong leader, these men hoped, who could rid Iran of exploitation and backwardness. Indeed, he was "coming to be regarded as the embodiment of that spirit of national pride and self-assertiveness characteristic of the post-war generation."⁵ Thus, initially, Iranian reformists rallied around Reza Khan and assisted him to the best of their abilities. Reza Khan, or Reza Shah, on his part, took great advantage of this ideological frame of reference provided by these individuals and set out first to subdue the centrifugal forces and secondly to consolidate his political power. In the process of achieving the former, Reza Shah gradually lost the support of most of the individuals who had welcomed his rise to power.⁶ This was, indeed, an indication of the inherent contradictions that existed between the approach of a political man who was determined to gain total power and initiate change the way he envisioned and the idealistic aspirations of the intellectuals to whom loyalty to Iran meant "social reform, free elections, industrialization, land distribution, the exclusion of foreign influence, and the

nationalization of petroleum..."⁷

To integrate Iran, Reza Khan's first measure was to expand the authority of the state beyond the capital and consolidate control over the periphery. The autonomy or independent status of different groups living in the outlying areas of Iranian territory was not compatible to his vision for Iran, i.e., emergence of a strong, centralized state. To end the autonomous status of the tribal chiefs in the periphery and to subdue different dissident movements in northern Iran, he utilized the unified, well-organized army that he, himself, had endeavored to build. The reconstruction of the army began from his own Cossack Brigade which was initially expanded and eventually unified with the Gendarmerie and other small forces. Also the modernization of the military was attempted by increasing the budget allocated to the armed forces as well as sending sixty officers per year to study in French military schools.⁸

The subjugation of the centrifugal elements was carried out ruthlessly and without any sympathy for the plight of the population concerned. By the time Reza Khan was coronated as the Shah of Iran most of the Iranian tribes were disarmed and settled by force.⁹ Many of the disobedient tribal chiefs were either executed or kept in

the capital as hostages. The more pragmatic chiefs who considered continued resistance futile were pacified yet kept in office since effective administration of the tribal areas still depended upon cooperation of these men.¹⁰ The nomadic tribes, particularly, were dealt with very harshly. Nomadism was considered both a sign of backwardness and a source of political instability. Thus, a drastic program of settlement began which in the long run proved to be a terrible socio-economic disaster both for the nomads and the country's economy.¹¹ Ann Lambton writes:

No detailed survey of the possibilities of settlement or the effect the destruction of the tribal element would have upon the economy of the country was made.....The annual migration of the tribes from winter to summer pastures was prevented. Suitable areas in which to settle the tribes were not always chosen, adequate provisions for health and education were not made, and sufficient facilities by way of agricultural training and the provision of agricultural implements were not given to the tribesmen.... The tribal policy of Reza Shah, ill-conceived and badly executed, resulted in heavy losses in livestock, the impoverishment of the tribes and a diminution of their numbers.¹²

However, Reza Shah's tribal policies drastically undermined the power and position of the tribal political elite. Since then, although Iran has not completely been rid of tribal unruliness, various Iranian tribes have ceased to create serious political instability in the

country.¹³

As we noted, the basis of Reza Shah's power was the military. The military helped foster the reconstruction and modernization of the Qajar's traditional and inefficient bureaucracy. Soon the bureaucracy supplemented the military as another pillar of the modern state in Iran. At the same time, centralization of government helped Reza Shah implement a series of political, economic and socio-cultural policies on the national level. One important aspect of centralization policies of Reza Shah was territorial division of the country into administrative units that were directly attached to the center. Before these units were usually called ayalat [state] and, as we noted, they had a tradition of autonomy.¹⁴ Now, the name ostan [province] was given to these units which, symbolized their dependent and non-autonomous status. Indeed, the dividing lines of some of these ostans did not exactly correspond to the ethnic/linguistic realities. Different townships in Azarbaijan, for example, made up two provinces, Ostan III including the townships of Tabriz and Ardabil, and Ostan IV including the townships of Khoy, Rezaieh, Mahabad, Maragheh and Bijar.¹⁵ Later, on the basis of such divisions, Azarbaijan, during the rule of Reza Shah's son,

was divided into two provinces of East and West Azarbaijan. Also Kurdish and Baluch inhabited regions that previously had their own ayelat [state] were now lumped together with other townships and called the Fifth Ostan and the Eighth Ostan respectively.¹⁶ Tehran, as the capital, became a special central province where the administration of other provinces was controlled. Also governors and other administrators were appointed by the center. These provinces lacked all powers of decision making and were in absolute subordination to the central authority. Effective control of the outlying areas was also facilitated by construction of new roads and importation of cars and trucks.¹⁷

As part of the overall process to transform Iran into a unified and homogeneous nation-state several other policies were implemented. The military conscription was made universal and compulsory; European dress was introduced and it became mandatory for all Iranians to have birth certificates and family names. The most important part of the homogenization policy was implementation of mass education along secular lines. Persian was made the sole language of instruction in the schools all over the country. As was mentioned before, in his efforts to legitimize his secular rule, Reza Shah

utilized the "national" ideology elaborated by the Iranian literati which was based on the legacy of the ancient Persian Empire and its so-called Aryan past. This ideology advocated the adoption of one language and one culture by the diverse population of Iran. Indeed the following article published in the newspaper Ayandeh [Future] sums up this ideology:

Our ideal is to develop and strengthen national unity. The same ideal created the nation-states of Germany, Italy, and Rumania. The same ideal destroyed the multi-national state of Ottoman Empire. What do we mean by "national unity"? We mean the formation of cultural, social and political solidarity among all the people who live within the present borders of Iran. How will we attain national unity? We will attain it by extending the Persian language throughout the provinces; eliminating regional costumes; destroying local and feudal authorities; and removing the traditional differences between Kurds, Lurs, Qashqayis, Arabs, Turks, Turkomans, and other communities that reside within Iran. Our nation will continue to live in danger as long as we have no schools to teach Persian and Iranian history to the masses, no railways to connect various parts of the country; no books, journals, newspapers to inform the people of their rich Iranian heritage; and no Persian equivalents to replace the many non-Persian place names in Iran.....¹⁸

This article is a reflection of the discomfort of the Iranian elite and the literari regarding the problem of "diversity" in Iran. The writer discusses the formation of the nation-states of Germany, Italy, etc. without paying any attention to the dynamics that helped create

these nation-states. The socio-political and economic forces that since the 18th century helped the evolution of "nationalism" in the West were mostly absent in Iran of the 20th century. Moreover, homogeneity was not initially the basis of the unification of many Western nations. Nevertheless, it was the fundamental process of change in the Europe of 18th and 19th centuries -analysis of which is beyond the scope of this study- that made the emergence of Western nation-states possible.¹⁹

It is true that Iran as an "state" had experienced a long and continuous political existence and this made her a rarity among many of the newly-emerging nation-states of the 20th century. However, the pre-modern "dynastic realm" in Iran did not need a "nation" to be validated while the modern state would be inconceivable without it.

Diversity was thus considered as the root of the "integration" dilemma. This "Problem" was particularly important because many of the ethnic groups who inhabited Iranian territory occupied -and still do today- strategic zones in border regions where political instability would involve a threat to the national and territorial integrity of the state. In this light one can better understand Reza Shah's efforts at homogenization and national integration in Iran. As a fierce nationalist, the

territorial integrity of Iran was highest in Reza Shah's agenda. This may also explain the harshness of his methods when dealing with centrifugal elements.²⁰

Nation-building, thus, to Reza Shah and many Iranian nationalists meant adoption of a series of coercive measures to put an end to the "problem" of diversity in Iran. If the peoples who inhabited Iranian territory spoke the same language, dressed in European style and paid homage to the same Shah, then Iran would represent a unified nation-state like those of the Western Europe. Force, however, was/is not an effective nation-building tool. A strong, central civil-military bureaucracy may be able to secure national unity by force but is it able to inculcate the idea of "nationhood" in the minds and hearts of the people? It is true that the use of force was not a novel practice in Iranian history and various peripheral groups were quite familiar with such patterns of political behavior. There were, however, important differences. The modern state possessed an organized, modern army with "superior weapons and tactics;"²¹ it was also all-encompassing and omnipresent. This was, indeed, a new situation, one that called for new forms of adjustments and adaptations. These adjustments and adaptations, however, were not to constitute a "national

consciousness."

It is interesting to point out the nationalist/patriotic slogan of the Pahlavi dynasty that advocated loyalty to Khoda, Shah, Mihan [God, Shah, Fatherland]. It is not surprising that the word "Mihan" [Fatherland] instead of the word "Millat" [Nation] was used in the slogan. The concept of "nation" was -and in many respects still is- an unfamiliar concept to the diverse population of Iran. While the efforts of the regime to create a strong sense of over-arching Iranian identity were mostly concentrated in the area of symbol propagation, it was never clearly elaborated what exactly constituted the "Iranian nation." Persian language and culture were considered as obvious tools for forging such a "nation" and schools were apparently the best medium for this "cultural engineering." The problem was that these tools alone could not create political and economic arrangements that would help foster emergence of such identity. Indeed, the extremely rigid and uniform curriculum of public and private schools reflected the authoritarian approach of the government. Memorization of abstract concepts was the basic method of learning without any attention paid to the application of theory and utilization of theoretical knowledge in real life.²²

Although secular education did, indeed, spread in Iran [following table], as a nation-building tool, education did not prove to be very effective for the obvious reason that most rural and tribal areas were not affected by educational reforms.²³ Reza Arasteh explains that not only the traditional social structure impeded the spread of education in rural areas, but difficult geography and lack of transportation and communication infrastructures as well as absence of other resources limited the government's capacities in this regard.²⁴

Year No. of Schools Total Enrolment

1924-25	3,285	108,959
1939-40	8,281	457,236 ²⁵

Despite the state's shortcomings in nation-building, Reza Shah laid the foundation for Iranian economic and industrial infrastructure. This initially entailed building transportation and communication infrastructures such as roads and highways.²⁶ The Trans-Iranian Railway that connects the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea is considered one of the most important achievements of Reza Shah's.²⁷ Also in 1935 the Iranian government ordered several planes from Europe and began passenger and freight services.²⁸

Industrialization policies of Reza Shah entailed the

adoption of Western science and technology. Such factories as sugar refineries and textile were established in several urban centers. Banani contends that Reza Shah's industrialization policies had two objectives: one was the introduction of technological advances of the West; and the other was the penetration of the central authority into the "old corporate basis of society."²⁹ The result was the emergence of "state-capitalism." Monopolistic firms were set up in most of which the state owned all or a large percentage of the stock with most of economic life and decision-making being concentrated in Tehran.³⁰ Most industry was concentrated in such light industries as textiles and agricultural processing. However, efforts to import heavy industries had to be postponed because of the outbreak of the War.

Agriculture was one of the areas that did not receive much attention from Reza Shah's state. Indeed, the full integration of rural economy into the national economy did not happen until well into the rule of Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, Reza Shah's heir to the throne. During Reza Shah, although some preliminary steps were taken to modernize agricultural practices, both traditional agricultural methods and tenural arrangements remained unchanged.³¹ However, the change initiated in other

sectors of society did have some impacts on the Iranian peasantry. Banani contends that external forces such as "universal military training, the growth of factories, and the construction of railroads," were responsible for the "acceleration of population movement and social mobility" in some areas.³² At the same time, some peasants did benefit from "price support and credit."³³

In 1927 banking operations were reformed and modernized by the establishment of Iranian National Bank³⁴ that became a symbol of Iran's economic independence. Also drastic reforms in the areas of judiciary system and public health were made.³⁵ Undoubtedly one of the most important achievements of Reza Shah's state was the unveiling of women who were, for all intents and purposes, an invisible stratum in the Iranian society. Reza Shah's reforms provided unprecedented opportunities for women - particularly middle and upper-class- to enter public life and join the work force for the first time.³⁶

Reza Shah's modernization policies, undoubtedly, had great impacts on the urban Iranian society. Indeed the emergence of new urban strata, such as a modern middle class, a bureaucratic as well as a technocratic stratum and a small urban proletariat was a result of such policies. However, the nation-building aspect of these

policies was negligible since the overwhelming majority of the Iranian population was made up of the peasantry and, as was mentioned before, the Iranian peasants were not affected by Reza Shah's modernization and reform policies.³⁷

In the political sphere, however, Reza Shah's state followed traditional patterns. The continuity of "authoritarianism" could be observed in many aspects of political institutions. This continuity was a result of the patrimonial structure embedded in the executive branch of a regime that could not go beyond the facade of constitutionalism and parliamentarism. Although it may be argued that it was only a climate that could allow Reza Shah to accomplish such policies as unveiling of women or founding a secular and modern educational system, the fact remains that this repressive climate prevented the emergence of a close identification between the population and the government. Indeed, creating a nation-state for Reza Shah meant the establishment of a few features of a strong state. The first aspect of this was, of course, the centralization of political authority. Centralization would not only provide greater political control, it would enable the regime to mobilize and rationalize resources of the country and achieve greater efficiency. Another

aspect was the expansion of the state functions. Reza Shah's state now had taken over the establishment and maintenance of the national defense and had the capability of generating or collecting revenues to an extent unforeseen by any previous state in Iran. The proliferation of legal standards that led to the growth and expansion of bureaucracy was another aspect of the emergence of a strong state.

Reza Shah's state, however, was not able to withstand the onslaught of the Allied forces on Iran with the break out of WWII. In 1941, with the invasion of Soviet and British forces of Western Iran, the government collapsed and Reza Shah who was perceived as being pro-German by the Allies, was forced to abdicate in favor of his son, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

As the iron grip of the state was relaxed, Iran entered into another period of chaos and weakness of the central government. At the same time, the army that was instrumental in keeping the centrifugal forces under control, disintegrated. The ramifications of these developments were felt during the last two years of the War when separatist movements by the Azaris and the Kurds threatened the territorial integrity of the state.

The nationalist uprisings by the Azaris and the Kurds

and the inactivity of the Baluch indicate that to a large extent each group was responding to its particular experience since the Constitutional Revolution. Such response was also reinforced by several factors: a) the distance between each group's homeland and the center and the extent and range of communication infrastructure that linked each group and the state; b) recruitment of each group's political and intellectual elite by the state; c) the indigenous socio-political structures and the extent to which they were affected by state policies or interaction with the state; d) the extent of the economic integration of the group and its homeland (region) into the national economy; e) the state's administrative policies and the effectiveness of such policies in transforming traditional structures; f) the state's cultural policies such as language, religion, and educational policies. In the following pages each group and its particular response to the new political environment will be examined.

THE Azaris:

Reza Shah's policies had a great impact in Azarbaijan both economically and socio-politically. By centralizing

commerce and trade in Tehran, Tabriz lost its advantageous position among the Iranian cities. The decline of Azarbaijan, compared to the prosperity of Tehran, created a great deal of resentment among the Azaris who considered their province as the "bread basket" of Iran. Indeed, the monopoly policy of the regime badly hurt provinces such as Azarbaijan that were forced to sell agricultural products only to the government to subsidize a few urban centers.³⁸ The following passage written by the British Consul in Tabriz is revealing:

The completion of one organized body out of different and to some extent independent local economies, such as that of Azerbaijan, artificially links the fortunes of his district with those of other districts. This means that if disaster comes it will be general and not local- a prospect not balanced by any promise of greater general prosperity. Also, Azerbaijan argues that it can, if left alone, very well provide its own prosperity. The north feels that the south has been carried away by meretricious doctrines, and that it will drag the north with it to disaster. The Shah, of course, is responsible for linking the north to the south and he is hated accordingly; even more perhaps, since he is detested because in all the upsets he has created, he has contrived to acquire a very large fortune for himself.³⁹

The decline in the prosperity of Azarbaijan, also, created a push migration into Tehran where economic opportunities were available and such social services as health and education were concentrated.⁴⁰ In the meantime, the official recognition of Persian as the

language of instruction in schools all over the country increased Azari discontent.

The ban on Azari literary works and publications and compulsory use of Persian language in schools and bureaucratic institutions, however, were welcomed by some Azaris such as Ahmad Kasravi, the renowned historian of Iran. As was mentioned before, Kasravi as an Iranian nationalist considered Turkish a foreign language imposed on the people of Azarbaijan.⁴¹ He believed the division of Iranian society into ethnic, communal and sectarian segments were harmful and dangerous and attributed Iran's backwardness to disunity and cultural fragmentation.⁴² Also Taqizadeh, the famous Iranian politician from Azarbaijan, advocated adoption and strengthening of Persian as a means to revitalize Iran.⁴³

It is not known, however, to what extent these views were popular among the Azari rank and file. Azari children, upon entering elementary school, had to learn to read and write in Persian while the overwhelming majority of them could hardly speak the language. The language issue, thus, became a matter of vital significance.

All this reinforced the feelings of betrayal and abandonment that the Azaris had begun to feel in the years following the Constitutional Revolution. The Azari break

with the Iranian state seemed very real to the Azari intellectual elite and the members of the modern middle classes. The usage of the phrase "Turk-e khar" that equates Azari Turks with a jackass and is meant to signify stupidity began after Reza Shah's Persianization of Iran, according to many of my Azari interviewees. The Persians, for the first time, were considered to be better than Azaris; and this "holier than thou" attitude, although greatly mitigated in relation to the Azaris, still continues to persist today.

One impact of Reza Shah's cultural policies in Azarbaijan was the regression of Azari poetry and other literary works. The progressive Azari literature became more conservative in both form and content.⁴⁴ Berengian writes:

The suppression of Turkic for literary use resulted in a staggering amount of religious poetry produced in this language since, except for ordinary conversation at home, the only function left for Turkic was for various religious purposes....These religious poems helped the Azeri idiom survive the Pahlavi period.⁴⁵

It should be pointed out that some Azari poets and writers recognized advantages in Persian as a highly developed literary language. Such poets as Parvin E'tesami [1906-1941] and Mohammad Hoseyn Shahriar who were born in Azarbaijan, wrote only in Persian. Shahriar,

however, began to write poetry in Turkish after Reza Shah's abdication⁴⁶ and again after the success of the Islamic Revolution.⁴⁷

The Democratic Republic of Azarbaijan:

The abdication of Reza Shah created a new political environment in which the Azaris of Iran could further their collective interests. These demands were not restricted to cultural freedom and more equitable distribution of resources. Many Azari intellectuals and political leaders who were influenced by Marxist-Leninist ideology imported from Russian Azarbaijan were expressing separatist tendencies. These individuals succeeded to temporarily separate Azarbaijan from Iran at the end of the World War II.

The possibilities for the emergence of a separatist movement were created by the War and abdication of Reza Shah and the Soviet occupation of Azarbaijan. As we noted, Azarbaijan had lost its prosperity during Reza Shah's years. However, the province still boasted a much higher level of industrialization compared to some Kurdish inhabited areas and, of course, Baluchistan. The conditions of the peasantry had not improved while the War

years had widened the gap between the rich and the lower classe.

This situation stirred many Tudeh members into agitation activities in Azarbaijan particularly among the Azari peasants who had been oppressed by the rich Azari landlords.⁴⁸ The Tudeh Party, founded in 1941, was made up of the survivors of the 53 men whose organized leftist activities was ended in the 1930s. After Reza Shah's abdication other progressive elements joined these men and founded the Tudeh. The party had a very interesting ethnic make up. Abrahamian writes:

..Of the 2,213 former members..1,713 (78%) lived in the more modernized provinces of Tehran, Gilan, Mazandaran and Azarbaijan. Only 441 (19%) lived in the moderately modernized provinces of Isfahan, Khuzistan and Kermanshahan. And a mere 77 (3%) lived in the backward provinces of Kurdistan, Fars, Kerman, Sistan and Baluchistan.....

....The Azeri and other Turkic groups, which totaled less than 27% of the population, formed between 32 and 43% of the party leadership.

...The Azeris....were also well represented in the party's middle and lower ranks. Of the 168 delegates of the First Congress, 44 (26%) represented party branches in Azerbaijan. Among others, there were at least 18 (10%) Azeris from outside of Azerbaijan.... Of 218 party activists arrested in the main cities in 1951, 28 (13%) resided in Tabriz. Of 24 civilian members of the party who were executed or died in prison between 1953 and 1960, 9 (37%) were Azeris....⁴⁹

It should be noted that the party's leadership was made up of mostly Persian or Persianized intellectuals.⁵⁰

The disproportionate number of Azaris in the Tudeh membership, however, was an indication of a higher rate of urbanization and industrialization in Azarbaijan. Azarbaijan not only boasted large urban centers and a greater number of factories [Table IV], as we noted it had a long history of communications and interaction with Russian Azarbaijan. After the October Revolution, the Iranian Azaris, instead of Baku, chose to migrate to industrial centers within Iran.⁵¹

Azaris' interest in the Tudeh, however, does not mean that the party advocated Azari communal aspirations. On the contrary, the Tudeh basically appealed to the peasants, workers, members of the intelligentsia and lower middle classes⁵² and not a particular ethnic community. Indeed, the most important issues in the Tudeh agenda were:

Progressive labor legislation; improved standards of living for the peasantry; strict price controls to curb inflation; free education and general health services; elimination of reactionary elements from public life and the restitution of democratic practices; equality for minorities; reform of the judicial system; disarming of the nomad tribes; national industrialization; friendly relations with all of Iran's neighbors; and the elimination of foreign interference.⁵³

The above passage which was a declaration of the party's platform in 1943 demonstrates the party's

proclivities and its favorable views towards centralization and modernization. The party was not interested in communal and ethnic aspirations of various ethnic groups but more concerned with the idea of class struggle which signified its Marxist orientation.⁵⁴

During the War years when adverse economic conditions had created more inter-ethnic tensions, many Azari members of the Tudeh had begun to address the party's position regarding communal issues. Indeed, the issue of Azari ethnic identity was left unresolved between the Tudeh leaders in Tehran and those in Azarbaijan. While the Azari members considered themselves as a separate "nation," the Tehrani members considered Azaris as Iranians and their language as a local dialect. Indeed, although the Tehrani members tried placate the Azaris, the party's response to the grievances of the Azari members was ambiguous.⁵⁵ As a result the party's branch in Azarbaijan began sponsoring demonstrations, demanding the freedom to have Azari as the language of instruction in schools and establishment of a provincial council (early 1945).⁵⁶ Before the Tudeh's Central Committee could react to these developments, the establishment of the Ferqeh-e demokrat-e Azarbaijan [the Democratic Party of Azarbaijan] was announced by Pischevari and his friends.

Pishevvari, a veteran Communist, had emigrated to the Russian Azarbaijan at the age 12 and helped establish the first Iranian Communist organization in Baku, Adalat [Justice}. The leaders of Adalat party mobilized a large number of workers to help the Bolsheviks after the October Revolution⁵⁷ and later they became involved in the Jangali Movement in the Gilan Province in northern Iran and establishment of the Gilan Soviet Republic in the early 1920s.

After Reza Shah's suppression of Iranian Communists, Pishevvari was imprisoned. In prison he came to know the "Fifty-Three." The Fifty-Three were composed of Dr. Taqi Arani and his compatriots. Dr. Arani who was born in Tabriz (1902) but raised mostly in Tehran, like Kasravi, was an Iranian nationalist. He believed in the Persian heritage of Iran and considered Azarbaijan as an integral part of Iran. He also believed that Persian should be reformed and used as a unifying language throughout Iran. Arani, a "well-read Marxist and a convinced Socialist"⁵⁸ became the founder and introducer of Marxist ideology in Iran. Arani and fifty-two of his friends and disciples were arrested and jailed by Reza Shah's regime. He was murdered in prison (1940).⁵⁹

It was in prison that Pishevvari met the Fifty-Three

and different accounts contend that both personal and ideological reasons prevented a friendship to develop.⁶⁰

Pishevvari, after the formation of the Tudeh joined the party. However, he soon withdrew and began publishing his own newspaper Azhir [alarm]; writing diatribes against the Tudeh and its leaders.⁶¹ Soon after this Pishevvari's attempts at participating in the mainstream political process was defeated. As an Azarbaijan deputy in the 14th Majles, his credentials were rejected. It is at this juncture that Pishevvari left for Azarbaijan and thus the establishment of the Democratic Party of Azarbaijan.

One can only speculate whether this episode was one of the factors that contributed to the emergence of the secessionist movement in Azarbaijan. Indeed one may argue that had not the Majles rejected Pishevvari's credentials, his recruitment into the political process could have prevented his bid for power in Azarbaijan.

Pishevvari himself, regarding the formation of the Democratic Party of Azarbaijan, writes:

At that time, there was no political organization but the Tudeh party in Azarbaijan. This organization as a result of years of struggle had become weak and discredited.⁶²

Pishevvari continues that after a series of discussions between him and two Azari friends they decided

to form their own party. Abrahamian attributes this "defection of the Tudeh branch in Azarbaijan" to the insensitivities of the Tudeh Central Committee and predicaments of the local branches of the party.⁶³ Abrahamian, contrary to a few other scholars⁶⁴ argues that the Tudeh and Fergeh-e demokrat were two separate organizations with different objectives and aspirations. While Tudeh basically adhered to a Marxist ideology with class struggle as the important factor in its agenda, Fergeh-e demokrat, although Marxist, considered communal aspirations as vital as class struggle, if not more important.⁶⁵

This is indeed an intriguing point in the evolution and development of Azari ethnic identity. Many factors had helped sever Azari ties to the Iranian state, among which should be mentioned the Russian occupation of 1909, the economic decline of Azarbaijan, the hardship of War years, the neglect of the government, the Persianization of Iran and the humiliating attitudes of the Persians towards the non-Persians and more important of all the inability or unwillingness of the center to incorporate and co-opt different forces that demanded political participation. Other important forces, however, began to interfere as well. As we know Azaris like the majority of

the Persians are Shii Muslims. Islam is a religion that does not recognize ethnic or communal identities. The believer is a member of the community of faithful. The modernization of Iran temporarily helped weaken realigion and religious institutions and consequently generated more fragmentation. The weakening of religion made the group boundaries between the Azaris and the Persians grow wider and thus created more awareness of a distinct Azari identity. The differentiating element of this identity was, of course, the Azari language that helped distinguish Azaris from the Persians and the rest of the population. Reza Shah's Promotion of the Persian language thus immensely threatened the newly-emerging Azari identity. That is why it was the language that became a vital issue for the preservation of this identity.

The dilemma of the Azaris was thus a problem of identity. Now that the cohesive force of religion was weakened and other factors also prevented their complete identification with the ruling group, the question of identity had become a vital one. At this juncture the Azari intellectuals and the intelligentsia, educated and communally conscious, appeared on the Azari political scene and began searching for a meaningful way to define themselves. In their efforts to find such definition

these individuals emphasized language. In the meantime, to articulate and express this identity, they tried to find an ideological framework. Whatever this ideological framework, it had to have the capability of helping these community leaders to express a communal desire for self-assertion and articulate the socio-economic and cultural grievances of the community.

It was mentioned that as a result of Azarbaijan's proximity to the Soviet Union, the Azari intelligentsia were mainly influenced by social democratic and Marxist-Leninist ideas. Thus, the redefinition of ethnic identity and articulation of socio-economic and cultural demands were expressed in the Leninist terminology, particularly during the period of the emergence of the Fergh-e demokrat-e Azarbaijan. It should be pointed out that it is not known how pervasive these ideological proclivities were or whether they went much beyond the "progressive" and "politicized" intelligentsia. Some Azari workers might have been interested in "progressive labor legislation." However as the leaders of the party later admitted, Azari workers and peasants had neither the "organizational cohesion nor the political and ideological strength" to enable them to unite and fulfill their "vanguard position in the revolutionary movement."⁶⁶ In

other words, the movement was probably not very popular among both groups.

This fusion of Marxism with nationalism, however, is a very interesting phenomenon that has not been confined to Iran and its heterogeneous population. In many different countries, this synthesis has produced powerful and emotionally charged movements even though the two ideologies are at times mutually exclusive.

As is well known, both Marx and Engels were weary of nationalism. For them nationalism presented a difficulty in the development of a worker's party. However, 19th century Marxists tried to accommodate nationalism in the struggle against autocracy. With the emergence of the 20th century, the Marxists and the nationalists drifted apart. The Marxists viewed nationalism as a tool used by the bourgeois class to perpetuate their rule. It was believed that nationalism blurs class differences and creates the feeling of common interest between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Furthermore, it separates the working classes of different nations who should be united as one force; as working classes of the world. Thus, nationalism does not serve the interests of the proletariat⁶⁷ and nationalism and Marxism become "philosophically incompatible."⁶⁸

Lenin, however, had to deal with this structural feature of the Tsarist Empire, i.e., the existence of various ethnic groups or "nationalities." This, however, presented a paradoxical problem that was again dealt with in the most expedient way. When dealing with the mainstream nationalism of such dominant ethnic communities as those of Germany, Poland, Austria and Russia, nationalism was considered a popular movement against "imperial autocrats" and thus "functional." But when nationalism "took the form of ethnic communalism resisting central Communist Party control,"⁶⁹ it was considered as undesirable. Hence, the Bolsheviks did not hesitate to crush and suppress ethnic communalism within Russia itself.⁷⁰

The Iranian Marxists were also familiar with this "dual" treatment of the question of nationalities by the Bolsheviks. It was Mohammad Amin Rasulzadeh, a Marxist Azari, who for the first time wrote about the disappointments of some Azari Marxists with Leninism and its approach to the question of "nationalities."⁷¹ Undoubtedly, the leaders of the Democratic Republic of Azarbaijan were aware of the Soviet approach. However, since the very survival of their movement depended on the support and assistance of the Russians they chose to

overlook this fact.

Indeed, the emergence of the republic owed much to the Soviet presence in Iran. World War II provided opportunities for the Azari Marxists and the Soviet leaders to realize their dreams. While Azari Marxists aspired an independent homeland, the Soviets were contemplating ways to reach the warm waters of the Persian Gulf as this was the legacy of their predecessors, the Russian Tsars. Even before the War, there is reason to believe that, the Soviets were planning for such expansion.⁷² When the War began the Soviet desires in incorporation of Iran was expressed in the Four Power Act of 1940 between the Axis powers and the Soviet Union. Although the Act did not materialize, it sought to assign zones of influence to the contracting parties. The Soviet "center of aspiration" was proclaimed "as the area south of Batum and Baku in the general direction of the Persian Gulf."⁷³ At the same time, Leninist ideology provided the Soviets with ideological justifications for such an expansion.

It is true that the vital interests of other powers in Iran, particularly Great Britain, had prevented the Russians from openly resorting to force. However, there were other indirect and covert means to accomplish this

objective. Assisting Iranian "nationalities" to express their "national aspirations" was one of the ways the Soviets could bring Iran into the Soviet sphere of influence. Indeed, the least they could accomplish was to secure the oil deposits of the northern Iran which they badly wanted.⁷⁴ WWII provided the long-awaited opportunity. Not only Azarbaijan could be secured but Iran could be brought under Soviet domination. Soviet troops were in occupation of northern Iran since 1941 to protect the supply route to the Soviet Union. It was, thus, with great ease that the Soviets assisted Azari Marxists to declare the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Azarbaijan.

In the meantime, the occupation and Soviet machinations in Azarbaijan were coupled with pressure tactics to secure an oil concession to exploit the northern parts of Iran. Indeed, "an oil concession, especially one comparable to that of the British-Iranian Oil Company in the south, would simply consolidate the region as a security perimeter."⁷⁵ It is said that the Soviet forces made many Azaris demand -by sending telegrams and signing petitions- the concession be granted.⁷⁶ The refusal of the Iranian government to give in to the Soviet demands may explain why the Soviets

sponsored the establishment of the renegade republic.⁷⁷

Soon after declaring its formation, Fergeh-e demokrat began publicizing its program and extending its branches in Azarbaijan. At the same time, the Tudeh provincial organizations in Azarbaijan dissolved the Tudeh party branch and joined the Democratic party. The Tudeh, caught by surprise, eventually was "persuaded" by the Soviet authorities to accept the Democratic Party.⁷⁸

In October 1945 the Party's first Congress met and voted to form a militia. In this Congress representatives of different social strata, including the members of the clergy, merchants, tribal leaders, local dignitaries and Communist and modernized intellectuals, participated.⁷⁹ It is said that many people were motivated to align with a Soviet-supported party at a time when such alignment could safeguard one's property or enhance one's future opportunities.⁸⁰

The Congress issued a declaration according to which such demands were made as: democracy for Iran, autonomy for Azarbaijan according to the Atlantic Charter, administration of Azarbaijan's internal affairs by Azaris, creation of an Azari national congress that would elect the ministers of the autonomous regime, the usage of Azari Turkish in schools and government offices, etc... The

declaration also added that Azarbaijan has no desire to separate from the rest of Iran.⁸¹ However, despite this reassurance the central government immediately declared the movement illegal, Soviet-inspired and non-indigenous.

The Democratic Party, in response, resorted to force to assert its authority. The Red Army overtly assisted the party's militia and in the process the central government's military posts were disarmed and encircled while ultimatums were issued to the local commander to either surrender or leave the region. Assistance and troop reinforcement by the central government were made impossible when the Red Army prevented any movement of troops from Tehran to Azarbaijan.⁸² Thus all military posts of the central government in the region were taken over, sometimes with excessive use of violence.⁸³

To implement the resolutions adopted in the aforementioned Congress, the party held general elections for an "Azarbaijan National Assembly."⁸⁴ All strata of the population including women -who were given the right to vote- participated in this election. At the same time the Party succeeded to negotiate the evacuation of the last contingent of Iranian troops through a preliminary agreement signed between the central government of Iran and the Azarbaijani regime which recognized the

sovereignty of the democratic regime over the province and called for further negotiations to settle the ultimate relationship between the two. Nevertheless, the regime retained its army and maintained full and independent de facto control over the province. The Party also assembled a National Assembly in Tabriz. The deputies elected Pischevari as the Prime Minister of the autonomous government. Immediately after this, Pischevari's regime launched a series of socio-economic and political reforms. A "people's army" was established; a university was created that was the first university ever founded outside the area of the central province; a land distribution program was promised and partly implemented; freedom of religion was granted to all, including the minorities.⁸⁵ Also Azari became the official language of the Republic. The Democratic regime stressed the purification of Azari from "foreign" [basically meant Persian] words. It is, however, ironic that in the process the "speech of Tabriz" was beginning to be replaced by that of "Baku." Indeed, the gradual encroachment of Russian into the language made literary communication more difficult.⁸⁶ Language, however, was an issue of utmost significance for the leaders of the Republic. Pischevari in the first issue of the daily paper Azarbaijan wrote:

We have absorbed our mother tongue with our mother's milk and have taken it with the exhilarating air of our land. Those who are insulting it and endeavor to show it as an imposed and artificial language are our true enemies. Many perfidious foreign elements have tried for centuries to prevent the flourishing of this beautiful language. In spite of this, our language has survived in a strong and persistent manner.....⁸⁷

The regime, indeed, encouraged literary endeavors in Turkish and this period is one of the most prolific in the history of the Azari literary activity in Iran particularly in relation to patriotic or nationalistic poetry that mushroomed and filled the pages of various journals, periodicals and books. Berengian writes that although most of these works were mediocre, there were some very powerful and beautiful works particularly those written by three Azari poets: Biriya [the Education Minister of the Republic who was killed by a lynch mob after the collapse of the regime], Ali Tudeh and Balash Azaroghli who both fled to the Soviet Azarbaijan and enjoy immense respect and prestige there today⁸⁸ and have joined those intellectuals who discuss the "southern question" in the northern Azarbaijan.⁸⁹ Indeed, the continuation of this literary outpour was carried out in the Soviet Azarbaijan in the form of what is called "the literature of longing."⁹⁰

Regarding the impacts of the policies undertaken by

the Regime, it is been said that "even strongly anti-Pishevare residents of Tabriz admitted that more improvements were made in the city of Tabriz in one year of Democratic rule than in the twenty years under Reza Shah."⁹¹ Many peasants and workers who found employment in the Party's army were treated well with promise of high pay and promotion. These men were provided with Russian uniform and equipment and, according to Pesyan, they were never told that the ultimate objective is the separation of Azarbaijan but only the replacement of the corrupt government in Tehran.⁹²

The reaction of the elite in Tehran towards these events was mixed. The deputies of the 14th Majles were mostly bewildered. The central government was too weak to prevent such activities. Abrahamian states that the reaction of the ruling elite, the Tudeh and non-Tudeh intelligentsia had one element in common; their opposition to the linguistic demands.⁹³ The Tudeh, apparently was forced by the Soviet Union to support the movement but could not be forced to support its nationalistic predispositions. Thus, the Tudeh emphasized the movement's reformist aspects and played down the nationalistic ones.⁹⁴ The support and protection of the Soviet Union extended to the regime was justified as the

fact that "all social mass movements utilize historical opportunities"⁹⁵ and that if the Soviets regarded the Azarbaijan movement favorably that was because the movement was a genuine attempt at social reform. Thus, the central government should put aside its pro-British policy and recognize that the Soviet Union has no territorial ambitions in Iran.⁹⁶ Yet, the Tudeh ignored the language issue.⁹⁷ The Democratic Party, however, insisted on the language issue and in its organ Azarbaijan declared that "it was high time Persian intellectuals realized that there was such a language as Azari."⁹⁸

The Tabriz delegates, however, later agreed to work with the Tudeh. The Ferqeh-e demokrat, the Tudeh and the Iran Party, together with two regional organizations -the Kurdish Democratic Party and the revived Jangali Movement of Gilan- formed a coalition for the forthcoming parliamentary elections.

However, before these elections could happen, the democratic regime collapsed. The collapse of the republic was mainly a consequence of the withdrawal of the Soviet army. The Russians who had refused to leave Iran after the War had ended, were under pressure from various fronts. The Iranians, initially discouraged by the cool reactions of the British and the Americans to their cries

of help, appealed to the United Nations to no avail.⁹⁹ However, before long both Americans and the British realized the gravity of the situation when in 1946 their troops had evacuated Iran and the Russians had steadfastly remained. This prompted the Americans to resort to some pressures while the newly -appointed Iranian Prime Minister, Qavam, an astute and experienced politician, began direct negotiations with the Russians. In the meantime, Iran's appeal to the United Nations, as the first appeal ever brought before this organization, particularly made the Americans more alert to the ramifications of the Soviet presence in Iran. Eventually as a result of international pressures and Qavam's negotiations the Soviets withdrew their troops from Iran.

Many reasons have been put forward to explain the failure of the Democratic Republic of Azarbaijan. Some writers attribute the fall of the Republic to the withdrawal of the Soviet troops and the Russian reluctance to extend additional support. Robert Rossow, for instance, contends that the Soviet support for the Democratic Regime was only a means towards the larger goal, i.e., the reduction of Turkey.¹⁰⁰ Abrahamian, although not overlooking the Soviet factor, elaborates on the domestic reasons particularly economic failures of the

regime.¹⁰¹ Apparently these failures managed to alienate a great many of the Azari rank and file who were mostly motivated by socio-economic considerations. Katouzian also contends that the Regime's land reform policy was too disorganized and hastily implemented. On the one hand many peasants did not benefit and on the other the "radical manner" in which the land reform was implemented frightened many merchants and others who thought their properties would be confiscated.¹⁰² One of the most important factors was the Regime's identification with the Soviet Union. As we have mentioned before, the Azaris of Iran had born the brunt of Russian occupations and atrocities at different junctures in history and these memories were all too fresh. The ideological nature of the movement also did not sit very well with the Azari rank and file.

Russians....were Communists and Communism for the majority of both urban and rural Iranians meant little more than official atheism, forced labour camps, hunger and famine, sexual promiscuity and the collective ownership and use of everything, including 'one's wife.'many.....including Azarbaijanis [were frightened] into the belief that 'wife-sharing' was around the corner.¹⁰³

Yet, instead of distancing themselves from the Russians the leaders of the Regime used "jargons, slogans and tactics"¹⁰⁴ that identified them more with that power.

The significance of the Soviet support can only be demonstrated by the fact that as soon as the Soviet troops withdrew and the Iranian government dispatched the army, the Democratic Regime fell. Pischevari and several other leaders of the Regime escaped to the Soviet Union where they were taken to work camps in Siberia. Undoubtedly, the Soviets did not want the nationalist orientation of these people to affect the Russian Azaris.¹⁰⁵

Although the Soviet Union of Stalin period did not give a welcoming reception to the leaders of the Democratic Regime, one of the results of this episode was that the question of the "southern Azarbaijan" was kept alive and well in the Soviet Azarbaijan. A "national liberation" literature was developed in the Soviet Azarbaijan in which national symbols important to both Azarbaijans were created. Among these symbols the "Aras River" that divides the two Azarbaijans is the most widely used.¹⁰⁶ Of course, until the Islamic Revolution and the subsequent weakening of the central authority the Iranian Azaris were not able or cared to reciprocate this 'longing' through literary discourse.

The "southern question" in the Soviet Azarbaijan was institutionalized through the efforts of the Russian Azari intellectuals and the emergence of scientific and cultural

institutions whose sole function was to study Iran and the southern question.¹⁰⁷ The policy makers of the Soviet Union, however, refrained from direct interference in Iran's affairs after this episode. But the Communist party of Azarbaijan kept the "southern question" alive in a subtle but systematic way. It was only after the Islamic Revolution that a more "aggressive" approach to the "southern question" was adopted in Soviet Azarbaijan.

The Democratic Republic of Azarbaijan was an attempt by the Azari intellectual elite to define their community. As was mentioned before, the modernization of Iran and subsequent weakening of religious institutions weakened the Shii identity of the Azaris which they shared with the Persian population of Iran. The subsequent monopoly of power by the Persians and the stress of the ruling elite on Persian symbols helped distinguish Persians from the rest of the population including the Azaris who felt excluded and humiliated. The Azaris like other ethnic communities had two choices: either to assimilate or to resist incorporation. Many did choose to resist and this resistance was not only due to a well-developed culture and language but to the existence of an Azari national entity on the other side of the border. Indeed, the existence of Russian Azarbaijan and the strengthening of

Azari national identity by Soviet policies was a constant reminder to the Iranian Azaris that they are a distinct and separate entity. Most of the nationalist movements in Iranian Azarbaijan were supported and assisted by the Azaris of the Soviet Union and their impact and influence should not be underestimated. In point of fact, Russian Azarbaijan served as a channel through which Soviet ambitions regarding Iran were to be materialized.

The Democratic Republic was the result of such assistance and influence and without it the movement probably would not have amounted to anything significant. There are, however, reasons to believe that had the Democratic Republic of Azarbaijan succeeded, it would not have remained within an undivided state of Iran despite the claims of its leaders to the contrary. There is no doubt that for the leaders of the movement prudence dictated the temporary playing down of their real political objectives. Thus they demanded "autonomy" while many features of their movement signified a "separatist" attempt. Among these features the most obvious is, for example, the Republic's own police force and its militia - later transformed into an army- that was considered as the "backbone" of the Republic.¹⁰⁸ Also the Democratic Republic had an ideologically leftist political

orientation which was inherently at odds with the monarchical and patrimonial political structure of the Iranian state.

The Democratic Republic of Azarbaijan was the loudest expression of Azari national consciousness throughout modern history of Iran. Later events, however, demonstrated that Iranian Azarbaijanis share a great deal with Iran as a political and territorial entity and if the state adopts the "correct" approach towards them, they will feel quit comfortable with their identity as "Iranians."

THE KURDS:

Reza Shah's tribal policies have already been discussed. These policies, of course, included the Kurds who were mostly disarmed with some tribal chiefs kept as hostages in Tehran. The main objective of these policies was to prevent the Kurds from getting involved in armed insurrection and tribal unruliness. Hassan Arfa who himself directed some of the government's expeditions writes:

....The Shah decided that the time had come to bring the unruly Kurdish frontier tribes definitely under control...The Kurds did not fight for independence or

autonomy, and at the end of the campaign the rebel tribes were disarmed. Those who had helped us, however, were allowed to keep their arms for the time being...¹⁰⁹

In the meantime, according to the new administrative arrangements, the Kurdish inhabited areas of Iran were divided between the Fourth and the Fifth Provinces, i.e., the Province of Western Azarbaijan and the Province of Kermanshahan respectively. None of these provinces contained a homogeneous Kurdish population. The Kurds shared the province of Western Azarbaijan with a large Azari population while in the province of Kermanshahan there existed a sizable Shii Kurdish community as well as other groups. The administration of these areas, as elsewhere in Iran, was directed and controlled by the central government. This direct and strong central control meant that most tribal chiefs lost their political power and status.

As we noted, Kurdish inhabited areas in Iran are mostly suited for grazing animals and agricultural activity. In these areas the land and particularly pastures were traditionally owned by the tribe, i.e., assigned to the tribe by the sovereign which actually meant a de facto control of the land by the tribe itself.¹¹⁰ Reza Shah's rule, however, changed these

arrangements. Firstly, during early years of Reza Shah's period, considerable areas of land in Kurdistan were confiscated by the state.¹¹¹ Secondly, the forced deportation of some tribes¹¹² made their lands available to other groups. Thirdly, the Land Registration Laws of 1928-1929 made rich landlords out of many tribal Khans who seized both the agricultural and pasture lands¹¹³. Before the land reform program of the second Pahlavi Shah, the lands in Kurdish inhabited areas were entirely in the hands of either large landed proprietors or tribal Khans with very little peasant ownership.¹¹⁴

It was also during Reza Shah's period that capitalist relations and market economy were introduced to Kurdish areas. These areas, however, were unevenly integrated into the national economy and a full integration only happened during the reign of Reza Shah's son. Reza Shah's neglect of agriculture, however, did not mean the growth of industry in the Kurdish inhabited areas. Tehran, northern provinces and Eastern Azarbaijan served as favorite sites for factories and plants.¹¹⁵ [Table IV] However, the Kurdish inhabited areas of Iran were not devoid of urban centers. Such cities and towns as Urumiyah and Mahabad in Western Azarbaijan and Sanandaj and Kermanshah in the province of Kermanshahan should be

mentioned. Indeed Iranian Kurdish areas, despite their rural and tribal nature, did contain a modest urban population and it was among this population that the leaders of the first Kurdish nationalist uprising in Iran emerged.

During Reza Shah period, like Azaris, the Kurds had grievances about their cultural freedom and objected to the compulsory use of Persian as the language of school instruction and administration. The regime, particularly, considered its repression of Kurdish cultural expression legitimate since it could be justified by ethnic and cultural affinity of the Kurds and the Persians. This affinity, indeed, has helped obscure an important fact for some writers and also many Iranians; that the Kurds possess a distinct identity and they do not wish to be incorporated into any other group. When the revival of the Iranian pre-Islamic past -that the Kurds and the Persians apparently shared in peaceful coexistence- did not induce the Kurdish population of Iran to identify with the state, one writer wrote:

That the Kurds should rise up against Turkey is quite understandable; that they should kick against the Arabs of Irak...to whom they consider themselves superior, is even more explicable; but one is astonished that good relations should be disturbed between the Kurds and the government of Tehran. Are they not both Iranian? Are their languages not close

to each other? Are they not nourished on the same ancestral legends? Everything then ought to bring the two peoples together and undoubtedly the situation of the Kurds in Iran is, on the whole better than that of their neighbours....¹¹⁶

The above passage and other observations such as that of Eden Naby's who contends "the Kurds hold a special fascination for Iranian intellectuals,"¹¹⁷ tend to confuse ethnic or linguistic affinity with the issue of identity. Ethnic and linguistic similarities notwithstanding, the Kurds from time immemorial held a distinct identity separate from that of the Persians. One important reason for such distinction was that the Kurds, most of the time, were ruled by the Persians and never shared power with them. The body politic is an extremely important determinant of group identification. A group that is subjugated and ruled will hardly identify with the rulers regardless of the ethnic or cultural similarities. This is not, of course, a one-sided phenomenon since the ruling group will also consider itself as distinct and separate. In the case of the Kurds the differences were accentuated after the Safavids made Shiism the official religion of Iran. Indeed there was/is not an intrinsic significance in the Shii-Sunni split that keeps the Kurdish and Persian identities apart. As Donald Horowitz so aptly writes:

...It is not the particular differentiating

characteristic that matters...That is largely an accident of context and contact. The differentiating characteristics that become prominent will be defined in terms of what traits an emerging group has in common as against other groups with whom it finds itself in a single environment.¹¹⁸

The significant issue is thus juxtaposition of two groups with different identities in a common environment. The Sunni-Shii split becomes important because it is the most visible differentiating factor. Language, in this case, also becomes important because Persian and Kurdish, although having the same origins, are two distinct languages.

Reza Shah's policies such as his onslaught on the socio-political structure of the tribal society, the depoliticization of the tribal chiefs, the privatization of tribal lands and coercive acculturation as well as forced sedentarization all immensely affected Kurdish society.

The depoliticization of tribal structure and transformation of tribal chiefs to "landed aristocracy" had both economic and psycho-political impacts on the average Kurd. Economically the privatization of property made landless agricultural laborers out of Kurdish peasants or nomads. The tribal aristocracy, as long as it cooperated with the regime, could use this labor any way

they saw fit. Thus, the relatively egalitarian tribal society was transformed into one of oppression and exploitation.¹¹⁹ The transformation in the role of the tribal chiefs as well as the onslaught of new political and administrative structures and pacification and forceful sedentarization challenged the familiar socio-political structures.¹²⁰ At the same time the average tribal warrior who bore arms and was proud of his predatory activities, was now reduced to a mere settled peasant at the mercy of the landlords and the government gendarmes who would help the landlords collect their dues. As privatization of land proceeded and the landlords became more wealthy, the phenomenon of the "absentee landlord" emerged which meant the ties between the Kurdish elite and the rank and file were further severed. The result was, of course, a marginalized Kurdish peasantry who were exploited by their own elite as well as the government officials. One important consequence was emergence of a form of social stratification that did not exist before and had important socio-political ramifications for future Kurdish society.

The weakening of the tribal structure, however, meant that many politicized Kurds had to begin to search for new forms of identity. In a tribal society, an individual's

identity is tied to the tribal structure without which this identity has little meaning. Membership in a small group such as "family" makes membership of the larger group such as "clan" or "lineage" or "tribe" meaningful. If this structure is weakened the automatic mechanisms that determine role-relationships or one's social niche in a particular society will no longer operate effectively. Thus one notes that the kinds of discontent expressed have not always been grievances about economic deprivation. Although economic grievances have been real and pervasive, they have been usually additional to factors which in one way or the other have tended to threaten a group's identity. This is true of the Kurds of Iran who immediately after Reza Shah's abdication found an outlet to express their grievances.

The Democratic Republic Of Kurdistan:

Reza Shah abdicated upon the occupation of Iranian territory by the British and Russian forces. The northern part of Iran was under the occupation of the Russians while the British occupied the southern part.

The Soviet forces in Azarbaijan dealt directly with the Kurdish tribes in the mountains west of Lake Urumiyah.

These tribes were allowed to keep their autonomy in exchange for certain favors such as providing grain for the Red Army. The southernmost areas of Kurdish tribes were, of course, contained by the British forces.¹²¹

There was a vacuum area situated between the two zones controlled by the British and the Russians where two tribal chiefs, Mahmud Khan of Kani-Senan and Hama Rashid claimed autonomy. These two tribal chiefs were recognized by the Iranian government as semi-official governors of their areas; but later were defeated by the Iranian army.¹²²

Archie Roosevelt who was in the area at the time writes:

By the fall of 1945, all of Kurdistan south of the Saqqiz-Baneh-Sardasht line was again firmly in government hands. The vacuum was thus reduced to the small area between this line and the Soviet forces based on Rezaiyah, in which there was only one town of any size -Mahabad....¹²³

Mahabad was the town where the nascent Kurdish intelligentsia of Iran, for the first time, found an outlet to express their national aspirations through an organizational framework and later a leader. Eagleton who has devoted a book-length study to the Mahabad Republic writes that in the chaotic conditions of those years, Mahabad was relatively secure as a result of the presence

of a number of respected religious and civil leaders among whom Qazi Muhammad ranked high.¹²⁴ In the meantime, the Russians whose aspirations and plans regarding Iran had never been a secret watched Kurdish areas with interest and throughout their occupation not only endeavored to influence the Kurds but tried to win their trust.¹²⁵

Firuz Kazemzadeh writes:

In Kurdistan...Moscow was able to exploit not so much anti-Iranian as anti-government sentiments of the tribal aristocracy. After years of oppressive peace imposed by Teheran, the Kurds had had enough of corrupt representatives of a distant authority, enough gendarmes patrolling their roads, and enough tax collectors, army recruiters, and other such "trespassers." They were ready to revert to their more traditional and happier way of life, to raids, vendettas, and brigandage.¹²⁶

Indeed, the dissatisfaction of the tribal leaders and the aspirations of the nascent Kurdish intelligentsia provided the Soviets with an opportune moment to chip away the authority of the central government. In 1941 a number of prominent members of Kurdish tribes, including Qazi Muhammad, were invited to visit the Soviet Union. The make-up of this group was mostly feudal and conservative. However, the group returned to Kurdistan from the Soviet Azarbaijan with the impression that the Soviet authorities were "with them."¹²⁷

In May 1942, when Russian Consul-General of Tabriz

and a number of other Soviet officials met with several Kurdish chiefs regarding the security of the Russian occupied areas, the Kurds responded by stating that they would not return the rifles seized from the Iranian army and more importantly requested that Kurdish language should be the language of instruction in schools and that they should have freedom in their national affairs.¹²⁸ This episode made the Russians realize that the Kurds can be used to further Soviet plans in Iran.

In the fall of 1942 a group of young Kurds of Mahabad mostly of middle class background established a party called Khomola-i zhian-e Kurdestan [Committee for the resurrection of Kurdistan]. The party which was composed of the secret cells extended its membership from the initial 15-20 members to 100 in the period of 6 months. Since initially the party had no formal leadership, a Kurdish captain of the Iraqi army, Mir Haj, who represented a Kurdish community in northern Iraq called "Hewa" [hope] gave advice to the party.¹²⁹ Membership to the party was only open to the Kurds and every member was supposed to take the following oaths:

- 1- "Not to betray the Kurdish nation.
- 2- To work for self-government for the Kurds.
- 3- Not to disclose any secrets oral or written.

- 4- To remain a member for life.
- 5- To consider all Kurds, men and women, as brothers and sisters.
- 6- Not to join another party or group without permission of the Komala."¹³⁰

In 1943, Komala members by popular vote elected a central committee in which only a few of the founding members were elected. Eagleton writes that this fact shows that the party was being transformed into a dynamic organization. He, however, adds that no one at the time realized that at least as far as the naming of the executive body was concerned, a Communist model was being used.¹³¹ Komala, soon, began expanding very rapidly with chapters in Iraq Turkey.¹³²

At this time there was no effective Iranian authority in Mahabad and Russians although in word respected Persian sovereignty, did not allow Iranian forces to their area of occupation. Arfa explains that the Russians were ambivalent in their approach towards the Kurds. On the one hand, they liked to see an independent Kurdish state comprised of Iraqi, Iranian and Turkish Kurds, "which would be friendly or even subservient to Russia" and would thus pave the way for a deeper Soviet infiltration into the Middle East. On the other hand, they were afraid that

should such state show a spirit of independence, it could fall under Western influence since Kurdish elites were basically feudal landlords and conservative religious leaders.¹³³

This problem was apparently solved when Komola's leaders met with the Soviets. As the party had grown too large to continue meeting in private homes, the Soviets were asked to found a branch of "Iranian-Soviet Cultural Relations Society" in Mahabad. The Russians gladly complied and instead a "Kurdish-Soviet Cultural Relations Society" was established.¹³⁴

One more unresolved question for the party members which had now come to the open, was whether to invite Qazi Muhammad, the leading citizen of Mahabad, to join the party. Qazi was reputed to be an authoritarian personality and some were afraid he would dominate the party. Eagleton writes that upto this point the party was a "democratically ordered grouping". No leader was chosen or did any one of its members try to form a dominant clique within the party. And since no known Marxist or Communist had joined, there had been no attempted take-over from the left.¹³⁵ Qazi was, however, invited to join in October 1944. He accepted the invitation and since then "although never elected to the Central Committee, he

was the guide and the voice of the party."¹³⁶

Roosevelt maintains that the Russians were particularly happy to see Qazi's monopoly of power in the party and suggests that he was the kind of a man they were looking for in order to control Komala.¹³⁷ The fact, however, is that Qazi not only was not a lackey of the Soviet Union but he was a pious religious leader whose conservative inclinations would not even make him a suitable target for Soviet propaganda. He was, rather, a pragmatic politician and a nationalist Kurd who aspired the establishment of a Kurdish independent entity. He knew very well that the Kurds were not capable of such endeavor unless assisted by an outside power and at that juncture the only outside power willing to extend such assistance was the Soviet Union.

The Russians not only kept Iranian army out of the area, they also gave promises to the Kurds regarding Kurdish nationalist aspirations in the post-war period. We know that the Russians, at the same time, were involved in another separatist movement in Azarbaijan. But the Russian tactic when dealing with the two movements were not similar. The leadership of the Azari movement was Communist and ideologically and organizationally very sophisticated while that of the Kurdish movement was

basically conservative, religious and feudal. More important than that, deep-seated and time-honored hostility between the two ethnic groups as well as cultural, ideological and socio-economic differences made any Russian attempt at the unification of the two groups impossible. Indeed, Arfa contends that one of the reasons that prompted the tribal chiefs of the Western Azarbaijan to join the Kurdish movement was their hostility towards the Azaris. Fearing they would fall under the control of the emerging Azarbaijan Democratic Republic they joined Komala to counterbalance the Democratic Party of Azarbaijan.¹³⁸ These facts demonstrate one important aspect of the movement; that it was not an all-encompassing expression of national aspirations with grassroots support. Yet, it was important to the Kurds of Mahabad and its surrounding areas not to mention the Kurdish nationalists in neighboring countries. Indeed, the movement, through time, has been transformed into a major event of colossal proportions for the nationalist Kurds everywhere.

At the suggestion of the Russians the name of "Komola" was changed to the "Democratic Party of Kurdistan." Kurdish autonomy, the use of Kurdish in schools, employment of indigenous officials in the

administration of Kurdish areas and a more equitable allocation of resources were among the most important points in the Party's program.¹³⁹

In the meantime, the Russians increased their efforts for unification of the two movements in Azarbaijan and Kurdistan. Qazi, however, resisted Soviet attempts to induce him to consider the possibility that "Kurdish aspirations should be achieved within Azarbaijani autonomy."¹⁴⁰

Soon, the Russians delivered to the Kurds 1,200 rifles that belonged to Iranian gendarmerie and were captured by Azarbaijani militia. Meanwhile, Mulla Mostafa Barzani, a Kurdish warlord, and his tribal forces from Iraq crossed into Iran. Barzani and his tribe were in open revolt in Iraq and once they were pressured by the Iraqi forces they moved to Iran and joined the Mahabad movement. Barzani was followed by a few Iraqi officials of Kurdish descent who were active in Kurdish national struggle.¹⁴¹ Mulla Mostafa gave the Mahabad movement the military support it so desperately needed; a support that it could not reliably receive from many tribal chiefs in Iran who were in occasional contact and compromise with the central government.¹⁴²

The party, now, resembled an organizationally

sophisticated and efficient political organization. Thus after the emergence of the Democratic Republic of Azarbaijan was announced in Tabriz, on January 22, 1946 in a convocation of the entire city of Mahabad, Qazi, dressed in a Russian General's uniform, retaining his religious turban, announced the establishment of a Kurdish Republic in Mahabad.

However, for above-mentioned reasons, the Russians preferred for Kurdistan to be part of the Democratic Republic of Azarbaijan. Indeed, Qazi and other leaders of the Kurdish Republic soon realized that in relations to the Azarbaijani movement they were considered just another constituency and not an independent and separate entity.¹⁴³ In addition to the old inter-ethnic hostility between the Azaris and the Kurds, other outstanding issues were: Kurdish claims on the towns of Khoi, Rezaiyeh, and Shahpur in Western Azarbaijan which contained sizable Kurdish communities and "the rich, cultivated plains which surrounded them and without which the Kurds would be confined to a narrow mountainous strip along the Turkish frontier and the Mahabad region to the south of Rezaiyah."¹⁴⁴ It should be pointed out that these areas were also inhabited by a considerable number of Azari Turks and the Azaris would not cede them to the Kurds and

had also dispatched some army units there.

To prevent a clash, the Russians arranged meetings between the two ethnic groups and an agreement was signed on April 23, 1946, according to which:

"1- The two signatory governments will exchange representatives whenever it is deemed advisable.

2- In those areas of Azarbaijan where there are Kurdish minorities, Kurds will be appointed to government departments, and in those parts of Kurdistan where there are Azarbaijani minorities, Azarbaijanis will be appointed to government departments.

3- A joint economic commission will be formed to solve the economic problems of the signatory nations. Members of this commission will be appointed by the heads of the national governments.

4- The military forces of the signatory nations will assist each other whenever necessary.

5- Any negotiations with the Tehran government will be conducted in the joint interest of the Azarbaijan and Kurdish national government.

6- The Azarbaijan national government will take the necessary steps to promote the use of the Kurdish language and the development of Kurdish culture among the Kurds of Azarbaijan and the Kurdish national government will take

similar steps with regards to the Azarbaijanis living in Kurdistan.

7- Both signatory nations will take measures to punish any individual or group seeking to destroy the historic friendship and democratic brotherhood of the Azarbaijanis and the Kurds."¹⁴⁵

The question of the territories was not discussed in this agreement. Yet to the Iranian government, Article number 4 which stipulated a military alliance between the two Republics was a flagrant violation of Iranian sovereignty.

The agreement, however, did not help the relationship of the two ethnic groups. In several talks that the Azaris held with the central government of Iran, they managed to gain some sort of "recognition" which was denied to the Kurdish Republic.¹⁴⁶ Thus, as Roosevelt so aptly put it:

The Kurds had progressed from the condition of minority in the Iranian state to that of a minority in an Azarbaijan Turkish state.¹⁴⁷

As we noted, all these came to an end when the Soviets were forced to evacuate the Iranian territory. Both republics were thus abandoned and left on their own. Iranian army units, subsequently, entered first Azarbaijan and then Kurdistan. Apparently the reaction of the

population of the two provinces was quite different. In Azarbaijan, people were jubilant and welcomed the troops. In Mahabad, things were different. An Iranian military officer who travelled to Mahabad after arrest and execution of Qazi writes:

People are all sad and their faces are puzzled. You cannot find a happy face in this town even if you look hard..¹⁴⁸

A great deal has been written about the sympathetic or charismatic character of Qazi Mohammad. As a religious leader, he is said to have inspired respect and allegiance. And to his Kurdish followers he was a courageous leader who symbolized Kurdish national aspirations. As the President of the Republic, he not only received no salary but refused one.¹⁴⁹ Qazi also proved that he was not an authoritarian figure as he was thought to be. Roosevelt writes:

Qazi...became merely the leader of the party...The villages were run by their old landlords and tribal leaders with the aid of a gendarmerie locally recruited and dressed in Kurdish costume, but commanded by officers from Mahabad with Soviet uniforms. Mahabad itself, from a typically drab Persian provincial town, had become picturesque and colourful, its streets thronging with Kurds in national costume, free for the moment of the hated Iranian soldiers and gendarmes.¹⁵⁰

It is not known whether a "Kurdish Democratic Republic" was in the minds of the group of individuals who

founded Komala in the early 1940s in Iran. Did Qazi intend to become involved in a secessionist movement when he became the spokesman for the party? There is no doubt that some actions have unintended consequences and a logic of their own. Although the Kurdish nationalists, like Azaris, claimed that they only demanded "autonomy" within an undivided Iranian state, their movement gradually began to manifest all the trappings of a separatist movement. A Republic with its own president and army would naturally be considered a state within a state by the central authorities in Tehran.

The movement failed not only because the stronger military force dispatched from the center was able to subdue it, it failed because of inherent conflicts and contradictions within the Kurdish society itself. As usual, there was a lack of unity among the Kurdish tribes and parochial interests and tribal rivalries made it impossible for the Kurdish tribes to find a common denominator on the basis of which they could unify. The movement itself was mostly made up of urban Kurds -a small segment of the Kurdish population at the time- who felt little affinity with the tribal Kurds. The movement also lacked an organized, disciplined army. Mahabad Republic had to rely on tribal forces who only showed lukewarm

allegiance and at the time of need abandoned it. There was also the issue of identification of the Republic with the Soviet Union. Roosevelt explains that tribal animosity and suspicion towards the Soviet Union went beyond historical, social and religious reasons. It also had economic basis:

The Kurdish tribesmen depended largely on their tobacco crop for their livelihood, and now that their market in the rest of Iran was cut off, they suffered considerable hardship. In certain areas food supplies already strained had to be shared with the destitute Barzanis, who had long outgrown their welcome.... 151

At the same time, the support of the Russians proved to be half-hearted. Although the Republic was established with Soviet blessing, the support that the Russians extended was limited. When the moment of truth came both "autonomous" movements were abandoned.

Qazi and his regime, however, were able to implement a number of policies that greatly helped change the conditions of the people of Mahabad and its environments during the very short period that the movement lasted. Kurdish was made the language of instruction for Kurdish children. Indeed, just before the downfall of the Republic, Kurdish textbooks were published for primary schools. A newspaper and a political monthly, both called Kurdistan, were being published as well as two literary

magazines, havar and hilal. All this had made the Mahabad movement, the focus of attention of other Kurdish centers such the ones in Syria and Iraq.¹⁵² There was no political oppression and there existed much more freedom than did in Azarbaijan. There was a constant flow of information. The taxes were collected according to the old order with one exception that the tax collectors were now Kurds and the money collected stayed in Mahabad.¹⁵³

All that notwithstanding, Qazi and his regime were still not able to unify different Kurdish tribes of Iran. As the central government was preparing to occupy Mahabad many Kurdish tribes denied their forces to the Republic. When the Iranian army entered Mahabad, no resistance was put forward. Qazi and the rest of Kurdish leadership surrendered the town, although already Mulla Mustafa Barzani had tried to persuade them to flee. Qazi, his brother and his cousin were tried and hanged. Five more Kurdish leaders were hanged later. In the meantime, Mulla Mustafa and his tribal forces successfully fought their way into Soviet Union where Barzani remained for more than a decade.

The Democratic Republic of Kurdistan was the expression of nationalist aspirations of Iran's Kurdish urban middle classes. Although the movement did attract

tribal elements temporarily, tribal fragmentation proved to be its worst enemy for tribal identities were more important than an over-arching and all-embracing Kurdish identity. With modernization, however, tribal structures were on the wane. In the next chapter we will discuss whether the Kurdish tribal structure was resilient enough to endure the tide of change.

THE BALUCH

As we noted, by the time of Reza Khan's rise to power, Iranian Baluch were independent for all practical purposes. Doust Mohammad Khan, the chief of Baranzai tribe had subdued many other petty chieftains and thus consolidated most of Iranian Baluchistan under his rule. The decision to integrate Baluchistan with the rest of Iran was made in 1927 and carried out in 1928. According to General Jahanbani who commanded the military campaign in 1928, initially Doust Mohammad Khan and the rest of the Baluch population involved in the insurrection were approached with promises of amnesty and tax refunds if they surrendered.¹⁵⁴ The resistance of the Baluch resulted in military clashes between the government forces and those of Doust Mohammad Khan's. In these campaigns the government was not only assisted by some Baluch tribes

but for the first time air power was utilized.¹⁵⁵ Baluchistan was thus effectively pacified in 1928. The "Baluch Period" which is so nostalgically referred to by the Baluch is indeed the period before 1928 when the Baluch enjoyed independence.¹⁵⁶ The following passage is a vivid expression of Baluch's feelings regarding the loss of their independence and regret about tribal disunity:

...The entire Persian Baluchistan....sunk unto unbearable misery and uneasy terror. He [Reza Shah] pursued with a wanton whole bag of tricks in exterminating Baluchi rule and influence over Persian Baluchistan. The Pahlavi upstart strengthened his unhappy reign by hang, draw, and quarter. This was art and part of his despotic strategy. Inaugurating a reign of dread and awe, he believed in one word; everything or nothing....

Neither the ties of blood, nor the surprising pressure of necessity could reconcile the internal quarrels and disunity of the Baluch chiefs, all of whom fell one by one before the wanton aggression of the Pahlavi despot..¹⁵⁷

Soon military garrisons became the major features of the region. Until the rule of Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, Baluchistan became part of the Province of Kerman [the 8th province]¹⁵⁸ while remaining within the realm of military bureaucracy with military governors administering the region. The region also witnessed intermittent tribal unruliness; however, none of enduring significance or communal overtones. Most of the subsequent uprisings were dealt with easily and harshly.

During the reign of Reza Shah, things hardly changed in Baluchistan. A great deal of the lands in Baluchistan since the rule of Nasir al-Din Shah Qajar were state [crown] lands. Lambton, in her study of landlords and peasants in Iran pointed out that at the time of her research [1951], the state-owned lands in Baluchistan included "some property and ganats in towns of Khash and Zahidan and some twenty-odd villages in the neighborhood of Bampur and Iranshahr. This land is leased mainly to non-local people."¹⁵⁹ Indeed, The scarcity of land suitable for agriculture and of water has been an impediment to the emergence of large land-holdings in Baluchistan. Land proprietors in Baluchistan were mostly either the hokkams [the semi-feudal rulers of the south] or the sardars [the tribal chiefs of the north].¹⁶⁰ The average Baluch peasant was the poorest and the most deprived inhabitant of Iran who was not only oppressed by government agents but exploited by Baluch rulers themselves. As harsh environmental and topographical conditions made Baluchistan seem unsuitable for industrialization and modernization, no development project was carried out in the province during Reza Shah period. Also no attempt was made at creating an infrastructure in Baluchistan.

The pacification of the region had little effects on the socio-economic structures in Baluchistan. The tribal structure of the nomadic and semi-nomadic northern Baluchistan was left intact. The semi-feudal structure of the agricultural southern Baluchistan would naturally be more vulnerable to the presence of the military. The regime, however, retained the compliant and cooperative local rulers.¹⁶¹ Indeed, the state's omnipotent presence in Baluchistan in the form of military governors, garrisons and the gendarmes was an indication that the Pahlavi control was different from the intermittent control of the Qajars. The objectives of Reza Shah's regime in Baluchistan were to keep the region territorially integrated with the rest of Iran and to prevent further tribal uprisings for independence. In the meantime, compliant tribal and feudal leaders of the Baluch society who had kept their power and prestige intact, due to their cooperation with the government, gradually began to assume the role of the intermediary between the government and the Baluch rank and file.¹⁶² This particular function of the Baluch political elite -on which we will elaborate in the next chapter- became a conspicuous feature of the dynamics of the relationships between the Pahlavi state and the Baluch society.

Unfortunately data on Iran's social indicators are mostly lacking for this period until 1956 when the first complete census of Iran was carried out. The data nearest to the Reza Shah's period that could be found for this study was published in 1949 and concern the availability of medical services for different provinces infor the year 1326/1947. The Eighth Province [Kerman that included Baluchistan] with a population of 950,000 had only one doctor in private practice; i.e., the population per doctor in private practice was 950,000! Of course, the doctor in question could have practiced in Kerman that was, then and now, a more advanced and prosperous province than Baluchistan.¹⁶³ [Table V]. At the same time no thriving urban center appeared in the region and hardly any educational reforms carried out there. In these circumstances, it is not suprising that the abdication of Reza Shah did not stir nationalist uprisings in Baluchistan. Such issues as "freedom for cultural expression" and "equitable allocation of resources" as well as demands for political participation did not become significant factors in the relations of the Baluch with the state. There were hardly any schools where Persian could be imposed. There was no civil bureaucracy where under-representation of the indigenous population could be

objected to. There was also no change in the hatred of the Baluch for the Persians. The Baluch hated the Shii "Gajars" whom they considered as "cheats" and "liars"¹⁶⁴ while the Persians looked down at the Baluch as lazy and good-for-nothing savages.¹⁶⁵ The state's iron control intensified this animosity. Now the Persians were the omnipotent conquerors and the Baluch the vanquished. Reza Shah's conquest was the culmination of hundreds of years of aggression on Baluchistan;¹⁶⁶ one that made western Baluchistan an integral part of the Iranian territory.

* * * *

This chapter examined the advent of Reza Shah Pahlavi and the emergence of the modern state in Iran. Reza Shah as a strong man, a nationalist and a modernizer set out to industrialize and modernize Iran and to protect her independence by building a strong state and personally dominating the political process. The drive to build a strong state demonstrated an important aspect of the Iranian psyche particularly after decades of chaos and humiliation in the hands of outside powers. A strong state could protect Iranian independence and indeed the state's validity was based on such a protection. Nonetheless, a strong state could not necessarily create a unified and homogeneous "Iranian nation," since no lasting

political institutions were built that could bring the diverse population of the country into the political realm and endow them with a collective "national consciousness." Indeed, although Reza Shah's state was a modernizing one the traditional political structures were preserved and political development thwarted. The important objectives of the modernizing state in Iran were centralization and growth of military and administrative apparatuses, territorial integration, industrialization, adoption of Western technology, creation of a market economy, and creation of an infrastructure. Indeed, there was a great emphasis on economic progress, Westernization and preservation of Iranian national sovereignty.

However, as was mentioned, Political development was not in the regime's agenda. There was an unwillingness to foster a kind of change that would assure the participation of different groups in the political order. The regime thus suppressed all social movements and did not tolerate articulation of political sentiments. Indeed for the majority of the people the "authoritarian" nature of politics remained unchanged. However, if in the past the practical exercise of power was intermittent by the central authority, now it was a constant factor in the lives of the people. If in the past armed insurgency was

possible and sometimes successful, now it was futile and self-defeating. The state had become omnipotent and although the diverse population of Iran did not feel any particular loyalty or obligation to this strong center of power, they knew that their proper response to this authority should be obedience.

At the same time, although centralization of political power helped weaken the traditional local authorities, the state was not able to attract the loyalty of the rank and file of the population who never identified with the political system. Indeed, the form of political organization in Reza Shah's Iran, like that of the Qajars', corresponded to the patrimonialism of Max Weber. The Shah held power neither by virtue of external and formal criteria nor by means of a mandate from the people. He demanded submission in the name of a tradition regarded as inviolable; the tradition of Kingship. Since the secularization policies of Reza Shah meant that the regime could not utilize religious symbols in its search for legitimacy, the political symbols that were utilized belonged to an ancient past that was too remote and unfamiliar to the Persians and absolutely alien to the non-Persian population.

The emphasis on the Persian character of Iran and

social transformation had immediate consequences for those communities who experienced both. The Azari and Kurdish communities who occupied regions closer to the center of power [table III] and were more exposed to the socio-political penetration of the center, reacted to this penetration while Baluchistan which is one of the remotest corners of the Iranian territory was hardly affected.

At the same time, the state's bias in favor of the dominant group and its unwillingness or lack of capacity to bring different groups into the political arena made the political and intellectual leaders of Azaris and the Kurds feel abandoned and left out. These feelings were particularly acute amongst the Azaris whose ties to the Iranian body politic were weakened after the Constitutional Revolution. The Persianization of Iran had reinforced the distinction and separation that Azaris had begun to experience since the Russian occupation of Azarbaijan in 1909. Although such alienation was a short-lived phenomenon in the case of the Azaris, it helped them realize that their privileges cannot be taken for granted. A secessionist movement was thus the outcome of the alienation of the Azari intellectual and political leaders.

The Kurds, on their part, for the first time

experienced a break with the past through the dramatic onslaught of the modern state on the socio-economic, political and cultural fabrics of their society. Before the advent of the modern state, the autonomous existence of such ethnic groups as the Kurds meant that their relationship with the state in no way effected their way of life. The modern state, however, by extending its reach through implementation of various policies, transformed such aspects of the Kurdish society as social and political structures, social stratification and economic relations. The result was displacement and confusion since at the same time the state had failed to create an alternative source of identification. The small politicized Kurdish intelligentsia thus resorted to an uprising that questioned the legitimacy of the state.

The Baluch also had to be subdued by the modern state but the nature of the state's rule in Baluchistan precluded any socio-political transformation. With the indigenous socio-political structures intact and the persistence of rural and tribal nature of society, it is not surprising that no political movement of communal type emerged in Baluchistan after the abdication of Reza Shah. The Baluch were happy to revert to their previous way of life again, free of government control.

All these demonstrated that the process of nation-building was not complete in Iran since the state still needed a nation as an expression of itself. Perhaps nation-building was too much to expect of a man who, in less than twenty years, created internal security, political stability, relative independence from outside control and attempted to industrialize and modernize a traditional and undeveloped country. However, later developments in Iran demonstrated that the modern state, like its traditional counterpart, can devise policies to keep communal aspirations in check; all that was needed was a more stable political environment.

NOTES

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POPULATION OF URBAN CENTERS 1867 (QAJAR PERIOD)

Tehran (mostly Persian)	85,000
Tabriz (Azaris)	110,000
Kermanshah (Kurds)	30,000
Orumiah (Kurds, Azaris and others)	30,000
Khoi (Azaris)	20,000
Ardebeel (Azaris)	10,000
Hamadan (Azaris, Kurds, others)	30,000
Zanjan (Azaris and others)	20,000

REVENUES DEMANDED FROM EACH PROVINCE BY THE QAJAR COURT

Azarbaijan	620,000 Tomans
Kordestan, Kermanshah and adjacent districts	50,000 Tomans
Hamadan (Azaris and Kurds and others)	30,000 Tomans
Tehran and adjacent districts	210,000 Tomans

*- Compiled from Charles Issawi's The economic History of Iran: 1800-1914. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976. TABLE I

ETHNIC ORIGINS OF THE LEADING PERSONALITIES OF THE EARLY
COMMUNIST MOVEMENT IN IRAN

<u>NAME</u>	<u>OCCUPATION</u>	<u>PLACE OF BIRTH</u>
Assadollah Ghafarzadeh	Journalist	Iranian Azarbaijan
Ahmad Sultanzadeh	Journalist	Iranian Azarbaijan
Heydar Khan Amir Ughli	Engineer	Iranian Azarbaijan
Ja'far Pischevari	Teacher	Iranian Azarbaijan
Karim Nikbin	Journalist	Iranian Azarbaijan
Hussein Sharqi	Journalist	Central Asia
Ardashir Ovanessian	Pharmacist	Iranian Azarbaijan
Aqababa Yusefzadeh	Teacher	Iranian Azarbaijan
Muhammad Akhundzadeh	Teacher	Iranian Azarbaijan
Muhammad Dehqan	Writer	Kashan
Salamallah Javid	Doctor	Iranian Azarbaijan
Ali Sartipzadeh	Journalist	Iranian Azarbaijan
Muhammad Hejazi	Tyepesetter	Tehran
Ibrahami Alizadeh	Civil Servant	Iranian Azarbaijan

*- Abrahamian, Ervand. Iran Between Two Revolutions.

Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1982. PP. 132-133. Sultanzadeh and Ovanessian are Armenians from Azarbaijan.

TABLE II

DISTANCES OF SOME AZARI, KURDISH AND BALUCH TOWNS AND
CITIES FROM THE CENTER (TEHRAN) in kilometers

Tabriz	628 Kilometers
Kermanshah (Kurds)	530 Kilometers
Mianeh (Azaris)	453 Kilometers
Kangavar (Kurds)	461 Kilometers
Zanjan (Azaris and others)	314 Kilometers
Sahne (Kurds)	492 Kilometers
Hamedan (Azaris, Kurds, etc.)	368 Kilometers
Zahidan (Baluch and others)	1561 Kilometers
Zabol (Baluch and others)	1771 Kilometers

*- Compiled from Iran Almanac and Book of Facts. 1969.

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TABLE III

LOCATION OF FACTORIES IN OPERATION AT THE END OF 1947

Province	Large-Scale Factories		Total Factories	
	No.	%	No.	%
Azarbaijan	14	8	2,552	16
Kermanshahan [Kurds]	11	6	1,175	8
Kuruestan	0	0	213	1
Baluchistan	2	1	53	0
Tehran and adjacent districts		26	2,575	17

*- Bharier, Julian. 1971. Economic Development in Iran: 1900-1971. London: Oxford University Press. P. 182. TABLE IV

MEDICAL SERVICES BY PROVINCE (1326/1947)

PROVINCE	POPULATION	DOCTORS IN PRIVATE PRACTICE	POPULATION PER DOCTOR IN PRACTICE
Tehran	800,000	469	1,706
East Azarbaijan	2,200,000	39	56,410
West Azarbaijan	600,000	6	100,000
Kermanshahan [Kurds]	1,950,000	21	92,857
Kerman [Baluch and others]	950,000	1	950,000

*- Reports on Seven Year Development Plan For the Plan Organization of Iran.
New York: Overseas Consultants. 1949.

**- The source does not provide information on the number of physicians in public clinics or hospitals.

TABLE V

CHAPTER SIX

MOHAMMAD REZA SHAH PAHLAVI AND CARROT AND STICK
AZARIS, KURDS, BALUCH

The emergence of the modern state in Iran entailed a serious gap between the elite and non-elite. The state that had failed to come up with an adequate formula to legitimize its authority, was seriously shaken with the secessionist movements in Azarbaijan and Kurdistan after the abdication of Reza Shah.

This chapter will examine Mohammad Reza Shah's rule and the consolidation of the modern state in Iran. It will be explained that Mohammad Reza Shah's state was able to devise policies to keep various ethnic groups depoliticized. These policies ranged from effective co-optation of the indigenous elite [Azaris] to indirect rule and military suppression [Kurds and Baluch]. As a consequence after its consolidation the Shah's regime did not have to deal with communal upheavals that would threaten political stability. The state, however, was not able to offer a "national" formula in order to create a civil society based upon consent. The result was an inherent weakness that eventually resulted in the overthrow of the regime through a popular revolt carried out mainly by Persian and Azari uprban strata

General Observations:

Reza Shah's heir-apparent, Mohammad Reza, came to power after his father's abdication in 1941. At this juncture the central control was weak and the old ruling classes continued to dominate the political scene while centrifugal elements again seized the opportunity to assert their independence.

Although the presence of the occupying forces and the weakness of the center did not disrupt the parliamentary nature of the government, the parliament for the first two years of occupation of Iran was made up of the old ruling classes mostly Reza Shah's appointees with no sign of political participation in the periphery and among the rank and file. The experiences of Reza Shah's autocratic rule and the movements in Azarbaijan and Kurdistan, however, had important impacts on the perceptions and expectations of the Iranian intellectuals and the modern intelligentsia.

These experiences together with the near total disintegration of the country as well as the humiliating presence of the occupying forces helped authenticate and strengthen Iranian nationalism. This nationalism became a

central feature of Iranian politics after the war years and played a significant part in the events of the 1949-1953 period. The single, most important aspect of this nationalism was its "anti-imperialist," particularly anti-British character that was later expanded and included resistance against infiltration of all foreign powers in Iran.

The emergence of Dr. Mohammad Mosaddeq and the National Front that was an "umbrella organization" composed of various politically active groups and parties with a nationalist orientation, was the culmination of nationalist expressions of different urban strata. The middle classes formed the core of the nationalist movement.

The groups that were united under the banner of the National Front claimed very diverse constituencies. They were unified under a broad and vague program, i.e., the replacement of the old ruling classes with a representative and nationalist government that would carry out social and economic reforms and put an end to Iran's dependence on the West.¹ This task, according to Dr. Mosaddeq the leading figure among the Iranian nationalists, could only be realized by creating a "negative equilibrium," i.e., by keeping Iran neutral in

foreign affairs and reducing her dependence on such companies as the British owned and controlled Anglo Iranian Oil Company [AIOC]. The nationalization of oil industry was the natural outcome of this point of view.²

The premiership of Dr. Mosaddeq [1951-1953] signified an attempt by the Iranian nationalists to achieve the above-mentioned goals. This short period was the only time that Iran experienced parliamentary democracy and its failure proved devastating to the success of future secular and liberal democratic endeavors in the country. Indeed, one of the most important impacts of this failure was the emergence of an acute xenophobia among already suspicious and distrustful Iranian nationalists.³

A detailed analysis of Iranian politics during Mossadegh's premiership is, of course, beyond the scope of this study. However, it should be pointed out that the over-arching nationalist aspects of politics in this period obviously made the political objectives of the politicians in the center and the communal aspirations of Iran's ethno-linguistic communities, mutually exclusive.

Although during the short period of Mosaddeq's premiership all Iranians enjoyed some freedom of cultural and political expression, there was no doubt that Mossadegh and the National Front advocated the creation of

a strong and centralized yet democratic government in Iran. This, of course, meant that "provincial autonomy" was not on the agenda of the nationalists. At the same time, the National Front had proposed an agricultural reform program that would limit the percentage of profits a landlord could claim.⁴ Thus, the members of the provincial political elites, many of whom landlords, opposed both Mosaddeq and the National Front. That may explain the fact that the provincial rank and file remained mostly unaffected by Mosaddeq's charisma. In such provinces as Azarbaijan, however, a dual situation could be observed. While in Tabriz, particularly, some Azaris followed the example of the Persians and both National Front and Mosaddeq were popular,⁵ in other areas of the province there existed fierce opposition. For example, in the elections for the 17th Majles, when most of the Persian population voted for the National Front, in one Azarbaijani town the people voted for the old elite and the pro-Court individuals.⁶ This prompted Mosaddeq to suspend the elections⁷ to investigate possible rigging. But as Mosaddeq's own Minister of Interior informed him later, "even with the invalidation of the suspected ballots" the Azarbaijani deputy would have won.⁸

This was, indeed, a reflection of the socio-political

situation in Azarbaijan itself. On the one hand there was a large number of urban middle and technocratic classes who together with the Azari intellectuals supported Dr. Mosaddeq. The mass of the peasantry, on the other hand, were still very much in the sphere of influence of the landlords and local political elite.

The national situation also represented a myriad of different forces and loyalties. The charismatic figure of Dr. Mosaddeq, nationalization of oil industry, and opposition to British presence in Iran had temporarily brought these forces together under the banner of the National Front. However, it was soon evident that some of these forces were incompatible and on irreconcilable paths. It was only a matter of time for these groups to come into a collision course. The same rule applied to the provinces in many of which National Front was not particularly popular. It is interesting to note that no consideration was given to different ethnic groups of Iran by the National Front because this was indeed a non-issue at those tumultuous times. Even the symbols that were manipulated by Mosaddeq and his supporters demonstrated this fact. Most of these symbols appealed to the overarching "Iranian" people with no attention paid to parochial or communal attachments and loyalties. It is

again possible that the peripheral population by the virtue of its position was considered "inconsequential."⁹ It should also be noted that the issue of "nationalization" of oil industry that held the urban constituency of the National Front together was hardly of immediate interest to the local political elite who either strove to keep their privileges intact or aspired for local autonomy.

Placating the provincial political elite was, however, not very high on the Prime Minister's agenda. Mosaddeq had to struggle against a combination of internal and external forces. This and other reasons eventually brought him down through a coup staged by the Iranian army and other forces loyal to the Shah with the backing of the CIA and the British Intelligence Service.¹⁰

The Reemergence Of The Pahlavi State:

The outcome of these events was the re-emergence of the Pahlavi state under Mohammad Reza Shah. To survive, the Shah attempted to strengthen the state and his personal power base. The result was the strengthening of the traditional political forms and the weakening of liberal democratic and rationalizing tendencies.

Unlike his father, Mohammad Reza Shah had a weak personality but like him, he meant to rule and not just reign. This tendency had manifested itself from the early years of his rule. In 1949, the Shah in an attempt to increase his power called for a Constitutional Assembly that was convened in order to revise the Consitution.¹¹ Among different measures to increase the power of the Shah was the formation of the Senate with 60 members, half of whom the Shah would appoint. Fifteen were to be appointed and elected from Tehran and fifteen appointed and elected from the provinces. The provincial contribution to the Senate was limited to a number of important provincial cities as follows:

Qazvin [Persians and Azaris]= 1 Tabriz [Azaris]= 2
 Rezaiyey [Azaris, Kurds]= 1
 Kerman [Mostly Persian]= 1 Isfahan [Persian]= 1
 Hamadan [Persian, Azaris and others]= 1
 Ahwaz [Persians, Arabs, and others]=1
 Shiraz [Persians]= 2 Mashhad [Persians]= 2
 Kermanshah [Shii Kurds, some Persians]=1 Rasht
 [Gilanis]= 1 Sari [Mazandarans]=1 12

A brief look at the make up of the Senate demonstrates the predominance of the Persians. As we note, there were no appointed or elected Senators from

Baluchistan although in subsequent years a few Baluchi tribal leaders were "chosen" for the Majles. The interesting point about both the Senate and the Majles is that as the power of the Shah increased the representatives of both Houses only consisted of hand-picked and loyal "servants" of the Shah.

The Shah strengthened the traditional aspects of Iranian politics, there is no doubt that a parliamentary form of government would pose severe limits on the monarch's authority. To secure his position the Shah had to acquire complete control of the administrative, judicial and military machinery of the state. This meant that the state apparatus had to be organized in such a fashion that it could be controlled from a single command post. The revenues from the sale of oil that helped Iran's rapid modernization made the infrastructural reach of the state possible and thus facilitated such control.

The Shah, however, like his father, was weary of international criticism. It was important that a constitutional and parliamentary facade be kept intact and provide some sort of legitimation for the monarchical system. The parliament, elections, political parties, etc., all existed in the Shah's Iran. However, they were all a farce. Even the Prime Minister and his cabinet were

not a genuine and independent executive body.¹³

During Reza Shah autocracy was justified and supported through the introduction of a state-manufactured and extreme nationalism. Indeed, Islam as a justification for the rule of the Shah was more or less replaced by this nationalism. Mohammad Reza Shah brought some changes into this picture. To counter the specter of Mosaddeq and his "negative equilibrium," the Shah coined the term "positive nationalism," which apparently meant to explain Iran's amicable relationship with the "West" and cool relations with the "East." Also there were more attempts to appease the religious leaders. The Shah who claimed he had occasional "religious experiences" and "visits" from the Shii holy men, paid great lip service -and in some cases more than that- to some of the grand ayatollahs and at times manipulated religious symbols. There were indications that the regime was trying to give a Shii legitimacy to the Shah and his regime by association to Shii symbols and institutions. This strengthening of the traditional aspects of Iranian cultural and socio-political structures initially helped the Shah who was absolutely devoid of any personal charisma. The masses of the people accepted the Shah, out of a sense of awe, as the ruler of an Islamic/Shii people. This, of course,

worked until television destroyed the myth. Mohammad Reza Shah continued his father's assimilationist policies through forceful Persianization and acculturation. There was, however, one important difference. Mohammad Reza Shah made serious attempts to co-opt local political elites and counter elites and to certain extents he succeeded to depoliticize most of the periphery.¹⁴ Indeed, except the first few years of his rule, Iran did not experience serious provincial disturbances based on communal aspirations. It would, however, be a mistake to interpret the calm of this period as the regime's accomplishment in creating an over-arching national consciousness. It was, indeed, the combination of physical force and omnipotent presence of the state as well as its placating policies toward the local leadership, i.e., carrot and stick that proved effective.

It is understandable that the Shah in order to hold to power had to keep many traditional features of the Iranian state intact. However, like his father, he aspired to international prestige and status. This could only be accomplished by modernization and economic development. In order to facilitate modernization some rationalizing policies had to be adopted. The military and the bureaucracy were the two institutions through

which many policies were implemented.

The army and the bureaucracy, however, could not forge an over-arching national consciousness in Iran. It is true that both institutions performed functions that were otherwise poorly carried out. However, traditional aspects of socio-political relationships in Iran that manifested themselves in personalization of such relationships limited the effectiveness of the functions performed. Indeed, personal cliques were the main sources of decision making within both institutions.¹⁵

Thus, during the rule of Mohammad Reza Shah no shared political orientation emerged in Iran. The "formula" forged by the regime to rationalize its dominance over the diverse population inhabiting the Iranian territory did not correspond to the beliefs and sentiments of this population. The peripheral communities continued to identify with their local political elite and not with the "national" elite.

It is interesting to note that the existence of various ethno-linguistic groups in Iran had little direct bearing on day-to-day political and economic process. The absence of interest in the periphery was a reflection of two factors: 1)- the regime's success in depoliticizing the periphery and 2)- the weakness of local political

leadership to exert influence in the center with the exception of the Azari political elite who were successfully incorporated into the national elite.

At the same time, modernization became a means for the Shah and his ruling elite to overcome their inferiority complex vis-a-vis the outside world. Rapid economic development was the main goal without attention to rational planning and equitable distribution. It is true that Iran boasted a "Plan Organization" and economic development of Iran during the rule of the Shah was more "planned" than it was in his father's period. However, many aspects of Iranian political structure proved to be "anti-planning and anti-programming."¹⁶

The process of economic development in Iran during the Shah basically followed the same course as it did during his father's period.¹⁷ Centralization was now institutionalized. The provincial administration was controlled and directed from Tehran. The centralized power structure in the capital appointed political administrators to the provinces and provincial economy was regulated by the local branches of respective ministries headquartered in Tehran. All decisions about local affairs, important or otherwise, were made in Tehran thus making the provinces economically and politically reliant

on the center.¹⁸

At the same time the center kept altering the internal boundaries between provinces. At the time of the first national census the number of provinces was changed from 10 to 13. This was changed again at the time of the second national census to 21 provinces. During 1970s, two more provinces of Yazd and Zanzan were created. It is not known to what extent ethnic considerations were important in such alterations. It should however be pointed out that these divisions did affect the three groups under study here.

In the meantime, the personal and clique-oriented Iranian power structure made cooperation between political and the "ministerial-sectoral" administrators in the provinces impossible. These individuals reported to their own sectors with few channels for communications and cooperation.¹⁹ The consequences of such state of affairs were:

...Frequent power struggles among the ruling elite, mismanagement of public institutions and investments, corruption, inefficiency in government operations, and ineffective planning practices at the provincial and national levels..²⁰

Overcentralization created the ubiquitous emergence of a primate city, Tehran.²¹ There were also a few provincial capitals where socio-economic activities were

concentrated.²² The growth of Tehran was an indication of the accumulation of the wealth and power of the country in one central location. Tehran with a population of 85,000 in 1867 [Table I] grew to more than 4.5 million in 1976 [Table VI]. Indeed, during 1970s, Tehran which embraced 14% of Iran's population also reaped a disproportionate amount of the advantages of development. Tehran in the 1970's accounted for 51% of Iran's production of manufactured goods, 30% of the industrial enterprises, 60% of all wages and salaries, 33% of total investment, 35% of the country's GNP, 38% of all institutions of higher education, 52% of all students in higher education, 46% of all doctors, 76% of all cars, and 100% of all banks, insurance companies and other fiduciary institutions, all of which had their headquarters in Tehran.²³ Tehran also rated high for health and communication facilities.²⁴

Economic planning began in 1949 [first plan 1949-1954]. The first two plans [second plan 1955-1962], mostly concentrated on building infra-structure, investments in military and import-substitution industries.²⁵ These two plans that were devoid of any planning methodology and investment decisions, in the words of one scholar, "reflected primarily the subjective judgments of the planners."²⁶

The third and fourth plans [1963-1967 and 1968-1972] were more comprehensive. Regional development authorities were created for such provinces as East Azarbaijan, Khuzistan and others to boost their potentials through agricultural/irrigation/electricity generation projects or for "relief" purposes in case of such poverty-ridden and backward provinces as Sistan and Baluchistan. Also agricultural growth poles were created in East Azarbaijan and other provinces [mostly inhabited by Persians] and industrial projects were undertaken in such provinces as East Azarbaijan, Esfahan and Markazi [the latter two both Persian-inhabited].²⁷ Most of these projects and plans were carried out in those provinces with agricultural potentials and large urban centers. The result was further widening of the gap that already existed between the "advanced" and "backward" regions. The more developed provinces also reaped a disproportionate share of urban development projects with more industries and social services concentrated in a number of provincial capitals.

In the early 1960s the land reform program was implemented. The land reform had primarily political objectives. It was thought the distribution of land among cultivating peasants will create a social and political base for the regime in the rural areas. At the same time

the state believed that land reform would weaken the power base of the large landowners and thus help remove a potential source of political instability. This the regime succeeded to accomplish. The power and clout of the large landlords were drastically reduced. However, the land reform program only distributed lands to the peasants with traditional rights to cultivation [nasagdar]. Those who worked the lands but did not hold such rights, i.e., the agricultural laborers and the village proletariat,²⁸ did not receive lands and as Farhad Kazemi contends "the majority of the poor rural migrants who went to the principal cities of Iran came from among those agricultural laborers who were now pushed off the land." ²⁹

As overconcentration of resources and excessive centralization necessitated decentralization, throughout the Fifth Plan, there was much talk and some initial efforts at decentralization. However, "development still centered on the growth-poll strategy. Indeed, to the Iranian planners, decentralization came to mean only deconcentration of Tehran or concentration of sectoral investments in specified poles outside the capital."³⁰

The tables at the end of this chapter demonstrate existing disparities among the Azaris, the Kurds and the

Baluch during the Pahlavi rule. Although all three groups show absolute increases and improvements in almost all social indicators, the provincial disparities are wide. The central province always ranks first followed by other Persian speaking provinces and East Azarbaijan. The provinces of Western Azarbaijan and Kermanshahan [oil-producing province] are somewhere in the middle and Kurdistan and the province of Sistan and Baluchistan, despite improvements, lag behind. There is no reason to believe that ethno-linguistic considerations were responsible for such gaps. One thing is, however, certain. The difficult terrain in both Kurdistan and Baluchistan may be considered as an important factor that contributed to the government's neglect.

The following tables demonstrate migration patterns in the areas of interest to this study. Table (a) demonstrates the rate of population increase due to migration between 1966-1976 and table (b) shows the percentage of rural-urban migration in the year 1972.

Table (a)- The Rate of Population Increase Due to Migration (1966-1976)

	% of Increase	% of Increase Due to Migration
Tehran	65.4	52.5

Tabriz [Azaris]	48.0	35.6
Ardebil [Azaris]	77.1	59.7
Kermanshah [Kurds]	55.1	43.7
Sanandaj [Kurds]	81.5	61.4
Mahabad [Kurds]	67.9	52.6 31

Table (b)- 1972

Province of Origin	No. of Internal Migrants	% of Rural to Urban Migrants
Tehran	1,803,657	46.6
E. Azarbaijan	132,115	64.6
W. Azarbaijan	60,149	71.3
Kurdistan	27,549	41.9
Kermanshahan	112,246	55.6
Sistan and Baluchistan	27.985	22.0 32

In this table, as we note, the highest rate of migration occurred in the provinces of East and West Azarbaijan while the province of Sistan and Baluchistan witnessed the lowest rate of migration. This population mobility is indeed an indication of the more "advanced" status of Azarbaijan as opposed to Baluchistan.

Another important facet of modernization policies in this period was the expansion of a huge mass communications network. The following tables demonstrate the growth in the ownership of radio and television sets in Iran during 1965-1986. Regional data have not been available.

Number of Radios in Use/Per 1,000 Inhabitants

<u>1965</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1986</u>
.....	1,800/63	6,400/166	11,000/240

Number of Television Sets in Use/Per 1,000 Inhabitants

<u>1965</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1986</u>
110/4.6	533/19	1,700/51	2,600/57

By March 1974, NIRT [National Iranian Radio and Television] had 15 major television production and transmission centers. These included 2 in Tehran and 1 in some provincial cities. Among the cities those of interest to this study were: Tabriz [Azaris], Ardebil [Azaris], Mahabad [Kurds], Rezaiyeh [Azaris and Kurds], Kermanshahan [Shii Kurds], Sanandaj [Kurds], Zahedan [Baluch and others].³⁴

The media, particularly NIRT, were completely controlled by the government and reflected the regime's

notions of development and change for the Iranian society as well as providing legitimacy for the regime. Most of television programming, for example, were geared to acculturate the Iranian society to a Western style of life. In such provinces as Azarbaijan, Kurdish inhabited areas and Baluchistan and Sistan, local radio and TV stations broadcast a few hours of local programming and music in the native [provincial] languages. The content of these programs, however, were mostly propaganda or admiration of the Shah, his family and his policies.³⁵

Much has been said and written about the exposure to the mass media. Karl Deustch, for example, stresses the role of what he calls "basic communication grids" in the process of political integration. However, Deustch does not consider this as the only factor that affects the "growth of nations."³⁶ Deutsch, in fact, identifies seven more factors that contribute to this process. These are: transition from subsistence to market economies, the integrating influences of core areas on the "socially mobilized" rural populations; urbanization and subsequent results of social mobility within urban areas and between "town and country"; different concentration of capital and skills and social institutions between regions and classes and their "lift pump affects on other areas and

populations" with the successive entry of different social strata into the nationalistic phase; the emergence of individual self-awareness and the rise of individual and group interests that would prompt people to join groups united by language and communications habits; the rise of "ethnic awareness and the acceptance of national symbols"; the identification of ethnic awareness with state coercion which in turn will result in the transformation of one group into a dominant one.³⁷

The key factor for Deutsch is the concept of "social mobilization." Social mobilization is a process that the population of modernizing societies undergo; a process of movement out of traditional patterns of life and into new values and behaviors. Social mobilization is defined as "the process through which major clusters of old social, economic, psychological commitments are eroded and broken and people become available for new patterns of socialization and behavior."³⁸ Deutsch later elaborated on the link between social mobilization and politicization of the population. In other words, a socially mobilized population will demand political participation and such demand if unmet could "express itself informally through greater numbers of people taking part in crowds and riots, in meetings and demonstrations, in strikes and

uprisings."³⁹ Although the above statement can be interpreted as a recognition of a possibility for ethnic conflict, Deutsch himself does not elaborate. He, however, explicitly links social mobilization to national integration by writing that "a nation, is the result of the transformation of a people or of several ethnic elements, in the process of social mobilization."⁴⁰ Thus one consequence of social mobilization is "a shift of emphasis away from the parochialism....of many traditional cultures to a preoccupation with the supralocal but far less worldwide unit of the territorial, and eventually, national, state."⁴¹

Although Deutsch recognizes the significance of such factors as language in the communication between the rulers and the ruled and admits that in a heterogeneous country, rapid social mobilization can result in political instability, he believes that the state can solve this problem by a series of "creative adjustments"⁴² about which he does not elaborate. He, however, states that if a government is not capable to meet the demands put upon it by the rapid social mobilization it will confront political instability regardless of the ethno-linguistic character of its population.⁴³ Deutsch indeed briefly deals with the link between assimilation and group

conflict by stating that if the socially mobilized group is not assimilated then group conflict can be expected.⁴⁴ Deutsch's approach, however, becomes ambiguous when in one article he writes:

The process of modernization will draw many of the most gifted and energetic individuals into the cities or the growing sectors of the economy away from their former minority or tribal groups, leaving these traditional groups weaker, more stagnant and easier to govern.⁴⁵

Despite his ambiguous approach, in the last analysis, Deutsch's overall tendency is to link social mobilization to national and political integration. His theoretical postulates thus lose their effectiveness when applied to a case study such as Iran.

There is no doubt that modernization policies of Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi entailed the social mobilization of a great number of the population. The commercialization of agriculture had impacts on many peasants who were being integrated into the larger economy. We also noted that the land reform policies resulted in massive migrations into urban centers. Increase in the rate of urbanization, transitional economies, development of communication and transportation networks, differential or uneven development and its consequences all helped the "mobilized individual" of

Deutsch emerge in Iran. One should, however, note that this was not an all-encompassing phenomenon; since only those segments of the population who experienced change had become socially mobilized. There is, however, no reason to believe that such social mobilization entailed emergence of a common identity among the diverse population of Iran. Deutsch's approach, thus, becomes insufficient here because the concept of "social mobilization" and other related concepts that are linked to the "growth of a nation" do not adequately answer the question of "what makes a society hang together?"

If by "integration" one means the forceful inclusion of diverse peoples within the territorial state, then one can claim that Iran was "nationally" and "politically" integrated during the Shah's regime. It is, however, obvious that if a state has to resort to coercion to keep the polity together then "national integration" is nothing but a chimera. In the same light, one may ask does common participation in a money economy and collective subjection to an autocratic rule mean that a society is integrated? It is true that the efforts of the Shah's regime helped foster economic integration of most of the regions in Iran and economic interdependence can work as an integrative force. However, it should also be noted that in some

remote areas such as Baluchistan the participation of the indigenous population in a common system of production was almost nil. Also it is true that the establishment of functionally differentiated institutions at the center helps the decay of local and indigenous political structures where it is intended to do so. But, the important question is: did a strong collective consciousness emerge that could unite and join together all these different units and make a united whole out of them? Although the revolution of 1978-79 proved that the Shah's regime had not been able to create mass identification and loyalty towards the state, the following accounts of Azaris, Kurds and Baluch demonstrate that through policies of intimidation and accommodation, i.e., "carrot and stick" the regime successfully neutralized different groups as long as it ruled over the Iranian populations.

THE AZARIS:

The Democratic Republic of Azarbaijan was the last open and organized expression of Azari national identity in Iran. The organizations and institutions of the Democratic Regime immediately collapsed with no political

leadership surviving the onslaught of the Pahlavi regime. The Tudeh also did not engage in any organizational activity in Azarbaijan until 1951. Around this time, a number of the surviving members of the Democratic Party made contacts with the Tudeh that resulted in the emergence of party organization in Azarbaijan.⁴⁶

During this period, Azaris, like other ethno-linguistically distinct groups, were deprived of the use of their language in schools and administration. Thus, many activists, particularly those who engaged in literary endeavours, immigrated to Tehran "where there was less danger of identification with the cause of the Pischevari regime."⁴⁷

Early fifties coincided with the rule of Dr. Mosaddeq. As we noted Dr. Mosaddeq and the National Front advocated the idea of Iranian nationalism and opposed local autonomy. Although population of Tabriz is said to have supported Dr. Mosaddeq⁴⁸ there are indications that not everyone in Azarbaijan felt the same way. The Azari landlords were irked by Mosaddeq's advocacy of the rights of the peasantry and the political leaders who were disappointed because of his opposition to local autonomy did not extend their support either.

The political atmosphere, however, was more open and

less repressive towards the Communists. Thus many of the men who were Pischevari sympathizers or members of his government, established such organizations as "The Association of the Friends of Azarbaijan" or "The Association of Azarbaijani Writers" and were engaged in literary activity in Tehran.⁴⁹ These "associations" published various papers and books of prose and poetry in Tehran particularly between 1951-1953. After the fall of Dr. Mosaddeq, however, their activities came to a halt. Throughout the rest of the Shah's period although there was a formal ban on Azari publications, it seems that the regime did allow "politically correct" literature in Azari to be produced. Berengian writes:

The greate bulk of the literature produced in the post-war period has receded to the level of folk and popular expression and thus falls into the category of the now permissible designation mahalli [local]. Even the works with legitimate claim to the status of "art" or "formal" literature hide themselves behind this label, in order not to meet with serious discouragement. For similar reasons, most writers in Turkic prefer publishing under pseudonym, and most Turkic works appear with Persian titles.⁵⁰

Although any mention of Pischevari and the Democratic regime had been a taboo both in Azari literary works and among the Iranian Azaris, Eric Hooglund who spent 2 years (1966-68) in Iranian Azarbaijan writes that the memory of Firgeh-e demokrat was well and alive among many Azaris in

the late 1960s.

Among the younger generation [ca. 18 to 25 in 1966-68], there was an especially positive, even idealized, view of this time. Most Azarbayjanis, even those who expressed disapproval of the autonomous movement, resented bitterly the national holiday on December 12 to commemorate the "liberation" of Azarbayjan.⁵¹

This has also been confirmed by Nabdell who believes the repression of Azari culture and language has created this "escapism."⁵² It is, at the same time, an indication that not only a distinct Azari identity has continued to exist but the Azari younger generation demonstrates its disappointments with the regime through the expression of Azari identity.

At the same time, since social stratification and social structure in Azarbaijan resembled those of the Persian-inhabited areas, the process of change in Azarbaijan resulted in the emergence of similar social strata, however in a smaller scale. As among the Persians, the Pahlavi rule prompted the emergence of new classes in Azarbaijan who were distinct from the traditional classes not by virtue of their wealth but by their world-view. Like their Persian counterparts, these new classes owed a great deal to the Pahlavi modernization policies. Many of these new bureaucratic and technocratic strata actually migrated to Tehran and were working in

various state institutions. It is important to note that the Iranian Azaris, although were subjected to cultural bigotry and slurs by the Persians, never experienced social, economic and administrative discrimination. Indeed the Iranian Azaris enjoyed the same rights and privileges as the Persians.

In Table VII which is compiled from Marvin Zonis's The Political Elite of Iran, one notes that although the number of political elite born in Tehran and in other Persian speaking areas is by far the largest, Azarbaijan ranks highest among other groups.⁵³ The same results is obtained from the data on the birth place of nearly 4,500 members of the Iranian elite [Table VIII]. Of 4464 individuals who were requested to provide information, 1683 had not indicated their birth place. Among the rest, those born in Persian speaking areas again ranked highest with Azaris following. It should also be mentioned that Farah Diba [the late Shah's wife] was from Azarbaijan as well as a number of important civil and military officers.

During this period, although many Azaris complained about unequitable allocation of resources and the imposed restrictions on the Azari language, separatist activities were scarce. The strategic importance of Azarbaijan and the numerical strength of the Azaris had made the Shah's

regime responsive to Azari political elite. Not only the political leaders of Azarbaijan were accommodated but social mobility was unhampered for the average Azari. Thus the patterns of Azari response to the changing political scene in Iran was similar to that of the Persian population. The Azaris revolted to topple the regime like the Persians but they did not demand autonomy or independence.

Many Azari peasants shared the same experiences as their Persian counterparts. Azarbaijan was the first province in which land reform was carried out.⁵⁴ Also the greatest number of peasants benefiting from the first stage of the land reform were located in East Azarbaijan.⁵⁵ It should, however, be pointed out that despite the fact that Azarbaijan was among the relatively developed provinces of Iran, in 1966 such cities as Tabriz and Ardebil contributed 50,000 and 120,000 persons respectively to the population of Tehran.⁵⁶ Also in a study of squatter settlements in Tehran the squatters from the province of East Azarbaijan ranked highest after Khurasan and Central provinces.⁵⁷

The calm in Azarbaijan during the rule of the second Pahlavi Shah should not be interpreted as total support of the Azaris. Not unlike the Persians, opposition was

strong among the intelligentsia, the intellectuals and some of the clergy or religious students [tullabs]. Some Azari intellectuals, particularly those with leftist tendencies were very critical of the regime. The most important among the Azari intellectuals who objected to the authoritarian rule of the Shah and demanded autonomy for Azarbaijan were Dr. Qolam Hossein Saedi [1935-1985] and Samad Behrangi [1939-1969]. Both men mostly wrote in Persian and one was a novelist of international stature.

It should be noted that not all Azari nationalists were intellectuals. Other personalities appeared who signified the existence of inherently communalistic tendencies. Ali Tabrizi was one such individual who is said to have been a peddler selling books near the City Park in Tehran. Tabrizi who wrote pan-Turkish poetry and demonstrated great animosity toward Persians was able to attract the attention of the Azari lowest strata in Tehran. Nabdell, an Azari Leninist-Stalinist intellectual who headed the People's Fedayin Guerrilla Organization of Iran in Azarbaijan, rejects Tabrizi's poetry as "reactionary trash" and believes that such tendencies will impede and hamper the real struggle of the working peoples against the capitalists and the bourgeois middle classes.⁵⁸

The Azari rank and file, however, demonstrated great interest in the "national" or "folkloric" poetry and prose. In fact one particular booklet of Azari poems, called Heydar Babaya Salam, written by Mohammad Hossein Shahriar made history. It is translated into Persian and Published in Turkey and the Soviet Azarbaijan. Heydar Baba is the name of a mountain in Azarbaijan near a village where Shahriar spent his childhood years. Although the poems are devoid of political content, they are embodiments of Azari fears, hopes and aspirations. Shahriar, by writing Heydar Baba gave the mountain a mythical quality.

Heydar Baba and a number of other "politically correct" works were the only ones that were allowed to be published in Azari. During 1960s, however, the Shah's regime, consolidated and more secure, increased the time allotted to Azari music and other programs in Radio Tabriz and Radio Rezaiyeh. In the meantime, the Azarbaijan State Television and Radio in the Soviet Union that had begun broadcasts to Iran over Radio Baku since 1941, started to direct these programs at a specifically Iranian Azari audience in the mid-1950s.⁵⁹ Soon literary works published in Baku were being sold in Iranian Azarbaijan's book stores.⁶⁰ Nabdell contends this was a consequence of

the "revisionism" that with the emergence of Khroshchev occurred in the Soviet Union. In answer to the question why it was possible to disseminate and sell literary works from Baku and not from Iranian Azarbaijan, he writes that firstly "revisionism" meant the end of real Socialism in the Soviet Union and secondly most of the important papers and books were in Cyrillic and only a small fraction of Iranian Azaris could read and understand them and thirdly these works were such trash that could hardly pose any threat to the stability of the regime in Iran.⁶¹ These interactions, regardless of the reasons, kept the bonds between the two Azarbaijans alive and well.

THE EXTERNAL FORCES

The flirtations of the Russian Azari intellectuals with Iranian Azaris continued throughout the Shah's regime. The "southern question" in the Russian Azarbaijan was institutionalized by establishment of such organizations as the Azarbaijan SSR Academy of Sciences that through two of its institutes, the Institute of the Peoples of the Near and the Middle East and the Nizami Institute of Literature helped production and dissemination of research projects and literary works

about Iranian Azarbaijan.⁶² According to Nissman:

All Soviet Azerbaijanis who [were] prominent in discussions on the southern question in the post-war period [were] party members and some held important positions at the All-Union level.⁶³

There is no doubt that the Soviet authorities were interested in the "national liberation" of the Iranian Azarbaijan but they mostly left this task to the Soviet Azaris themselves.

The Iranian Azaris, for their part, although interested, do not seem to have reciprocated Soviet Azari enthusiasm. It is in the Soviet Azarbaijan that we find the idea of the "south" and the "literature of longing" so strong and emotionally charged and not in the Iranian Azarbaijan.

Regarding the perceptions and feelings of the Iranian Azaris toward the Ottoman Turks it should be pointed out that the Azaris have not demonstrated a great deal of sympathy for the Turks and ethnic and linguistic affinities have not acted as unifying factors. Indeed, except a short period during W.W.I. when the Iranian Azaris welcomed the Ottoman "liberators" as opposed to the Russian "occupiers," there has been no indication of the Azaris' interest in the Ottoman Turks and frequent Turkish overtures of unity and solidarity have not elicited

favorable Azari response. Iranian Azaris have obviously felt more comfortable to live within an undivided State of Iran than aspiring to join the Ottoman Turks with whom they seem to have only a language in common. At the same time the experiences of both Iranian and Russian Azaris with the Ottoman Turks during both Wars have made them realize that they will be somehow less than first class citizens in a state dominated by the Ottoman Turks.

THE KURDS:

The downfall of the Mahabad Republic of 1946 and subsequent consolidation of Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi made organized Kurdish nationalist endeavours almost impossible. After the demise of the Republic, a systematic program of disarming and settling of those Kurds who were nomadic or semi nomadic began. Many Kurdish chieftains pragmatically gave allegiance to the regime and claimed that they were forced to cooperate with the fallen Republic.⁶⁴ Those who were still defiant were pacified militarily while Kurdish publications and the use of Kurdish in schools and administrative offices was banned.

The Shah's regime, contrary to the regime in Turkey,

recognized its Kurdish population but emphasized the Kurds' Aryan or Iranian origins. The Kurds, like the Azaris and other ethno-linguistically distinct groups, were neither counted nor granted separate representation in the government. The Pahlavi regime only recognized non-Muslim groups as "religious minorities" and the Kurds as Sunni Muslims did not qualify to be recognized as such.

With the consolidation of the Shah's regime most Kurdish nationalist and activists especially the KDPI [Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran] went underground and throughout the Pahlavi period KDPI, while gradually taking a more leftist stance, was under siege.⁶⁵ The government's harrassment of the KDPI was particularly heightened after Iraqi revolution of 1958 and the return of Mulla Mostafa Barzani [the tribal leader of Iraqi Kurdish nationalist movement] to Iraq.

The average Kurd in Iran, however, remained poor and deprived particualrly in the province of Kurdestan proper. The Kurdish inhabited areas in this period were divided among three provinces of West Azarbaijan, Kurdestan and Kermanshahan. The Kurds share the province of West Azarbaijan, with Azaris while in Kurdestan and Kermanshahah they comprise the overwhelming majority of the population. Among these three provinces the province

of Kermanshahan attracted more development spending.⁶⁶ The reason for more prosperity in the Kermanshah Province is that there is an oil field [Naft-i Shah Field] in the area located in immediate proximity to the Iraqi border. This field is connected by two pipelines [one for petroleum and one for natural gas products] to one of Iran's older refineries in Kermanshah built in 1935. This refinery processed only a very small percentage of Iran's total refined output and provided petroleum for domestic consumption only.⁶⁷ The province of Kurdistan, however, is rugged and very mountainous and mostly neglected while province of Western Azarbaijan due to its agricultural and other potentials has been more developed than Kurdistan. The data in the tables at the end of this chapter demonstrate that the disparity between these three provinces was a constant factor throughout the Pahlavi rule. Although each province showed some absolute improvement the differential rate of development continued to persist.

Prior to the land reform program considerable areas of land were in the hands of tribal khans as landlords who treated the peasants as chattel and took advantage of their power and status.⁶⁸ After the land reform, as Qassemlu the Secretary General of the KDPI wrote, the big

landlords have disappeared and in turn there are more medium landlords who managed to hold on to their lands and also more small landholding peasants.⁶⁹ The traditional structure has thus given way to market economy and subsequent economic integration of Kurdish rural areas into the national economy. Many peasants who were driven off the land joined the ranks of the unemployed Kurds in urban areas.⁷⁰

Another change brought about by land distribution and the consequent deruralization of the Kurds has been the gradual weakening of the tribal structure. The process, however, has been extremely slow. Although many Kurds who have moved into the urban areas might have lost their previous attachment to a particular tribe, the tribal mindset still persists.⁷¹ Indeed, the growth of urbanization among the Kurds does not mean that loyalty to the Pahlavi state replaced their traditional tribal attachments. The reasons for this phenomenon, again, should be sought in the particular approach of the state toward the Kurds and their leaders.

It is, undoubtedly, true that the Shah's regime did not demonstrate much interest to accommodate the Kurds as it did the Azaris. A psycho-historical investigation that may illuminate the reasons for such neglect is beyond the

scope of this study. Indeed, although the Pahlavi state referred to the Kurds as "pure Iranians" and "ethnic kin" of the Persians, in reality the regime's approach did not go far beyond those rhetorics. If the Qajars looked for ways to accommodate some powerful tribal leaders, the reasons should be found in the Qajars inherent military and bureaucratic weakness. The Pahlavi regime with an omnipotent and strong army did not have to pay lip service to the tribal warlords to guarantee their cooperation. Some tribal chiefs and other political leaders were, of course, coopted but no significant effort at power sharing was attempted. However, the Kurdish political and economic elite did comprise a small percentage of the national elite, among whom Dr. Ardalan the last Court Minister and General Palizban who was the last Governor General of Kermanshah province should be mentioned. These men, however, were token Kurds from wealthy families who mostly had lost touch with the Kurdish rank and file. There was thus little identification between the average Kurds and the few Kurdish leaders co-opted by the regime. In [Table VIII] data collected from Iran Who's Who, Kermanshah ranked highest as the birth place for individuals born in Kurdish inhabited areas. It should be noted again that most of the Kurds of Kermanshah are Shiis

and do not necessarily share the aspirations of the Sunni Kurds of Iran. The Iranian Shii Kurds have systematically sided with the government as opposed to their Sunni co-ethnics.

As the Shah's regime did not make a real attempt at power sharing, the moderate Kurdish activists became more and more radicalized. At the same time, the Kurdish different urban strata particularly the Kurdish middle class were disappointed at the National Front and its stance vis-a-vis the question of Iranian "nationalities." Thus, most Kurds did not show much interests in cooperation with the National Front. The fact that the Kurds are sunnis also helped separate them from religious forces whose main objective was the removal of the Shah's regime. This alienation and separation from other opposition forces led the Kurds more into nationalist and leftist directions which, in turn, helped politicize larger segments of the Kurdish middle classes and the intelligentsia.

The Kurdish peasantry continued to look toward the tribal elite some of whose modernized and urbanized segments participated in the underground nationalist activities. The KDPI that was underground throughout the rule of the Shah, boasted many feudal and tribal leaders

among its membership. Qassemlu, the Secretary General of the party himself belonged to the Kurdish feudal elite.⁷²

EXTERNAL FORCES:

Two factors seem to have had important effects on the struggle of the Kurds in Iran. The first is the external element, i.e., the Kurdish struggle in the neighbouring countries particularly in Iraq. The second is the intra-ethnic fragmentation and conflict not only among the Kurds in different countries but within the Iranian Kurdish community. The 1958 Revolution in Iraq and subsequent events brought the Iraqi Kurds into direct confrontation with the Iraqi central government. From 1960 to 1975 the Iraqi Kurds under the banner of Mulla Mostafa Barzani engaged in violent military clashes with different regimes in Iraq. During this period the Shah of Iran indirectly and soon directly gave financial and military assistance to Barzani forces in order to destabilize Iraqi politics. This confronted the Iranian Kurds with a dilemma. Qassemlu writes that during this period KDPI's activities in Iran "were frozen."⁷³ Indeed as long as the Iranian government was the life line of the Iraqi Kurds the Kurdish political elite in Iran chose not to do anything

to disturb the delicate situation. And this brings us to the second issue, that of internal fragmentation among the Kurds. To be able to cooperate with Barzani who represented feudal, conservative forces in Iraqi Kurdistan, the KDPI chose a more conservative leadership. However, Barzani to reciprocate the Shah's favours, arreasted and handed over to the regime, several Iranian Kurdish activists with leftist leanings who had decided to continue their struggle. He even executed one Kurdish leader and returned the corpse to Iran. This was, indeed, a prime example of Kurdish fragmentation and a low point in Kurdish political history which is replete with such acts of betrayal and fratricide.

It is ironic that the Iraqi Kurds, although have paid the highest price for their conflict with the state, have also enjoyed more cultural and some political freedom. Compared to the Iranian or Turkish Kurds, the Iraqi Kurds were the only group who succeeded to acquire a legal status. This legal status while differentiated the Kurds from the rest of the Iraqi population, i.e., the Arabs, helped guarantee Kurdish rights to safeguard and develop their own culture. The history of the struggle for this legal status dates back to the British occupation of southern Kurdistan during and after the W.W.I. Under the

Mandate, the government of Iraq kept these guarantees in force, and occasionally upheld them.

Iraq, as a nation, on the other hand, was founded in the context of Arab nationalism. Thus the Kurds who according to the Iraqi Constitution were to have been "partners" with the Arabs,⁷⁴ claim that they were being systematically discriminated against by the Arab authorities. The Kurdish national movement, however, had a far better growth and evolution in Iraq than elsewhere and this is partly due to the fact that the Iraqi Kurds enjoyed more cultural freedom than their kinsmen in Iran and Turkey. Kurdish literary materials have been freely published in Iraq and the relative freedom of primary education in Kurdish has allowed for the standardization of the Sorani dialect of Kurdish.⁷⁵

The Shah of Iran entered Kurdish-Arab equation when the Iraqi Kurds had learned with much disappointment that their Arab "partners" were reluctant to share power and economic gains with them. The Shah, however, never meant to assist the Iraqi Kurds to the end. A Kurdish success in Iraq would, undoubtedly, have had "demonstration effects" in Iran.

Thus, the vicissitudes of international politics as well as Kurdish internal fragmentation should be

considered as important impediments to Kurdish unification. Unlike Azarbaijan whose division between two states has not contributed to a cultural alienation, the division of the Kurds has made an already precarious cultural identity more difficult to materialize. Most of the Kurds of Iraq [except those who live in northernmost area] can exchange cultural and literary works with those who live in a large part of the Iranian Kurdish-inhabited area. The same literary products are not intelligible to the Kurds who live in the northern parts of the Iranian Kurdish areas who in turn speak the language [dialect] used in Kurdish areas of Turkey and northern Iraq. The Kurds in Turkey are unable to engage in literary exchange with either Iraqi or Iranian Kurds not only because of a different dialect they speak but because in Turkey Latin script is used and in Iran and Iraq Arabic script is the literary medium. All these as well as the conflict inherent in a tribal society have had far-reaching political ramifications the most important of which has been the manipulation of Kurds as pawns in the inter-state power politics.

The Pahlavi regime might have had the support of a few Kurdish landed elite but by and large the regime never seriously attempted to gain some sorts of "grass roots"

support among the newly emerging Kurdish middle and lower middle classes. The regime was also impervious to the situation of the Kurdish peasantry. The result was further radicalization of Kurdish intelligentsia and middle classes. Many Kurdish organizations, particularly student organizations, became very active in both Iran and abroad in the last decade of the Pahlavi rule. The basic objective of these organizations was propagation of the idea of "Kurdish national identity." Among these organizations, the KDPI was the most organized and efficient.

The KDPI basically demanded autonomy for the Kurds within an undivided democratic Iranian state with foreign policy, national defence and plans for national economy remaining in the domains of the central government. Autonomy, of course, meant complete cultural and administrative self-determination. The KDPI also proclaimed that since the dictatorial regime of the Shah left no room for democracy in Iran the party opted for armed struggle.⁷⁶ This, of course, explains the onslaught of the regime on the party and its leadership.

it is thus not surprising that the KDPI and the Iranian Kurds readily and willingly participated in the Revolution of 1978-79 and until the success of the

Revolution the declared objective of the party was the overthrow of the Pahlavi regime. It was only after the new regime was established that Kurdish cries for autonomy and self-determination could be heard.

In the following chapter we will review the 1979 Revolution and the reasons why the Kurdish political elite could not come to terms with the Islamic Republic.

THE BALUCH:

Although the weakening of the central authority after Reza Shah's abdication had endowed the Baluch with more freedom, the Shah's consolidation soon re-established the authority of the central government in Iranian Baluchistan. However, during 1950s, the Shah's regime had to deal with tribal resistance which was manifested in the revolt of Dad Shah, a Baluch petty chieftain. Dad Shah who is considered a hero and a martyr by the Baluch and a renegade bandit by the Persians, engaged in hit and run activities against the central government's officials and military and police outposts. In the process he also killed an American military aid official and his wife together with another American accompanying them.⁷⁷ This prompted the regime to try to deal with him once and for

all. Hosseinborn writes that Dad Shah was betrayed by other Baluch chiefs who lured him to a meeting place where he was killed.⁷⁸ Dad Shah's revolt, although important for the Baluch, did not possess a nationalist quality and was devoid of grass roots support. From then on despite the fact that military units were permanently stationed in the region, the regime's co-optation of the Baluch tribal elite mostly with subsidies and stipends and sometimes with position was particularly successful in keeping the region calm.

During the rule of Mohammad Reza Shah, Baluchistan was completely integrated into the Iranian civil bureaucratic structures. Also the provincial frontiers were altered again. Baluchistan now came to include Sistan which is non-Baluch and Shii and thus the province of Sistan and Baluchistan was created. Part of the region was also annexed by provinces of Khorasan and Kerman and the Baluch living there counted as Khorasanis or Kermanis. Such division is the main reason many Baluch nationalists reject the population data given by the government. To all this one should add the systematic out-migration of the Baluch to find employment elsewhere in Iran or in Arab Sheikhdoms and also the in-migration of Persian settlers in Baluchistan.⁷⁹

During the Shah's period no Baluch was ever appointed to a high provincial administrative position let alone governorship. The officials running the bureaucracy in the province were mostly Persian and some Sistanis who are Persian speaking and Shii. In the meantime, as in other ethnically distinct provinces, an assimilationist policy was pursued. The compulsory use of Persian hampered literary development of an already underdeveloped Baluchi language. Also, as in Kurdish Areas, wearing of ethnic costumes was banned.

In 1957, the Shah's regime commissioned an Italian Economic Mission, Italkonsult, to study and submit a plan for the soio-economic development of southeastern region of Iran. Spooner writes that the Mission provided the government with a detailed account of the agriculture, hydrology, and geology of the region. However, its work on sociological aspects of Baluchi life, however, was not completed.⁸⁰ It is also not clear to what extent the government took into consideration the recommendations of the Commission since modernization policies of the Shah's regime hardly touched Baluchistan until 1970s. Ann Lambton who visited Baluchistan in 1964 writes that the region was barely affected by the first stage of the land reform. Besides the fact that the province was among the

regions where the number of estates were very small, the few villages that were transferred to the peasants "were not typical of the province."⁸¹ The interesting point is that the villagers cultivating these lands were Yazdis [Persian-speaking] and thus non-Baluch.⁸²

During 1970s, the Baluchistan Development Organization was established by the government to facilitate building of infrastructure in the region. Along with sedentarization the government assisted in the spread of irrigation agriculture. At the same time the amount of funds allocated to the region increased.⁸³ Baluchistan was, by now, almost completely integrated into the national economy. Roads were constructed through which Zahedan [the capital of the province] was linked to Chahbahar, an important port in the Gulf of Oman. To many Baluch the military bases at Chahbahar and other places in Baluchistan were the main reasons for the building of the infrastructure there.⁸⁴ The province throughout the Shah's rule remained devoid of any industrial plant.⁸⁵

However, the process of change, as late as it came, affected many aspects of Baluch life. Urban classes began to appear while radio and television connected the Baluch to a world beyond their reach. By early 70s, most Baluch possessed a transistor radio and could not only listen to

Baluchi broadcasts of Radio Zahedan but also had access to Baluchi broadcasts from Pakistan. Also it was in 1973 that the University of Baluchistan was established and although most students attending the university were non-Baluch, from 1972 to 1979 there were between 60 to 100 Baluch students attending the university. At the same time a Teachers Training College in Zahedan provided more opportunities for upwardly mobile Baluch.⁸⁶

There was also some erosion of the tribal structure. The new economic opportunities such as wage employment and market production as well as migrant labor and a thriving smuggling activity helped transform the tribal economy and this, in turn, had an impact on the basic mode of adaptation in Baluchistan which was manifested in the decline of pastoralism. Salzman writes:

Why invest capital in such a vulnerable sector when other sectors, such as irrigation agriculture, commercial activities [driving motorcycle taxis, working in retail stores, tailoring], and even large scale smuggling seem more secure?⁸⁷

The political calm in Baluchistan during the rule of the Shah can probably be attributed to two factors. One is the slow pace of change and the other is the regime's control through indirect rule. From the outset, many Baluch tribal and feudal leaders were coopted by the regime. This "indirect" use of existing traditional

authority structures enabled the state to rule Baluchistan even when the region was not fully integrated into the national economy and civil bureaucracy. Salzman documents the regime's policies of indirect rule through stipends and subsidies. In the areas where he studied, some Sardars [tribal chiefs of northern Baluchistan] misused the funds provided by the center since the government had put them in control of a "great many of the tribe's resources and thus provided them with a middle-man function." ⁸⁸ At the same time, a very small minority among the Baluch political elite was appointed to posts at the national level. These individuals were five or six loyal Baluch leaders who were chosen and appointed as representatives in the rubber stamp parliament.

Salzman attempts to explain the absence of Baluch nationalist movement in this period in terms of the overall effects of change on Baluchi identity:

...Contact with other peoples in developing and modernized urban settings of Iran and the Persian Gulf has undercut the insular local orientation and the conviction that to be human is to be Baluch....The tribesmen have not become cosmopolitan but Baluch chauvinism has gone into a steep decline.⁸⁹

Salzman concludes that as a result of the above impediments to the growth of the Baluch identity, the Baluch have resorted to the revival and elaboration of

Sunni Islam to bolster their identity vis-a-vis Shi'ite Persians.⁹⁰

Another anthropologist, Brian Spooner, also has attempted to explain the rise of religious leaders among the Baluch. However, while for Spooner this phenomenon is a result of a general fall in the activity of secular leadership⁹¹ for Salzman the rise of religious leadership was simultaneous with the increase of the authority of the secular leadership.⁹² Although Salzman attempts to explain this obvious discrepancy by attributing it to the fact that the two anthropologists studied different parts of the region, his explanations are not very clear.

What is certain is that the process of change particularly the introduction of new political and administrative structures challenges the social world of the indigenous peoples thus undermining social cohesion. the "indirect rule" does not mean that the power of the tribal chiefs or the traditional political structure remains intact. The monopoly of force is concentrated in the central government and this fact characterizes the relationship of the center and the group as one of submission and domination. This political domination is usually accompanied by cultural domination. The following passage is revealing:

Among the assortment of luxury items, there are electrical appliances, machine-made rugs, cowboy costumes, chic rubber shoes, eau de cologne, and perfumed soaps.....In Chahbahar, you can see a Baluchi student with a lei costume, wearing a foreign cologne, insisting that he is imitating the Persians.⁹³

The transformation and displacement brought about by the process of change had undoubtedly affected the Baluch. The emergence of religious leaders in the Baluch political arena can be better understood in the light of what happened in the mainstream Iranian politics. Like many Persians, the Baluch torn between two worlds, one losing its relevance and the other menacing and alien, resorted to an Islamic expression of identity in their search for self-definition.

Such attention to religion could also be explained by the fact that many Baluch did not approve of the submission of their political leaders to the Pahlavi state. They were well aware of the abuse and corruption of their chiefs who played the role of intermediaries between the group and the bureaucracy. These political leaders indeed lost their credibility and traditional legitimacy in time.⁹⁴

Salzman, thus, may be correct when he asserts that Baluch parochialism was affected. However, there is no reason to believe that change had helped reduce Baluch

identification with the indigenous community. Similar to the situation among the Kurds a sense of a wider loyalty to the ethnic community was replacing identification with the tribe. The events after the Revolution of 1978-79 demonstrated that the transition had indeed enhanced Baluch sense of ethnic identity.

However, since the Iranian Baluch lack a history of nationalist activity with capable leaders and sophisticated organizations, it is not surprising that the Iranian Baluch usually looked at the Pakistani Baluch for direction and inspiration. Even the Pakistani Baluch with their much larger urban middle strata and longer history of nationalist struggle have welcomed and utilized the assistance of the "non-Baluch" elements.⁹⁵

Nationalist aspirations in Iranian Baluchistan were thus expressed through different channels. One a marxist-Leninist channel inspired by the struggle of the Pakistani Baluch and some of its leaders who had left a great impression on the small and nascent Baluch urban middle and lower middle classes composed of students, teachers, shopkeepers, bureaucrats and some professionals. The other, an Islamic channel headed by Maulavis [Baluch religious leaders] who began gaining power and prestige during the last decade of the Shah's rule and were

followed by the rank and file.

The emergence of the Baluch middle strata has been a turning point in the growth of the group's ethnic/national consciousness. The Baluch middle class has a vested interest in the growth and promotion of a national identity. Harrison writes:

As the Shah cautiously permitted education to reach the Baluch, Iranian Baluchistan began to look like a miniature version of Pakistani Baluchistan, with the educated unemployed rapidly assuming politically significant proportions. High school and junior college graduates, in particular, had nowhere to go and were starting to think in terms of independence before the Shah's overthrow opened the way for an unprecedented upsurge of political activity.⁹⁶

Indeed, the middle class was the stratum who, particularly, grieved about the educational system, the mandatory use of the Persian language and the omnipresence of the Persian teachers. In the meantime, many Baluch migrants who returned from the Gulf states and were affected by the nationalist activities of some Baluch there, began helping organize "nationalist study groups dedicated to 'Baluchistan for the Baluch.'"⁹⁷

Selig Harrison who visited Iranian Baluchistan on the eve of the Revolution contends that the members of the guerrilla organizations of Fediyan-e khalq [Marxist-Leninist] and Mujahedin-e khalq [progressive Islamic] had visited Baluchistan. He stresses the fact that despite

obvious strength of the Marxist-Leninist sentiments among politically conscious youth, these organizations and particularly the Tudeh [Communist] Party were not able to muster much support in Iranian Baluchistan.⁹⁸ It should be noted that these organizations although support the "oppressed nationalities" do not endorse the "right of cession" or "independence." Indeed, the Baluch educated youth have been more inclined to look up or aspire to join such leftist Baluch organizations in Pakistan as the Baluchistan's People's Liberation Front [BPLF].⁹⁹

EXTERNAL FORCES:

Being a trans-border group, the Baluch are obviously exposed to influences from their kin on the other side, particularly in Pakistan. The external influence, however, has been limited and transitory.

The Pakistani Baluch, although politically subjugated, have enjoyed more cultural freedom than their kin in Iran. The Baluch insurgency has thus been much more intense and violent in Pakistan. The Iranian Baluchi small middle class received inspiration from the Pakistani Baluch but the tribal fragmentation and the successful cooptation of the Baluch political leaders kept the Baluch

rank and file static and depoliticized.

The details of the Baluch nationalist struggle in Pakistan is beyond the scope of this study. It should be pointed out, however, that the suppression of the Baluch identity and attempts at the assimilation by the dominant Punjabis created fierce opposition among the Pakistani Baluch which culminated in a violent civil war between 1971-1977.¹⁰⁰ In contrast to the Iranian Baluch, the movement in the Pakistani Baluchistan has been organized and has enjoyed sophisticated leadership. The main figures of Baluch nationalist movement in Pakistan are three powerful tribal chieftains. Their tribal origins make these men appeal to the Baluch rank and file. However, since as privileged members of Baluch society they have had access to modern education and partly because of their leftist leanings the three men have enjoyed the backing of more modern elements of Baluch society.

In Pakistani Baluchistan such political parties as the Pakistan National Party [PNP], the Baluch Popular Liberation Front [PBLF] and the Baluch Student Organization [BSO] are all nationalist. However, each advocates a different approach to the problem which is mainly a reflection of their ideological orientation.

It is ironic that during the rule of Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi it was the Pakistani Baluch who were affected by political necessities in Iran. With Zolfiqar Ali Bhutto's coming to power in Pakistan and the initial empowerment of Baluch leaders, conflict between the Baluch and the Pakistani central government made the Shah of Iran very nervous. At one point, Bhutto is reported to have said "I cannot hand over Baluchistan to NAP [National Awami Party],¹⁰¹ because the Shahinshah of Iran does not approve of it."¹⁰² The Shah was obviously mindful of demonstration effects of Pakistani Baluch independence or secession. That is the main reason Iran actively supported the Pakistani government in suppressing the Baluch insurgency of 1971-1977. Iran had its own Baluch under tight political control and was not going to allow the Baluch movement in Pakistan to spill over into Iran.

Another influence from outside was the Arab, particularly Iraqi, provocations in Iranian Baluchistan. The Shah's assistance to the Iraqi Kurdish rebels prompted Iraq to retaliate by stirring up the Iranian Baluch through "smuggling in weapons and airing radio appeals in Baluchi from across the Gulf."¹⁰³

During, 1968-1973, a period called "Baghdad Period"¹⁰⁴ the Iraqi leaders assisted a group of Baluchi

exiles who together with Mir Abdi Khan the leader of Sardarzai tribe of Iranian Baluchistan, had established the Baluchistan Liberation Front [1964]. This was an isolated case in the sense that although participation of Mir Abdi Khan as a tribal chief was significant, he was the only tribal leader who had become involved in Baluchi nationalist struggle in Iran. It is not surprising that the Front had to rely on the Arab support since there was not much support for it in the region. The Shah's successful cooptation had deprived the Baluch community of Iran of a credible political leadership. More importantly, in 1973, Mir Abdi Khan himself, gave in to the Shah's regime and in a Radio Tehran broadcast repented!¹⁰⁵

The outcome of the Iraqi-Baluch alliance had a lasting effect on the Baluch in the sense that many Baluch began to re-examine this relationship and some even refuted the claim that the Baluch had Arab ethnic origins.¹⁰⁶ The Iraqi duplicity was revealed further by the signing of the Algiers Agreement between the Shah and Saddam Hossein according to which the two regimes were reconciled and Tehran stopped supporting Iraqi Kurds. The Baluch, thus, like the Kurds had to face the bitter realities of the inter-state power politics.

From then on, the nationalist struggle of the Baluch was basically occurring in Pakistan. The Shah's regime in addition to the Iron fist of the military increased government spending in the 1970s and also no effort was made to stop the large scale smuggling operation between Pakistan, Iran and Persian Gulf ports. The regime was trying to appease the Baluch political leaders and keep the status quo intact. The Revolution of 1978-19 happened when Iranian Baluchistan was disorganized and leaderless.¹⁰⁷ Thus, contrary to the Kurds who participated in the Revolution to bring down the Shah's regime the Iranian Baluch waited and watched with nervousness. The Shii aspects of the movement in Iran was not very encouraging to the Baluch who could not trust the Shii "Gajars."

* * * *

This chapter examined the relationship between the Iranian state and the Azaris, Kurds, and Baluch under the rule of Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi. It was argued that like his father, Mohammad Reza Shah was a modernizer who stressed state-building at the expense of creating "national cohesion" in Iran. The Shah, as his father, earnestly believed that modernization of an underdeveloped and mostly illeterate society will not be possible except

through autocracy. Thus centralization of power and economic planning were necessary to guarantee the success of the regime's policies. In the process, a political system emerged in which all authority was controlled from the top while such seemingly democratic institutions as a parliament, political parties, etc., existed in name only, with no authority or autonomy of their own.

Mohammad Reza Shah, however, was not as determined as his father in fostering the idea of Iranian nationalism. As we noted, Reza Shah had championed the cause of an independent and self-sufficient Iran, a strong state based on an ancient civilization that would be free of foreign control and external pressures. The emergence of Dr. Mosaddeq and his brand of nationalism also signified the same idea, ridding Iran of foreign exploitation and control. It is interesting to note that the type of "formula" presented by both men is essentially negative and defensive instead of positive and integrative. However, there is no doubt that political exigencies of the time absolutely necessitated such an approach to nationalism. Mohammad Reza Shah's brand of Iranian nationalism, on the other hand, seems to have been forged basically to counter Dr. Mosaddeq and his ideas as well as to explain or justify the assistance rendered to the Shah

by outside powers to re-capture the throne and his continued amicable relations with the West. This "positive nationalism" was, however, devoid of fundamental elements of an integrative ideology. At the same time the symbolic propagation of a remote past was clearly not sufficient to create identification and loyalty to the state among the Persians and the Azaris let alone other ethnic groups.

During this period, Iranian population experienced drastic change in many aspects of their lives. Rapid economic growth and industrialization were pursued by the regime as significant steps that would guarantee Iran's place among the world's great nations. Concentration of political power and other resources in the center meant that the process of development in Iran, as in many other countries, was extremely uneven and this involved backwardness and lagging behind of many "peripheral" communities vis-a-vis the center. It is, however, interesting to note that modernization, or even uneven development, per se, seem not to have played a significant role in creating communal conflict.

None of the groups under study here engaged in a serious communal uprising with nationalist overtones after 1946. This is indeed one of the most interesting aspects

of those inherent contradictions that predominated the Shah's rule. In point of fact, his policies in relation to the periphery, as long as his rule lasted, had proven to be effective and beneficial to the state. He was able to subdue tribal centrifugal elements in both Kurdish and Baluch areas by depoliticizing and neutralizing the tribal political elite either through co-optation or suppression. Kurdish intellectual opposition was also suppressed and mostly driven underground or into exile while such stratum was not significant among the Baluch. Azaris, on the other hand, as the most prosperous or "advanced" among these groups, were accommodated, i.e., Azari political elite was treated on a par with the Persian political elite and the rank and file, except cultural restrictions, suffered no economic or administrative discriminations. Without a doubt, an historical continuity can be observed in the relations of the modern state of Mohammad Reza Shah with the three groups under study here. Azaris, who were a privileged group during the Qajar period were able to re-strengthen their ties to the Iranian state and thus keep their status and position intact while the policy of "carrot and stick" was used for the Kurds and the Baluch as the Qajars did use such policies as well. Of more interest is the fact that neither economic deprivation

[Baluch, Kurds] nor cultural repression such as language and educational policies [Baluch, Kurds, Azaris] were sufficient reasons to create group conflict. Although restrictions in the use of indigenous languages created grievances particularly among the urban strata, such policies were not inherently significant enough to threaten political stability. Cultural or economic grievances were indeed the most tangible means for the politicized members of these groups to express their dismay when they found themselves in the same socio-political environment with the Persians. Within such environment the real problem was one of political exclusion. The Shah's regime, however, depending on the group, attempted to mitigate the problem. Since it was realized that as a sophisticated and politically conscious group Azaris cannot be excluded from the political domain the historical ties of the Azaris to the Iranian state were reaffirmed. Azarbaijan was also too strategically important to be ignored. On the other hand, some community leaders among both the Kurds and the Baluch were coopted while other potentially instabilizing forces were neutralized by intimidation and suppression. Indeed the omnipotence of the modern state and the variety of options at its disposal enabled it to control the process of

conflict generation or conflict resolution. Thus, although Mohammad Reza Shah's regime was not able to formulate an over-arching national ideology that could unify various groups of the population and integrate them willingly into the Iranian society, the state was able to, temporarily, put a cap on the population's communal demands and aspirations until the revolution of 1978-79 opened the Pandora's box.

The revolution of 1978-79 was not based on communal loyalties and mostly signalled the emergence of a pervasive socio-political consciousness that, in many cases, cut across ethnic and class boundaries. Nevertheless, the revolution also demonstrated that ethnic and communal loyalties were well and alive and only needed the right opportunity to reappear.

NOTES

- 1- See for details: Cottam, Richard. Nationalism in Iran. p. 268.
- 2- See for details: Bill, James A. and Roger Louis. 1988. Mussadiq, Iranian nationalism and Oil. Austin: University of Texas Press. Also Zabih, Sepehr. 1982. The Mossadeqh Era: Roots of the Iranian Revolution. Chicago: Lake View Press. And Diba, Farhad. 1986. Mohammad Mossadeqh: A Political Biography. London: Croom Helm.
- 3- See, for example, Elwell, Sutton, L.P. 1958. "Nationalism and Neutrality in Iran." Middle East Journal 12. PP. 20-32.
- 4- Cottam, Nationalism in Iran. PP. 271-272.
- 5- Cottam, Richard. Nationalism in Iran. PP. 129-130.
- 6- See for details: Zabih, Sepehr. 1982. The Mossadeqh Era: Roots of the Iranian Revolution. P. 34.
- 7- Ibid.
- 8- Ibid.
- 9- It should be pointed out that the representation of a number of the Kurdish elite in the National Front did not necessarily mean that the Front was sympathetic to communal proclivities or that the Kurds as a whole sympathized with the National Front. The Kurdish elite who participated in Iranian politics, at the time, were among urbanized and assimilated Kurds and mostly Shii and hardly represented the Kurdish rank and file or the Kurdish tribal elite.
- 10- See for details: Gasiorowski, Mark J. 1991. U.S. Foreign Policy and The Shah. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. Chapter three.
- 11- See for details: Lenczowski, George. 1978. "Political Process and Institutions in Iran: The Second Pahlavi Kingship." In Iran Under the Pahlavis, ed. George Lenczowski. Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press. PP. 435-439.
- 12- Iran Almanac and Book of Facts. 1969. Tehran: Echo of Iran. P. 104.
- 13- For details see: Binder, Leonard. Iran. PP. 109-127.
- 14- For details on the co-optation efforts of the late Pahlavi Shah, see: Zonis, Marvin. 1971. The Political Elite of Iran. Princeton: Princeton University Press. PP.

- 23-25.
- 15- See for details: Binder, Leonard. Iran. And Zonis, ibid.
- 16- Baldwin, G. B. 1967. Planning and Development in Iran. Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press. P. 197.
- 17- For details on economic development of Iran during the Pahlavis see: Amuzegar, Jahangir. and M. Ali Fekrat. 1971. Iran: Economic Development Under Dualistic Conditions. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Also Katouzian. Homa. Political Economy of Iran.
- 18- For details on administrative centralization see: Amuzegar, Jahangir. 1964. "Administrative barriers to economic development in Iran." Middle East Economic Papers 11. PP. 5-7.
- 19- See for details: Amirahmadi, Hooshang. 1986. "Regional Planning in Iran: A Survey of Problems and Policies." Journal of Developing Areas 20. PP. 504-505.
- 20- Ibid.
- 21- See: Kazemi, Farhad. 1980. Poverty and Revolution in Iran. New York: University Press. PP. 18-26.
- 22- For details see: Looney, Robert E. 1973. The Economic Development of Iran. New York: Praeger. PP. 127-128.
- 23- Johnson, Gail Cook. 1980. High-Level Manpower in Iran: From Hidden Conflict to Crisis. New York: Praeger. P. 25.
- 24- Kazemi, Farhad. Poverty and Revolution in Iran. P. 25.
- 25- See for details: Daftary, Farhad. 1973. "Development Planning in Iran: A Historical Survey." Iranian Studies 6.
- 26- Ibid. P.181. .
- 27- See for details: Amirahmadi, Hooshang. 1987. "Dynamics of Provincial Development and Disparity in Iran." Third World Planning Review 9. PP. 170-171.
- 28- See for details: Kazemi, Farhad. 1980. Poverty and Revolution in Iran: The Migrant Poor, Urban Marginality and Politics. New York: New York University Press. P. 35.
- 29- Ibid.
- 30- Amirahmadi, Hooshang. "Regional Planning in Iran." P. 517.
- 31- Hooglund, Eric J. 1982. Land and Revolution in Iran: 1960-1980. Austin: University of Texas Press. P. 117.
- 32- Kazemi, Farhad. 1980. Poverty and Revolution in Iran: The Migrant Poor, Urban Marginality and Politics. New York: New York University Press. P. 31.
- 33- Compiled from the UNESCO Statistical Yearbook, 1988.

- PP. 10.2 and 10.4.
- 34- Iran Almanac and Book of Facts. 1974. Tehran: Echo of Iran. P. 125.
- 35- NIRT in 1977 boasted one of the largest budgets allocated to any governmental institution in Iran. See for details: Tehranian, Majid. and Farhad Hamzadeh and Marcello L. Vidale. 1977. Communications Policy for National Development. London: Routeledge and Kegan Paul Ltd. P. 261.
- 36- Deutsch, Karl. 1953. "The Growth of Nations: Some Recurrent Patterns of Political and Social Integration." World Politics 5. P. 127.
- 37- Ibid.
- 38- Deutsch, Karl. 1961. "Social Mobilization and Political Development." American Political Science Review 55. P. 494.
- 39- Ibid., p. 499.
- 40- Deutsch, "The Growth of Nations." PP. 169-170.
- 41- Deutsch, "Social Mobilization and Political Development."
- 42- Deutsch, Karl. "Social Mobilization and Political Development." P. 501.
- 43- Deutsch, Karl. "Social Mobilization and Political Development." PP. 104-105.
- 44- Deutsch, Karl. "The Growth of Nations."
- 45- Deutsch, Karl. 1963. "Problems of Nation-Building and national Development." In Nation Building, ed. Karl W. Deutsch and William J. Foltz. New York: Atherton Press. P. 4.
- 46- Nabdell, Ali Reza. n.d. Azarbaijan va mas'aleh-e melli [Azarbaijan and the National Question]. n.p.: Eldirim Press. P. 22.
- 47- Berengian, Sakina. 1988. Azeri and Persian Literary Works in Twentieth Century Iranian Azarbaijan. Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag. P. 189.
- 48- For details see: Benab, Younes. "Tabriz in Perspective."
- 49- Berengian, Azari and Persian Literary Works.... P. 189 and n. 10, p. 213.
- 50- Ibid. PP. 191-192.
- 51- Hooglund, Eric J. 1982. Land and Revolution in Iran, 1960-1980. Austin: University of Texas Press. P. 160, n. 20.
- 52- Nabdell, Ali Reza. Azarbaijan va mas'aleh-e melli. PP.

- 37-38.
- 53- Zonis, Marvin. 1971. The Political Elite of Iran. Princeton: Princeton University Press. P. 136.
- 54- Lambton, Ann K.S. The Persian Land Reform. P. 87.
- 55- Ibid. P. 120.
- 56- Hemmasi, Mohammad. 1976. "Migration and Problems of Development: The Case of Iran." In Social Science and Problems of Development, ed. Khodadad Farmanfarmaian. Princeton: Princeton University Press. P. 214.
- 57- Ibid., p.222.
- 58- Nabdell, Ali Reza. Azarbaijan va mas'aleh-e melli. PP. 24-26.
- 59- Nissman, David. The Soviet Interest in Iranian Azarbaijan: 1917-1948. P. 30.
- 60- Nabdell, Azarbaijan va mas'aleh-e melli. PP. 31-32.
- 61- Ibid.
- 62- Nissman, David. The Soviet Interest in Iranian Azarbaijan: 1917-1948. P. 29.
- 63- Ibid.
- 64- Arfa, Hassa. The Kurds. PP. 102-103.
- 65- McDowall, David. 1981. The Kurds. London: Minority Rights Group. Report No. 23. P. 16.
- 66- Clarke, J.I. and B.D. Clark. 1969. Kermanshah: An Iranian Provincial City. Durham: Center for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies. Research Paper Series no. 10.
- 67- For details see: Fesharaki, Fereidun. 1976. Development of the Iranian Oil Industry: International and Domestic Aspects. New York: Praeger Publishers. P. 212.
- 68- Lambton, Ann K.S. Landlord and Peasant in Iran. PP. 169, 276 and 291.
- 69- Qassemlu, "Kurdistan in Iran." PP. 116-117.
- 70- Qassemlu contends that unemployment is very high in the Kurdish inhabited areas of Iran. See ibid.
- 71- Ibid.
- 72- Van Bruinessen writes that the founding members of the KDP all belonged to the tribal elite. "Kurdish Tribes and Simko's Revolt." P. 393.
- 73- Qassemlu, "Kurdistan in Iran." P. 131.
- 74- The Constitution of 1958 states that "Arabs and Kurds are partners in this homeland and the 1970 Peace Agreement with the Ba'athist regime recognized the binational character of Iraq.
- 75- For an excellent study of state planning regarding Kurdish language see: Hassanpour, Amir. 1989. The Language

- Factor In National Development: The Standardization of the Kurdish Language, 1918-1985. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- 76- Qassemu, "Kurdistan in Iran." PP. 132-133.
- 77- Harrison, In Afghanistan's Shadow. PP. 104-105.
- 78- Hosseinbor, Mohammad Hassn. 1985. Iran and Its Nationalities: The case of Baluch Nationalism. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation. American University. PP. 140-141.
- 79- Harrison contends that by 1978 Persian immigrants constituted almost 40% of the population of 75,000 in the provincial capital of Zahedan. And the number of Baluch immigrated to the Persian Gulf, according to Harrison's estimation, was about 150,000. He, however, does not mention the source of the data. See his In Afghanistan's Shadow. P. 3.
- 80- Spooner, Brian. "Kuch u Baluch And Ikhtyopagi." P. 59.
- 81- Ibid., p. 145.
- 82- Ibid., p. 146.
- 83- Harrison, In Afghanistan's Shadow. PP. 99-100.
- 84- Ibid.
- 85- Hosseinbor mentions one single exception that is the construction of a textile factory in Iranshahr which was unfortunately not completed before the Revolution. See for details: Hosseinbor, Mohammad Hassan. 1985. Iran and Its Nationalities: The Case of Baluch Nationalism. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation. American University. PP. 110-111.
- 86- Ibid.
- 87- Salzman, Philip C. 1980. "Process of Sedentarization Among the Nomads of Baluchistan." In When Nomads Settle: Process of Sedentarization as Adaptation and Response, ed. Philip C. Salzman. PP. 100-105.
- 88- Salzman, Philip C. 1973. "Continuity and Change in Baluchi Tribal Leadership." International Journal of Middle East Studies 4. P. 432.
- 89- Salzman, "Process of Sedentarization...." PP. 100-105.
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- 91- Spooner, Brian. 1971. "Religion and Society Today: An Anthropological Perspective." In Iran Faces the Seventies, ed. Ehsan Yar Shater. New York: Praeger Publishers. P. 187.
- 92- Salzman, "Islam, Authority..." P. 69.
- 93- "Baluchistan: Its Political Economy and History."

RIPEH IV, Spring 1980. P. 69.

94- For details see: Hosseinborn, Mohammad Hassan. Iran and Its Nationalities. PP. 125-126.

95- Harrison writes how "some admirers of Che Guevara who come from rich, non-Baluch families in Karachi and Lahore...see Baluchistan as the most promising arena in Pakistan for the application of their ideas..." See for details: Harrison, Selig S. 1978. "Nightmare in Baluchistan." Foreign Affairs 32. P. 155.

96- Harrison, In Afghanistan's Shadow. P. 110.

97- Ibid.

98- Ibid.

99- Pace, Eric. 1979. "Iran's Minorities: A History of Conflict." New York Times December 23. P. 14.

100- See for details: Sayeed, Khalid. 1980. Politics in Pakistan: The Nature and Direction of Change. New York: Praeger Publishers; and Wirsing, Robert G. 1981. The Baluchis and Pathans. London: Minority Rights Group.

101- National Awami Party was the regionalist alliance of Baluchistan and neighbouring North West Frontier Province that came victorious out of the free election of 1970.

102- Sayeed, Khalid. 1980. Politics in Pakistan. P. 115.

103- Harrison, In Afghanistan's Shadow. PP. 153-154.

104- Ibid., p. 107; see also: "Arab Support For Baluchistan." Foreign Report Feb 14, 1973.

105- Ibid.

106- See, for example, Janmahmad. 1982. The Baluch Cultural Heritage. Karachi: Royal Book Company.

107- Harrison, In Afghanistan's Shaow. PP. 112-113.

POPULATION OF CITIES OF 100,000 AND MORE INHABITANTS

CITIES	1956	1966	1976	1986
Tehran	1,512,082	2,719,730	4,496,159	6,002,079
Tabriz [Azaris]	289,996	403,413	598,576	994,377
Hamedan [Azaris-Kurds]	99,909	124,167	155,846	274,274
Kermanshah [Kurds]	125,439	187,930	290,861	565,544
Rezaiyeh [Azaris-Kurds]	-	110,749	163,991	304,823
Ardabil [Azaris]	-	-	147,404	147,865
Khoy [Azaris]	-	-	-	115,873
Maragheh [Azaris]	-	-	-	102,966
Sanandaj [Kurds]	-	-	-	203,975
Zahedan [Baluch and others]	-	-	-	288,612

*- Compiled from the Iranian Census Data; 1986 figures from the U.N. Demographic Yearbook. TABLE VI

BIRTH PLACE BY PROVINCE OF THE POLITICAL ELITE AND TOTAL POPULATION OF IRAN

Province	% of Elite Born There	% of Father's of Elite Born There	% of Total Population of Iran Born There
City of Tehran	54.1	35.5	5.1
Other Than Tehran	45.9	64.5	94.9
Central Province	2.2	4.4	5.6
Azarbaijan	6.7	9.3	16.3
Kermanshahan	2.3	2.0	7.8
Kurdestan	.9	1.0	2.9
Baluchistan & Sistan	.9	1.0	2.3

*-Compiled from data in Zonis, Marvin. 1971. The Political Elite of Iran. Princeton: Princeton University Press. P. 136.
TABLE VII

BIRTH PLACE OF THE ELITE AS PROVIDED IN IRAN WHO'S WHO (part one)

[Pahlavi Period]

Born in	Pol./Mil./Bur. Elite	Economic Elite	Intellectuals and Artists
Persian-speaking areas	853	118	200
Birth Place not mentioned	724	91	340
East Azarbaijan	125	26	18
West Azarbaijan	14	-	1
Kermanshahan	28	3	5
Kurdestan	16	3	1
Mazandaran	26	1	4
Gilan	59	8	25
Zanjan	17	-	2
Hamedan	14	2	3
Khuzestan	10	-	2
Baluchistan & Sistan	5	-	-

TABLE VIII

BIRTH PLACE OF THE ELITE AS PROVIDED IN IRAN WHO'S WHO (part two)
[Pahlavi Period]

Born in	Professional & Technocrats	Entertainers	Others	Religious Personalities
Persian-speaking areas	632	110	66	4
Birth Place not Mentioned	336	149	41	2
East Azarbaijan	78	13	4	-
West Azarbaijan	10	-	1	-
Kermanshahan	10	3	1	-
Kurdestan	3	1	-	-
Mazandaran	8	7	-	-
Gilan	31	7	5	-
Zanjan	4	-	1	-
Hamedan	18	2	2	1
Khuzestan	4	-	-	-
Baluchistan & Sistan	-	-	2	-

*-Compiled from the data in Iran Who's Who. Third edition, 1976. Tehran: Echo of Iran.
TABLE VIII

LEGAND FOR TABLE VIII

Pol./Mil./Bur. Elite= Political/Military/Bureaucratic. This group includes high civil servants, diplomats, military officers, Majles Deputies and Senators [both elected and appointed].

Economic Elite= This group includes bankers, industrialists, businessmen and merchants.

Intellectuals and Artists= This group includes journalists, translators, writers, poets, painters, sculptors.

Professionals and Technocrats= This group includes universtiy professors, lawyers, judges, physicians, scientists, teachers, engineers, and other specialists and experts.

Entertainers= This group includes actors, actresses, musicians, athletes, sportsmen, radio and TV announcers and those connected to entertainment industry.

Others= Social personalities such as wives of powerful and wealthy men who may have nominal positions at some organizations; a few workers and labor leaders.

East Azarbaijan= Azaris; West Azarbaijan= Kurds, Azaris, others;
Kermanshahan= Kurds; Kurdestan= Kurds; Mazandaran= Mazandarani; Gilan=
Gilanis; Zanzan= Azaris, Kurds, Persians; Hamedan= Azaris, Kurds, Persians;
Khuzestan= Arabs, Persians; Baluchistan & Sistan= Baluches, Sistanis,
Persians and others.

PERCENTAGE OF RURAL/URBAN POPULATION

Province	Rural		Urban	
	1966	1976	1966	1976
Central	19.2	13.8	70.3	79.7
E. Azarbaijan	50.2	41.6	29.0	36.3
W. Azarbaijan	61.0	53.9	25.5	32.1
Kurdestan	69.0	51.6	16.5	24.2
Kermanshahan	55.2	40.7	35.4	43.4
Baluchistan & Sistan	66.6	57.1	14.4	24.2

*- Statistical Reports: Plan and Budget Organization of Iran.
 E. Azarbaijan= Azaris; W. Azarbaijan= Kurds, Azaris, others; Kurdestan= Kurds;
 Kermanshahan= Kurds; Baluchistan & Sistan= Baluches, Sistanis, others. TABLE IX

OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE

Province	1956		1966		1976	
	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
Central	27.8	32.1	17.9	37.7	11.7	35.8
E. Azarbaijan	59.5	20.0	50.3	28.3	38.0	38.5
W. Azarbaijan	66.5	10.4	60.1	16.0	54.0	22.6
Kurdestan	71.5	7.3	69.0	11.9	43.2	36.4
Kermanshahan	66.6	11.1	55.1	15.6	38.8	28.8
Baluchistan & Sistan	74.7	8.1	66.3	14.6	35.1	33.1

*- Statistical Reports, Plan and Budget Organization of Iran. TABLE X

PERCENTAGE OF LITERATE POPULATION

Province	1956	1966	1976
Central	30.6	49.6	66.1
E. Azarbaijan	10.2	20.5	38.1
W. Azarbaijan	10.2	19.8	38.1
Kurdestan	6.4	16.2	30.0
Kermanshahan	11.4	28.7	42.3
Baluchistan & Sistan	5.6	14.9	29.7

*- Statistical Reports, Plan and Budget Organization of Iran. TABLE XI

POPULATION PER PHYSICIAN

Province	1947	1966	1976
	population	Physician	Physician
			Popu. % of total
Central	—	1,961	20.7
E. Azarbaijan	2,200,000	56,410	9.5
W. Azarbaijan	600,000	100,000	4.2
Kurdestan	1,950,000	92,857	2.2
Kermanshahan	"	"	3.1
Baluchistan &	950,000	950,000	2.1
		11,111	5,239

*- Kurdestan and Kermanshahan were part of the same province in 1947.

**-1947 data is from: Report on Seven Year Development Plan for the Plan Organization of Iran. New York: Overseas Consultants, 1949.

***-The rest of the data from: Statistical Reports, Plan and Budget Organization of Iran. TABLE XII

PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES AT POVERTY LEVEL OF CONSUMPTION BY PROVINCE

Province	Total	Urban	Rural
Central	21.0	12.2	56.8
East Azarbaijan	32.0	22.0	37.7
West Azarbaijan	35.0	26.8	38.8
Kermanshahan	38.0	10.1	59.3
Kurdestan	30.8	23.9	33.9
Baluchistan & Sistan	77.0	47.7	83.0

*- Cited in Aghajanian, Akbar. "Ethnic Inequality in Iran: An Overview," in The International Journal of Middle East Studies, 15 (1983), P. 218.
TABLE XIII

PERCENTAGE OF HOUSES WITH ELECTRICITY

Province	1966	1976
Central	80.6	96.8
East Azarbaijan	54.3	81.4
West Azarbaijan	48.5	80.2
Kurdestan	60.5	81.2
Kermanshahan	62.2	82.6
Baluchistan & Sistan	48.2	62.5

*-Statistical Reports, Plan and Budget Organization of Iran. TABLE XIV

IRAN SPECIAL REGIONAL INVESTMENT: 1973-1978

<u>Province</u>	<u>Billion Rials</u>
E. and W. Azarbaijan	27.0
Kermanshahan, Kordestan and Ilam	17.0
Kerman, Sistan and Baluchistan	12.6

*- Iran, Summary of the 5th National Plan, 1973-76. Plan and Budget Organization, Iran. TABLE XV

PER CAPITA (GDP) RIALS

<u>Province</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1974</u>
Central	50,264	94,449
East Azarbaijan	16,003	30,243
West Azarbaijan	21,290	35,511
Kurdestan	24,988	33,123
Kermanshahan	22,500	38,839
Baluchistan	11,996	21,995

*- The Ministry of Economics, Iran.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE ADVENT OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC:
AZARIS, KURDS, BALUCH

The revolution of 1978-79 that replaced the modernizing monarchy of the Pahlavis with an Islamic Republic, was a clear demonstration of the Pahlavis' failure to create loyalty and identification toward the state.

Various theories and hypotheses have been offered to explain the causes of the revolution and the ease with which the Shah's regime was toppled. This chapter will begin by enumerating some of these explanations and will proceed to examine the advent of Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic state. The new political environment elicited different reactions from Azaris, Kurds and the Baluch. Each group's particular response to the new political situation will be elaborated. It will also be explained that although the political structure and the state's ideology were dramatically changed, the approach that the dominant group adopted toward the ethno-linguistically distinct groups remained essentially the same.

General Observations:

Much has been written about the causes of the Islamic

Revolution in Iran. Economic "boom and bust," moral outrage and a quest to "return to Islamic purity," impact of modernization, authoritarianism and foreign intervention or conspiracy have all been suggested as possible causes of the Revolution.¹ All these might have been contributing factors but none by itself is sufficient enough to explain the fall of the Shah's regime.

Afsaneh Najmabadi who offers a combination of economic and political reasons for the fall of the regime contends that the depoliticization of the elite and other classes who had habitually been involved in Iranian politics was probably one of the most devastating aspects of the Pahlavi rule in terms of its own survival. Najmabadi explains that the huge increase in the oil revenues caused the autonomy of the state from the civil society. A rentier state that does not have to effectively tax the population to generate revenues will not feel an urge to be representative. She further elaborates:

This autonomy of the state from a taxation base...resulted in a progressive narrowing of the politically relevant body of decision-makers, which ultimately was reduced to the person of the Shah...²

Najmabadi's accounts are not only illuminating in respect to the prevalent cynicism and lack of support

among the elite and those classes who had benefited from the Pahlavi rule, they demonstrate the attitudes of many Iranians toward oil revenues after their increase in 1973; a wealth that they had done nothing to generate. During those years everyone seemed to be on a relentless and urgent pursuit of wealth; a "gold-rush" mentality was predominant.

The "rentier state" theory, however, does not effectively explain the politicization of the rank and file of the population that led to the downfall of the regime. We noted that maldistribution of resources was one of the outcomes of the Pahlavi policies. Najmabadi seems to imply this was one of the main reasons for the Pahlavis' demise.³ However, this does not explain why many well-to-do Iranians participated in the Revolution or why the most deprived and rural regions did not.

The "moral" issue is of less significance and it has mostly to do with the vested interests of the religious classes in Iran. This class who had been treated with contempt and sometimes violence by Reza Shah, regained some of its power and status during the rule of his son. There is no doubt that modernization/Westernization of Iran meant the decline of the power of the religious strata. The objections of the clergy to the unveiling of

women and their enfranchisement, their outrage by what they saw as a growing laxity of sexual morals, etc., were mostly manifestations of their indignation over their declining power. In today's Iran prostitution is said to be one of the basic means of survival for those women who have lost their husbands in the Iran-Iraq War. One does not witness much moral outrage over this problem or the candid pronouncements of Mr. Rafsanjani on the issue of "temporary marriage."

Modernization, however, did create a "culture shock" for many who were caught in the transitional process. It is interesting to note that the Revolution was an urban phenomenon that mostly occurred in Tehran, and other Persian speaking urban centers as well as the important cities of Azarbaijan and Kurdish inhabited areas. The more remote and "backward" regions of the country, for example, Baluchistan, although aware of the upheaval did not take part in the Revolution. The most visible of those groups who participated in the Revolution were the "ulama, the young intelligentsia (mainly students and teachers), and the Bazaaris."⁴ The modern middle class and the workers as well as the urban poor joined the Revolution at later stages.⁵ This particular aspect of the Revolution, i.e., the fact that it was limited to

those segments of the population who had been effected by the process of change demonstrates that modernization probably was one of the important contributing factors.

In the interviews conducted for this study, during a two year stay in Iran after the Revolution, when asked why they participated in the Revolution, most of the interviewees did not have a clear answer. Most responses were vague and emotionally charged. The intellectuals and some members of the intelligentsia and students, among my interviewees, were more specific and articulate. Those who had leftist orientations mostly talked about "imperialism" while those with religious leanings elaborated on cultural decadence and immoral behavior. A few people complained about "inflation." One thing, however, ran constant in almost all of the responses. Almost everyone complained, vaguely or explicitly, of a feeling of "alienation," and "discomfort." None of these feelings could be explained by reference to political repression or economic deterioration. This, of course, does not mean that those factors and many others did not contribute to the dissatisfactions and disappointments. However, "identity crisis" was an all-encompassing phenomenon.

Undoubtedly, the population caught in the process of

change was under severe stress. However, the new kind of awareness was not totally compatible with the prevailing values and norms of the society. An identity crisis could not but help push Shii Iranians [Persians and Azaris] into the soothing arms of religion. Indeed the Pahlavi regime not only had been incapable of mitigating the polarization of tradition and modernity by reconciling the two, it had failed to present an ideological synthesis that could help accommodate different aspects of modern state and modern economy and bring together the diverse population by creating a comprehensive cultural-ideological consensus. The Shah, himself, not unlike Khomeini, considered the people as a flock whose guidance was bestowed upon him. The following passage is a perfect example of such attitude as the Shah himself wrote:

Proverbially to get things done in Persia one must both reward and punish. My father relied more on punishment than he did on reward or encouragement...Oriental psychology in these matters differs from that of the West and my father's methods for getting things done showed no little realism in the light of our authoritarian tradition...⁶

In the same light, the population of the periphery was considered as inconsequential and deterring to development. Selig Harrison quotes the late Prime Minister Hoveida about the Baluch:

...There are not very many of them, are there? But

they happen to live in a strategic part of the country. Should we let them use this accident of geography and history to provoke us into devoting precious resources to develop that wretched part of the country? Why not move them elsewhere, where development is more rational?⁷

These condescending attitudes expressed by the Shah and his elite may, to some extent, also explain why the political system was not opened to mass participation and why eventually such participation took a revolutionary form.

Islam Versus Secularism:

As was pointed out, the Shah's regime claimed legitimacy on the basis of 2,500 years of Iranian monarchical history. The monarchy, however, had to deal with other important political forces such as Islam and secular Iranian nationalism. At the outset, Iranian nationalism and monarchy, both secular forces, were closely identified. Yet, after a short period, there was schism and the goals of the monarchy and those of the Iranian nationalists did not coincide any longer.

Islam, on the other hand, presented a political force that drew its legitimacy from a completely different source and as change created much discomfort, this force

grew stronger. Iranian political culture, thus, became polarized during the rule of Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi. Each segment of this polarized political culture developed independently of the other and the real conflict regarding the appropriate forms of authority arose between Islam and the monarchy.

The only way that the Pahlavis could counterbalance the force of religion was through secularization which entailed implementation of legal and educational reforms. Iranian secularization, however, bypassed the masses while embraced by modern educated elite.⁸

The Iranian masses had embraced Shiism since the Safavid period [16th century]. The Safavid Shahs of Iran who are said to have established Shiism to differentiate themselves from their rivals, the Ottoman Turks,⁹ helped the promotion of the Shii clergy. Throughout the Safavids' rule the Shii high clergy enjoyed power, status and prestige as well as wealth.

The Safavid Shahs claimed legitimate rights to political leadership based on their descent from a Shii saint. As soon as the consolidation and institutionalization of their power, however, the Safavid rulers moved to separate religion from state functions although they were careful not to alienate the ulama by

reducing their wealth and prestige. And the ulama, in return, helped validate and strengthen the rulers' claims to legitimate authority. Spiritual realm was nevertheless subordinated to the temporal rule.¹⁰

The Qajar rulers of Iran due to convergence of different factors, were not as fortunate as the Safavids. The weak and decentralized Qajar state did not have the means and the power to control the ulama who had an independent financial base by collecting religious taxes or holding large tracts of lands as well as controlling the religious courts.¹¹ The religious elite of Qajar Iran as marja'-e taqlids or Sources of Imitation, were among the wealthiest members of society and controlled complex channels of social groups. Indeed independent financial status and the social prestige allowed the ulama to control an important network of patronage and followings. The Qajar ulama were thus able to function independently of the state and resist state policies that they did not consider advantageous to themselves and harmful to the community. There are various examples of successful resistance of the ulama, the most noteworthy of which was the Tobacco Rebellion which led to the boycott of tobacco products following the fatva [religious decree] of a grand ayatollah in Najaf, Iraq.¹² This and other events,

particularly the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911, demonstrate that in Qajar Iran religion was detached and autonomous from the institution of the state. The interesting point to be stressed is that until the Islamic Republic and the revolutionary ideology of Khomeini, the Shii ulama did not actively question the legitimacy of the temporal rule. Even during the Constitutional Revolution the ulama who participated in the revolt did not intend to change the structure of power in Iran.¹³ The Revolution only restored the so-called "just rule" and that is the reason the Qajar dynasty survived this revolt until it was toppled by Reza Khan in 1925.

The Pahlavi state, as we noted, set out to eradicate all potential sources of power and in many ways it succeeded. With secularization and other policies, religious sector also lost many of its privileges. Even though, Reza Shah did launch an attack on the prerogatives of the ulama, by the time his rule had ended, the Shii ulama still steadfastly held the sources of wealth and prestige. The following table is an example of such wealth.

Important Landholders in Isfahan, 1946

<u>Category</u>	<u>Number</u>
Aristocracy	4
Merchants	6

Ulama	15	
Writers	5	
Physicians	2	14

The autonomous basis of the Shii clergy, however, was not lost and the Iranian clergy did, at times, flex some muscles in order to gain the attention of both the population and the state.¹⁵ In the meantime, the religious schools [madrassas], mosques, and endowments survived and at times prospered depending on who had the upper hand; the state or the ulama.¹⁶ Micheal Fischer estimates that in 1975 there were 6,500 religious students in Qumm, 1,800 in Mashhad, 1,000 in Isfahan, 500 in Tabriz, 250 in Shiraz and 300 in Yazd.¹⁷ Through such religious taxes as zakat and khoms, religious schools were saved from dependence on the state. The autonomy of the Iranian clergy thus endowed this stratum with the capability of efficient organization and mass mobilization through its sophisticated networks of patronage and followings which proved vital in facilitating their leading role in the Revolution.

Khomeini and the Islamic Republic:

Before Khomeini, an important characteristic of the Iranian Shii ulama was political quietism. Indeed the

issue of the legitimacy of the temporal rule was not dealt with beyond the requirements of a Shii political ruler or leadership. One scholar who has studied the Shii doctrines closely contends:

Compared to the Imam, both the Twelver Shi'i ruler and the mujtahid are equally fallible, equally lacking in divine qualities and equally entitled to none of the Imams prerogatives. There is nothing in Twelver Shi'i doctrines that hinders a Twelver Shi'i political ruler from filling the office of a mujtahid provided he possesses the necessary qualifications which may be acquired by any capable person. Implicitly the opposite is equally applicable.¹⁸

The argument is if the temporal rulers or leadership are Shii Muslims and do not impose non-Islamic rules or laws on the faithful community their rule should be sanctioned and indeed it was until 1979.

A detailed exposition of Khomeini's ideas is, of course, beyond the scope of this study. But a brief account of some of the more important features of his thought can provide us with some explanations regarding the posture he adopted vis-a-vis the demands of such groups as Azaris, Kurds and the Baluch.

It is important to note that before the Revolution of 1978-79 and the exposition of Khomeini's ideas there is no evidence that besides him any of the Iranian clergy had ever advocated the rule or guardianship of the faqih [Islamic jurisconsult]. Most of Khomeini's ideology was

formulated when he was in Najaf, Iraq, exiled by the Shah after 1963 disturbances.

The initial exposition of Khomeini's thought can be found in the book kashf al-Asrar [1943-44] in which the young Khomeini attacked Reza Shah and his secularization policies such as unveiling of women and the reduction of the ulama's power and called on the ulama to help save Iran's Shii cultural identity and its integrity. He emphasized the fact that the ulama must be able to oversee the legislative and executive functions of the government. Here he stressed that he did not mean for the jurisconsult to become the Shah or the prime minister, etc.¹⁹

Khomeini, however, appeared actively on the Iranian political scene between 1962-1964 when several riots broke out in Iran by mostly religious groups who opposed government acts regarding land reform, women's enfranchisement and bestowing of legal immunity to American personnel in Iran. Khomeini's outspoken opposition entailed his detainment, house arrest and eventual exile to Najaf in Iraq. During this episode Khomeini had not yet formulated his ideas about the illegitimacy of the monarchy and that the rulership of the Muslim community belonged to the jurisconsult.

It was in Najaf that most of Khomeini's ideas about

velayat-e faqih [the Guardianship of the Jurisconsult] were formulated in a series of lectures. In these lectures Khomeini vehemently rejected the idea of the separation of church and state and rationalized his advocacy of the guardianship of the just jurisconsult by theoretically equating, in terms of government functions, the role of the faqih with that of the Prophet and the Imams. The Prophets and the Imams are the true rulers of the community but who will guide the Muslims in their absence? He writes:

Perhaps the Imam of Times, may peace be upon him, will not appear for another 200 years. What do we know? We are unaware of the facts. Perhaps, God willing, he might even appear tomorrow. But if he does not appear until the end of time, as the Hadith [tradition] has it, then should not the Islamic principles be implemented until the Day of Judgment?"²⁰

Khomeini thus uses different hadiths [traditions] from the Prophet and the Imams to substantiate and confirm the role he advocates for the jurisconsult. Since there is a necessity for enactment of the law, i.e., for government which continues after the death of the Prophet, Islam must include a governmental system. But who is the best suited to rule? The Islamic ruler must have a thorough knowledge of divine law and be just.²¹ The Imams had these qualities but in the Great Occultation the best

candidate is the faqih [jurisconsult].

Khomeini also elaborated on the incompatibility of Shiism with monarchy and chastised the ulama for their quietism.²² Khomeini's most important contribution that was indeed a departure from tradition and an innovation was his insistence on the direct rule of the faqih [jurisconsult]. Many of the Shii theologians had considered the jurisconsult as the representative of the Imam but Khomeini moved this proposition one step further by contending that the faqih would not just be one high official among many but the supreme overseer and the guardian.²³

Khomeini's ideas regarding the legitimate form of government, however, do not solve the "problem" of diversity in a Muslim country such as Iran. To start with, he vehemently opposes the idea of nationalism. Nationalism to Khomeini, is an imperialist plot to sow discord among Muslims:

Nationalism that results in the creation of enmity between Muslims and splits the ranks of the believers is against Islam and interests of the Muslims. It is a stratagem concocted by the foreigners who are disturbed by the spread of Islam.²⁴

In his declarations, lectures, sermons and teachings Khomeini seems to see the Muslim world as one unit. He also emphasizes the dangers of Sunni-Shii split²⁵ and

propagates the exportation of the Islamic Revolution to liberate the Islamic lands. Indeed the Constitution of the Islamic Republic incorporates such stipulations as:

From the viewpoint of Islam, the government does not arise from the notion of classes and mediation among persons or groups but is a crystallization of political idealism based on religious community.....In regard to the Islamic contents of the Iranian Revolution, the Constitution provides the basis for trying to perpetuate the revolution both at home and abroad.²⁶

Principle 9 of the Constitution stipulates:

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, freedom, independence, unity and the territorial integrity of the country are inseparable from each other....No individual, or group or authority has the right to harm even slightly the political, cultural, economic, military and territorial independence of Iran by exploiting the name of freedom..²⁷

This article can be interpreted as denying the rights of ethno-linguistic groups to self-determination. At the same time Principles 12 and 15 recognize Shii Islam and Persian language as the official religion and language of Iran. Principle 15, however, allows for the use of local languages in the local media and schools along with Persian.²⁸

In 1979 the Ayatollah, himself, in an interview said:

Sometimes, the word minorities is used to refer to people such as the Kurds, Lors, Turks, Persians, Baluchis and such likes. These people should not be called minorities, because this term assumes that there is a difference between these brothers. In

Islam such a difference has no place at all. There is no difference between Muslims who speak different languages, for instance, the Arabs or the Persians. It is very probable that such problems have been created by those who do not wish the Muslim countries to be united....They create the issues of nationalism, of pan-Iranism, pan Turkish and such isms, which are contrary to Islamic doctrines. Their plan is to destroy Islam and the Islamic philosophy.²⁹

The above passage is a clear indication of the Ayatollah's political posture vis-a-vis various ethno-linguistic elements. Muslim community embraces one people only, the community of faithful. Thus, the Kurds, the Baluch, as well as other Sunni ethno-linguistic groups fall in the category of the "faithful" and are not distinguishable from the rest of the Iranian Muslims, i.e., Shii Persians and Azaris.

This view seems to be in keeping with the idea that for Khomeini territorial and/or ethno-linguistic aspects of a polity are not significant and it is ideology that is the building block of a society. One scholar writes:

...If political society, according to Khomeyni, is based on ideology and not on territory or politics, Khomeyni's understanding of the international system must be cast in terms of ideology as well.³⁰

Although various pronouncements by Khomeini and the foregoing do support such suggestion, in practice Khomeini's reactions to different situations have demonstrated that not only his understanding of politics

is based upon a modern nation-state framework, but he, himself, sometimes has behaved in a nationalistic manner which is in absolute contrast to his advocacy of the Muslim unity and solidarity. David Menashri provides another interesting example:

He [Khomeini] disregarded the demands of the United Arab Emirates for the return of the three islands captured by the Shah in 1971, insisted on the continued use of the name, the "Persian Gulf" (and even rejected Ayatollah Khalkhali's proposal to name it the 'Muslim Gulf'), and disqualified Jalal al-Din Farsi's candidacy for the presidency on the ground that his father had held an Afghan nationality, and that he was not of 'Iranian origin'..³¹

There is no doubt that the ideal-typical Islamic state has been and is very different from the Islamic state that Khomeini envisioned and was established in Iran. Khomeinism, like other ideologies, had to come to terms with realities of power. Undoubtedly, as a Shi'i jurisconsult the spirit of his messages about an Islamic government is universalist. All those authors who point out his emphasis on Islamic Umma [Islamic community] indeed are referring to this spirit. But like other utopian political leaders the Ayatollah too had to compromise with reality and its imperatives. As a leader of a nation-state he soon proved to be a representative of the implicit, unspoken but inevitable ideology inherent in the nation-state; i.e., he was transformed into a

nationalist, albeit Muslim, leader, thereby identifying more and more with those aspects of Islamic Revolution which were strongly "Iranian" and moving away from his previously stated all-inclusive, universalist Islamic umma.

In this light, Khomeini's reactions to the autonomy demands of various ethno-linguistic groups are more explicable. There is indeed little difference between the violent way which the Ayatollah and his regime dealt with communal demands and Reza Shah's methods of confrontation with centrifugal forces in Iran. What makes the Ayatollah resemble his secular military predecessor is the necessity of holding the nation-state together even through the use of violent force.

The Revolution was undoubtedly a long-awaited opportunity for ethno-linguistically diverse groups to demand autonomy. The reaction of the clerical regime was swift. The regime made it clear that it would not tolerate any autonomy movement. Indeed it was the rebellion of such groups as the Kurds and the Baluch that demonstrated the difference between theory and practice in Khomeini's approach.

AZARIS :

Not unlike the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-11, the Iranian Azaris, participated in the Revolution of 1978-79 in great numbers. Indeed the first and main revolt, in February of 1978, occurred in Tabriz and subsequently sparked other revolts in many Iranian cities.³²

The objectives of the Iranian Azaris were basically identical to those of the Persian-speaking population, i.e., the overthrow of the Shah's regime. Throughout the revolt, not one word about autonomy or communal sentiments was heard from Azarbaijan. The Azaris, as Shii Muslims, readily embraced the Shii symbols that predominated the revolt. Indeed such important leaders of the Revolution as Mehdi Bazargan were Azari themselves and many Azari religious students and the clergy participated in the Revolution. Bazargan was appointed as the first Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic by Khomeini himself.

Throughout the revolt many Azarbaijanis identified with Ayatollah Sharia'tmadari, an Azari jurisconsult, who was considered one of the most learned and important marja'-e taqlids [source of imitation] during the Shah and

who never actively opposed the regime. Sharia'tmadari, although joined the voice of the revolutionaries, kept his moderate and conciliatory posture throughout. Subsequent power struggle, however, between Khomeini and Sharia'tmadari and their respective followers led to Sharia'tmadari's eventual humiliation on the National Iranian Radio and Television.³³ It should be pointed out that the differences between Khomeini and Sharia'tmadari were not of ethno-linguistic or communal nature. It was a struggle for power that created the schism.

Sharia'tmadari, in the tradition of many Shii jurisconsults, had tacitly approved of the Shah's regime and in return was tacitly recognized as the Ayatollah al-Ozma [The Grand Ayatollah] and the marja'-e taqlid [source of imitation]. While many anti-regime activists supported Khomeini and considered him as the marja'-e taqlid, many others, particularly many Azaris, followed Sharia'tmadari. This was never a communal issue and there is no doubt that among the supporters of Khomeini one could find a great many Azaris.

Sharia'tmadari's approach to politics was much more modern than Khomeini's. Although Sharia'tmadari approved of the concept of an Islamic state, he believed that Islam should be adapted to the "requirements of modern

society."³⁴ There were also differences in the two men's understanding of such concepts as democracy and republic. While Shariatmadari's worldview was much more in tune with Western concepts, Khomeini's disdain for such concepts as democracy is well known.³⁵

More important, of course, was Khomeini's rhetorical pan-Islamism which contrasted the moderate views of Shariatmadari who regarded "Islam as the cohesive element of Iranian nationalism and the main instrument in the strengthening of Iran's national unity, as well as safeguarding its national sovereignty."³⁶ In the same light Shariatmadari defended the rights of ethnolinguistic minorities to self-rule. He, however, vehemently stressed the territorial integrity of Iran and even asked his Azari co-ethnics in 1979 to postpone their communal demands "until the government is fully stabilized."³⁷

The power struggle between the two factions eventually culminated in the Tabriz uprisings of December 1979.³⁸ These demonstrations and their eventual outcome proved the Islamic regime's capabilities in dealing with political instability. First and foremost the regime's use of force in Azarbaijan proved effective. Second, through propaganda, the regime was able to convince the

Azari masses, many of whom believed in Khomeini as their spiritual leader, that the discord is an imperialist and Zionist plot. And thirdly, the regime was able to arouse the historical and inherent inter-ethnic hostility between the Kurds and the Azaris to its advantage.

Although no explicit demands for local autonomy were put forward by these demonstrations, almost all of the groups who participated in the Revolution, opposed the upheaval in Azarbaijan. Even Qassemlu, the Secretary General of the KDPI (Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran) who was in the process of negotiation with the government on the issue of Kurdish autonomy, did not support the insurrection. The Kurds were apparently apprehensive that the fall of Khomeini's regime could bring to power a strong, nationalist faction who would prove detrimental to Kurdish aspirations. Of course, all these groups later regretted their naivete in initially supporting the regime.

The issue of Kurdish-Azari hostilities can best be illustrated by referring to an interview conducted by Fred Halliday with a group of Azari students in Iran. Their response to the question about regional autonomy was that while they liked the idea, "they could do without it - because if we get it then the Kurds will have to get it

too."³⁹

Sharia'tmadari and his followers were eventually silenced mainly because many Azaris supported the regime and more important than that a number of the clergy in the political leadership have been Azaris themselves. Ayatollah Khalkhali, the hangman of the regime, Sayyed Hassan Mousavi, the non-clerical former Prime Minister, Hojjat al-Islam Khamenei⁴⁰ who has now replaced Khomeini and occupies the position of the grand jurisconsult and many other important religious personalities are from Azarbaijan. The Revolution, suprisingly, demonstrated that a great number of religious students [tullab] and high clergy of Iran were indeed from Azarbaijan.⁴¹ The important Azari merchants of the Tabriz and Tehran Bazaars also wholeheartedly assisted and supported the regime.

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES AND A FORWARD LOOK:

One important factor in the Azari politics at this period was the conspicuous lack of leftist tendencies among Azaris. This, of course, does not mean that such propensities were non-existent. Many Azarbaijani students and modern intellectuals and intelligentsia, like their Persian counterparts, demonstrated such tendencies.

However, the non-pervasive aspects of leftist proclivities are particularly important. One of the reasons for such phenomenon may have been the prevalent crisis situation in the Soviet Union at the time. The Russians who usually had taken advantage of the weakness of the central government to occupy Azarbaijan and somehow meddle in Iranian affairs, had more important things such as Afghanistan and their own deteriorating economic conditions to worry about.

The Islamic Revolution in Iran, without a doubt, left a great impression on the Muslims of the Soviet Union. This impact was particularly strong on the Soviet Azaris who like their co-ethnics in Iran are Shiis.⁴² The feeling of solidarity, although strong among the Russian Azari intellectuals, was prevalent among the Azari rank and file as well. It was, however, the Soviet Azari intellectuals who began a campaign of communicating nationalistic messages to the "South."

Nissman writes that through radio, telephone⁴³, the mail and personal contacts "the message" was transmitted until 1982 when the government restricted such exchange. Of particular importance was the poetry exchange between Azari nationalist poets of the north and some Azari poets in the south, the most noteworthy of whom was Shahriar,

through Radio Baku Poetry Program.⁴⁴ It is interesting to note, that Shahriar, at the same time, was writing praise poetry for Imam Khomeini and the greatness and glory of the Islamic Republic!

The expression of unity and solidarity that was extended to the south by the Soviet Azaris was part of the larger process of consolidation of national identity in the Soviet Azarbaijan. By the time Islamic Revolution happened in Iran Soviet Azaris possessed a solid Azari Identity. The Soviet policies of encouragement of a national language and culture as well as the promotion of a national leadership had helped solidify national identity in every republic. One of the manifestations of this national consciousness was the desire to extend ethnic/national rights and privileges to the co-ethnics outside the home republics.⁴⁵ In the case of the Soviet Azaris this desire was expressed by emphasizing linguistic and cultural and thus national solidarity with the South, i.e., Iranian Azarbaijan. The extension of this feeling of nationhood to Iranian Azarbaijan entailed intense cultural and literary activity regarding the south on the part of the Soviet Azaris. The history of the South since its separation in 1828 was studied and the art and culture of Iranian Azarbaijan was regarded as one and the same

with that of the Russian Azarbaijan. Indeed interesting irredentist overtones in the expressions of nationalist aspirations by the Soviet Azaris -particularly the intellectuals- could be observed. Saroyan quotes the Director of the Nizami Institute of Azarbaijani Literature, Garaiev, contending:

Throughout history Azerbaijan has been parceled up many times. Three-fifth of its territory and its population have remained on that bank of Araz [Aras River that divides the two Azarbaijans]. This is a historical injustice..⁴⁶

To facilitate communication and exchange of literary activity between the two Azarbaijans, all students in the humanities and social science at Azarbaijan State University and Azarbaijani Knowledge Society are required to learn Azari in the Arabic script that is used in Iranian Azarbaijan⁴⁷ in order to eliminate the problem of access.

In the first few years after the Iranian Revolution there was a noticeable upsurge of fundamentalism with pan-Azarbaijani overtones in the Russian Azarbaijan that were also manifested in the riots over Nagorno-Karabakh, an Armenian enclave within the Azarbaijani territory that sought to be annexed to Armenia. The inter-ethnic hostilities and disturbances have continued and so far have had violent and tragic outcome that threatens the

political stability in the region. The nationalist aspects of the conflict are loud and clear enough to be heard in Iran and everywhere else.

Iranian authorities were initially quite uncomfortable with cries of nationalist aspirations and proclaimed that they would not interfere in the "Soviet internal affairs." They, however, agreed to facilitate travel across the border between the two Azarbaijans since one of the loudest grievances of the Soviet Azaris was the demand for opening the borders and easing of travel to Iranian Azarbaijan.⁴⁸ The dispatch of the Soviet army to Azarbaijan and the brutal pacification of the Soviet Azaris calmed the Republic temporarily until the demise of Communism in the Soviet Union.

The former Soviet Azaris now possess an independent state of their own. The Communist Party structures, however, are still well and alive in Azarbaijan with the old Communist leaders as reborn "democrats," waging anti-Communist campaigns! As the old party apparatus was restructured and reconsolidated, other forces - particularly Azari nationalists who organized Azarbaijan Popular Front- failed to attract mass support. The Armenian-Azari conflict, however, seems to be weakening the power of the old Communist functionaries and in the

long run might strengthen the Azari nationalist forces.

As for Iran, the leaders of the Islamic Republic initially did not show much enthusiasm in having new, independent states on Iran's northern borders. Although the crumbling of an "atheist empire" was a reason to rejoice, the consequences of the disintegration of the Russian empire indeed made things more complicated. Firstly Iran has a lot more to fear from an independent Azarbaijan. Northern Azaris with their implicit irredentism and frequent outbursts of nationalism may create instability in Iranian Azarbaijan. Secondly, Iran now has to compete with such states as Turkey and Saudi Arabia, not to mention the United States, for influence among the newly independent states on its northern borders. The competition with Turkey is particularly intense in Azarbaijan since Turkish influence in Azarbaijan will imply the strength of secular forces in that new state. The consequence of this competition has been a thaw in the relations between the two countries. The leaders of the Islamic Republic, however, have been quite pragmatic about the new situation and have gone out of their way to accommodate the state of Azarbaijan with offers of economic cooperation and cultural exchange. They have even proposed to help change the Cyrillic

alphabet used presently in Azarbaijan to Arabic in order to counter the Turkish proposal to help change the alphabet to Latin!

The Iranian Azaris, nonetheless, have been surprisingly calm. Their integration in the Iranian socio-political, economic and cultural structures and absence of discrimination in different institutions have given them high stakes in the future of Iran. The Shii character of the regime also has intensified the common denominators shared by Persian and Azari population and thus has helped narrow ethnic boundaries. At present, the Iranian Azaris are not even vocal about linguistic and cultural restrictions since there is more freedom in print and broadcasting in local languages. For example, the publications of an Azari version of an official newspaper in Tehran provoked the Kurdish demand for the same privilege that was not granted.⁴⁹ Indeed according to one anthropologist, Azari integration into the Iranian society has prompted some scholars "not to consider them a national minority."⁵⁰ This is probably not a very realistic view of the situation of the Azaris. It would be a mistake to allow Azari political and socio-economic integration obscure the fact that they have a separate and distinct identity. Ethnic identities are fluid and

flexible. As identities contract or expand depending on many external and internal forces, it is always possible to see the Iranian Azaris reclaim their national identity. However now that the Northern Azaris possess an independent state of their own, all developments in Northern Azarbaijan they will, undoubtedly, have a greater impact on the Southern Azaris. In the meantime, the Iranian state has to play a more active role to guarantee Azaris' continued loyalty to the state.

THE KURDS:

The Iranian Kurds actively participated in the Revolution of 1978-79 and for the duration of the Revolution the basic demand, like that of the Persians and Azaris, was the overthrow of the Pahlavi regime. The Kurdish revolt was organized and directed by indigenous groups and parties who had been underground during a greater part of the Pahlavi period. Among these the most important was KDPI [Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran] whose origins could be traced to the Committee of Kurdish Youth established in 1943. This committee was transformed into a political party in 1945 and it played a major role in the ill-fated Kurdish Republic of Mahabad in 1945-46.

After the fall of the Republic KDP with a membership of mostly Kurdish intellectuals and middle class nationalists had to go underground. During this period KDP of Iran began close ties with the Tudeh [Communist] Party and demonstrated a leftist orientation. The onslaught of the Pahlavi regime on the left took its toll on the Party and the surviving leaders eventually ended up in the Eastern Europe.

In the 1960s when Mulla Mostafa Barzani was engaged in violent clashes with the Iraqi regime many members of the KDP of Iran extended assistance. However, when the Shah began supporting Barzani, he returned the favor by helping the regime deal with the dissident Kurds of Iran. His betrayal of the Iranian Kurdish dissidents who were mostly leftist intellectuals made cooperation between different Iranian and Iraqi Kurdish factions difficult to this day.

KDPI became one of the most active political groups in Iran during the Revolution. With the return of its leadership from exile and the assistance of other elements within the country it was able to create an efficient organizational structure and attract grass roots support among the Kurds. The Secretary General of KDPI was Abdul Rahman Qassemlu, a Kurdish intellectual from feudal

background with Socialist tendencies whose return from exile was made possible after the Revolution. Another noteworthy group [Party] in Iranian Kurdistan was Komala [The Revolutionary Organization of Toiler of Kurdistan], a radical leftist group that was founded clandestinely in late 1960s or early 1970s. Komala's political orientation was initially Maoist but apparently after a revision its ideological orientation is described as "pure Marxism of the Albanian type."⁵¹ Also a charismatic Sunni cleric, Shaikh Ezzuddin Hosseini who has been sympathetic to Komala became a national figure among the Kurds. Hosseini due to his status as a religious man enjoyed the support of the rank and file of the Kurdish peasantry while his radicalism attracted many young, more educated and modern members of the Kurdish society.⁵²

Although the Kurds during the Revolution did not raise the autonomy demand, the weakening and eventual fall of the monarchy did create a de facto autonomy in the Kurdish inhabited areas of Iran.⁵³

With the fall of the regime, a new phenomenon appeared on the Kurdish political scene: class conflict. Many Kurdish landlords and tribal chiefs who had lost their lands to non-tribal Kurdish peasants due to the land reform program, returned to seize their lost lands by

force. The Kurdish non-tribal peasants with the help of the modern strata of the Kurdish society such as the intelligentsia as well as military assistance of Komala were able to defend themselves. Peasants unions were organized which in turn joined the Komala.⁵⁴ The KDPI that enjoyed mass support and also attracted tribal leadership, in many instances, had to play a mediatory role between the landlords and the peasantry. The landlords, on the other hand, were assisted and supported by the central government, revolutionary guards, etc. Also, the KDPI and the Komala both helped some peasants with land seizures.⁵⁵ The result was that "the Kurdish national cause and the cause of the peasantry against their oppressors became closely associated."⁵⁶

Soon both KDPI and Komala and other groups began voicing autonomy demands. The clerical regime, particularly in the beginning when it was still weak and not consolidated, tried to stall by negotiations. Among the spokesmen for the Kurds Qassemli, KDPI Secretary General and Shaikh Ezzudin Hosseini were the most prominent. The autonomy demands while stressing indivisibility of Kurdish areas from Iran, claimed that Kurdish inhabited areas include four provinces of Western Azarbaijan, Kurdistan, Kermanshahan [now Bakhtaran] and

Ilam. Autonomy was meant to imply self-rule within an undivided and sovereign Iranian state. Such matters as foreign policy, national defence, foreign trade and long-run economic planning would be the prerogatives of the central government. There were also other stipulations such as the employment of Kurds in the administration and military installations of Kurdish areas as well as the establishment of a Kurdish National Assembly that would be a legislative body elected by the Kurdish people through free elections that would entail secret balloting and universal suffrage. There were also stipulations regarding the use of Kurdish in educational and administrative institutions.⁵⁷

These demands, of course, were rejected by the government which led to a series of violent and bloody confrontations that lasted until 1983 when the government eventually was able to pacify most of Iranian Kurdistan. It is obvious that the notion of self-rule was opposed to the ideological and political perceptions of Khomeini and his followers. The regime was not only apprehensive that such autonomy would be a first step to total independence or secession, it was aware of the demonstration effects of such event. Thus parallel to the use of the revolutionary guards and the regular army, the regime attempted to take

advantage of the latent Kurdish-Turkish hostility. In Western Azarbaijan, Azaris attacked a meeting of KDPI and soon the conflict was transformed into a full-fledged warfare in which both groups suffered immensely.⁵⁸ In the meantime, the government tried to sow discord among the Kurds by promoting a Kurdish cleric, Ahmad Moftizadeh, who did not enjoy much legitimacy, as the Kurdish leader recognized by the center. Such organizations as KDPI and Komala were outlawed and figures such as Shaikh Ezzudin Hosseini were proclaimed as the enemies of the Revolution by the Ayatollah. ⁵⁹

The breakout of the Iran-Iraq War injected another element into the conflict. The Kurds who occupy border regions of the Western Iran were called upon by the government to cease hostility and assist the government to resist the "imperialist" onslaught. It was hoped by placating some Sunni clerics from Kurdistan and promises of resource allocation, Kurdish insurrection could be checked. None of these measures succeeded since most of these religious figures were not representative of the Kurdish masses and there was no specific plan in the development projects for the Kurdish areas.⁶⁰

The War complicated an already complex political conflict. We have mentioned that the Kurdish movement in

Iraq led by Mulla Mostafa Barzani came to an end with the signing of the Algiers Agreement between the Shah and Saddam Hossein. The War prompted Khomeini's regime to employ Barzani's sons, Idris and Mas'ud and their KDP [Kurdish Democratic Party of Iraq] in military confrontations with Iraq. The Iraqis, in turn, used different Kurdish [and non-Kurdish] dissident groups, particularly KDPI and Komala against Iran. The Barzanis together with Iran's revolutionary guards eventually pacified most of Iranian Kurdistan by 1983.⁶¹

These alliances, undoubtedly, have left great impressions on the Kurdish psyche. The fratricidal warfare was not limited to conflict between the Kurds in different countries. Tragically different Kurdish groups within one country have engaged in military confrontations. In Iraq, for example, the bloody clashes between KDP of Iraq headed by Mas'ud Barzani and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan headed by Jalal Talebani, a more intellectual and ideologically leftist oriented individual, as well as clashes between other smaller groups, have made the idea of a united and coherent Kurdish national movement seem absurd.

In Iran the ideological differences between the KDPI and the Komala and the fact that each group represents

different social strata have made their cooperation, at times, difficult. While KDPI mostly represents middle and upper strata of the Kurdish society, the Komala has attempted to focus on the peasantry and particularly the workers. Komala's emphasis on class consciousness, not only in Kurdistan but in the rest of Iran, has made its cooperation with other leftist organizations possible. In 1983-84, Komala merged with the Communist Party of Iran thus becoming its military wing in Kurdistan.⁶² The KDPI also has had to deal with ideological differences within the Party. Indeed since 1979 the party has gone through different crises that have led to schism, the latest of which is the emergence of a new group, the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran -Revolutionary Leadership- with a purely Marxist outlook.⁶³ Among all these groups the KDPI itself seems to have been the strongest and the most popular. However, the most severe setback to the KDPI came in June 1989 when Qassemlu, its leader, was assassinated as he was negotiating with the Islamic Republic's representatives. Qassemlu, a shrewd and highly educated intellectual with leadership capabilities will be difficult to replace.

In an interview with an Iranian Kurdish scholar who had just returned from Iran, he maintained that the

Kurdish inhabited areas of Iran are under strict military control by the government. As an example of the lack of legitimacy of the clerical regime, he mentioned that in one town he visited, the local cleric appointed by the center could not even attend the Friday prayers unless he was accompanied by at least a dozen revolutionary guards to protect him. He also mentioned that to a visitor it would seem as if the revolutionary guards and the military personnel outnumber the Kurds themselves in these areas! The government, he maintained, out of necessity and due to the strategic significance of these areas [border areas adjacent to Iraq and Turkey] has had to build a communication and transportation infra-structure that was non-existent during the Pahlavi period. For the same political reasons broadcasting and print in Kurdish are allowed. Kurdish publications have, particularly, flourished and are growing. Amir Hassanpour, in his excellent study of the standardization of Kurdish language, maintains that the main objective of the Islamic regime in its "rather relaxed" policy regarding Kurdish "print" and "broadcasting" has been to attract the Kurdish secular nationalists who were audiences to the media output of the autonomist organizations based in the "liberated areas."⁶⁴ Hassanpour also contends that the

officialization of the Persian script that did not exist during the Pahlavi period is meant to prevent any attempt by the Kurds or other ethno-linguistically distinct groups to alter their alphabets to enable themselves to have cultural discourse with their kin in other countries.⁶⁵ In the meantime, although in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic freedom of education in native languages [along with Persian, of course] is stipulated, the Islamic regime has yet to allow such freedom. Thus educational institutions and bureaucracy are restricted to utilize only Persian and the use of other languages in such institutions are forbidden.

My Kurdish source also informed me that urbanization has dramatically increased in Iranian Kurdish areas. The dislocation of the Pahlavi agricultural policies and particularly the misery of the War have simply emptied and wiped out many villages. The following statistical data certainly demonstrate the damage inflicted by the War:

<u>Province</u>	<u>Existing Villages</u>	<u>Damaged</u>	<u>%Damaged</u>
Bakhtaran	2764	341	12.3
Kurdestan	1929	1244	64.5

W. Azarbaijan	3179	1705	53.6	66
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Urbanization has accelerated the pace of detribalization. However, there is no reason to believe that loyalty to the state has replaced previous and more parochial loyalties. My Kurdish source stressed the fact that a consciousness of being a "Kurd" is without a doubt replacing tribal loyalties.

The Kurds are indeed the most politicized of all groups in Iran today. However, internal strife and fragmentation has systematically prevented a coherent movement to appear among them. This is not just a predicament of the Iranian Kurds. In fact in Iraq, the Kurdish political leaders, particularly the tribal elite, are partly responsible for the plight of the Iraqi Kurds. The details of the Iraqi Kurdish dilemma are beyond of scope of our discussion. Suffice it to say that the Iraqi Kurdish elite -both tribal and intellectual- have at times deliberately torpedoed historical opportunities that could have led to at least Kurdish self-rule in Iraq. It is believed that Mulla Mostafa Barzani and after him many other Kurdish tribal leaders have been opposed to the social restructuring of the Kurdish society.⁶⁷ Such policies as land reform and more egalitarian social

structures would be destroying the foundations of the power and status of the tribal leaders. This has been one of the fundamental reasons for the conflict between the Kurdish intellectuals and the tribal elite.

In Iran the situation has been more or less the same with one exception, that the Kurdish intellectuals as political leaders have had more success attracting grass roots support. There is no doubt that the Pahlavi policies created social change among the Iranian Kurds; however, such political organizations as the KDPI and the Komala have been instrumental in raising Kurdish ethnic and class consciousness particularly after the Revolution and the onset of clashes with the Islamic regime. At the same time, the state has directly been responsible for the emergence of the conflict. By continuing the Pahlavi repressive policies as well as non-recognition of Kurdish legitimate leaders and by unleashing brutal military force on the community, the regime has destroyed any possibility of reconciliation. Thus at the moment military control is the only means of keeping Iranian Kurdish inhabited areas in check.

External Influences and a Forward Look:

It seems that the Kurds are not only easily manipulated by external forces, they readily lend themselves to such manipulation. Since the Kurds are divided among more than four countries, complex situations can emerge, some examples of which have already been referred to.

As we have noted the propensity to play the role of a buffer or mercenaries for stronger paymasters has been part of the political culture among the Kurdish tribal elite. Considering the perpetual conflicts, jealousies, rivalries and betrayals between Kurdish traditional leaders, it is not surprising that tribal warlords have been willing to sell their services to the highest bidders in the name of Kurdish nationalism. The interesting point is that even Kurdish intellectual leaders when caught in such dangerous games, behave exactly in the same way as their tribal counterparts.

The sixteenth century when the Kurds played the Safavids and the Ottomans against each other was perhaps a less complicated period. During the 20th century the Iranian Kurds have allied with the Iraqis against the

Iranian central governments while Iraqi Kurds have sought Iranian support against various Iraqi regimes. The Soviet Union and the United States as well as the Israelis all have become involved in Kurdish affairs once or twice. The Iraqi Kurdish dissidents live in Tehran while Iranian Kurdish nationalists have had their headquarters in Iraq. Turkey uses air raids against northern Kurds of Iraq⁶⁸ with the tacit agreement of Iran while the Iraqi Kurds also depend on Iran for sustenance! Amidst all this, the internecine hostility between different Kurdish factions continues to take its toll among the innocent Kurdish civilians. In such circumstances even consciousness of a common Kurdish identity is not going to help an ideologically and socially fragmented people.

In the meantime, the Gulf War in which Iraqi forces were driven out of Kuwait brought more misery to the Kurds. The dramatic weakening of the central authority in Iraq, as usual, prompted the Kurds to rise and attempt to realize their dream of autonomy or independence hoping that the United States will assist them. However, as such assistance was not forthcoming, millions of Kurds under heavy artillery and fearful of chemical and biological weapons had to flee to the mountains of Turkey and Iran. Again, the Kurds had to face the bitter realities of

international politics. The creation of an independent Kurdish entity and the interests of the states who dominate the region are mutually exclusive. Indeed none of the three states of Iran, Iraq and Turkey will ever acquiesce in the independence of their Kurdish subjects. Such mortal enemies as Iran and Iraq would easily unite to quell the danger of the emergence of an independent political entity in their Kurdish inhabited areas. The only superpower actively involved in the region at present is the United States and the most the U.S. would do is to protect the Kurds from the deadly onslaught of the Iraqi forces and even that is not guaranteed. As a consequence the Kurdish leaders seem to have come to terms with the realities of power politics and more and more they emphasize Kurdish autonomy within undivided states of Iran, Iraq or Turkey. Considering the nature of the regimes in power in these countries it is doubtful whether such autonomy would ever be granted.

As to the Iranian Kurds the future is not very bright. As long as the Iranian central authority -whether Islamic or secular- is determined to monopolize power, the state will have to resort to force to control Iranian Kurdish areas as it has done for the past decade.

THE BALUCH:

Throughout the Revolution the Iranian Baluch were in a wait and see state of mind. The Sardars and those political leaders who had supported the Shah's regime were apprehensive and mostly fled for their lives. The small Baluch middle class and other urbanized Baluch had legitimate concerns over the overwhelmingly sectarian orientation of the emerging state in Iran. The rank and file of the agriculturalists and the nomads continued as before, oblivious to the cultural and socio-political transformation around them.

The Revolution had devastating effects on the economy of Baluchistan. Many Baluch who worked in a few government and/or privately owned or sponsored companies, established in the late 70s in Baluchistan, lost their jobs and joined the ranks of the already unemployed. By the time the Islamic regime was in place there was not a "single production center" in Baluchistan. This rampant unemployment had given rise to a sweeping smuggling activity and highway robbery among the Baluch. The Baluch who, as nomads, used to engage in robbery to supplement their subsistence, did not consider this stealing. The

insecurity of roads also affected many Baluch shopkeepers who could not restock or find customers. It is estimated that at the time some 70% of the Baluch engaged in smuggling "weapons, beverages, narcotics, foreign made consumer and luxury items, etc."⁶⁹ It is interesting that the slogan most used among the Baluch during the Revolution was "Job, House, Freedom."⁷⁰

As we noted in the previous chapter, the Pahlavi period had the important effect of increasing the power and prestige of Baluch religious leaders. The Shii character of the new regime helped enhance this aspect of Baluch political scene. Now, the Baluch Sunni religious leaders became the power brokers and the intermediary between the Baluch and the central government. They were able to readily assume their new role partly due to the political vacuum left by the fleeing Baluch elite who had supported the ancien regime.

On the other hand, the emphasis of the new regime on the Shii character of Iran and its recognition in the Constitution helped foster communal demands in Iranian Baluchistan. The Iranian Baluch who for a few decades had been quiescent and complied with the Shah's regime, suddenly rose up and demanded autonomy. It is interesting to note that the Baluch unleashed their anger and

frustrations against their Sistani neighbours. The Sistanis are a Persian-speaking, Shii group who live in the province and are socio-economically more prosperous than the Baluch. This episode was indeed a remarkable manifestation of "relative deprivation." There is no doubt that the Baluch's perception of their worth as a group was determined by reference to the group closest to them, i.e., the Sistanis.⁷¹ The clashes between the two groups eventually resulted in the intervention by the central government on the side of the Sistanis.⁷²

As a result of these upheavals a number of Baluch religious leaders emerged among whom Maulavi Abdol Aziz should be mentioned. Maulavi Abdol Aziz with the support of the local aristocratic elite as well as the lesser clergy founded the Islamic Unity Party [hezb-e ittehad-e Muslemin]. Under the banner of this party, Maulavi Abdul Aziz and his group declared their demands. In an interview, the Baluch religious leader proclaimed: "we are not secessionists. And it is not in our interests to be independent in all fields. Our goal is to see that the Baluchis make their own decisions in cultural and political fields, instead of being forced to accept decisions made in Tehran. We want to choose our own Governors General, Governors, and administrators [although

not our military officials]. That is what the Baluchis mean by autonomy."⁷³

This was probably the most clearly articulated Baluch demands for self-rule. As Khomeini sent emissaries back and forth, it soon became clear that the Islamic regime was essentially following the footsteps of the Pahlavi Shahs. The appointed Governors of the province have been Persian and, as the case has been with other groups, the Constitutional stipulations regarding teaching of local languages alongside Persian were disregarded. Broadcast and print in Baluchi are allowed. However, the Baluchi language needs a suitable environment to be developed and standardized and such environment is unfortunately absent in Iran.

The Islamic regime, eventually, through coercion and recognition of a new group of local leaders succeeded to calm Iranian Baluchistan. Like Kurdish inhabited areas Iranian Baluchistan is also under tight military control. Although most smugglers are now executed there is no reason to believe this has affected the rampant smuggling activities among the Baluch rank and file who are probably living in as miserable a condition as they ever did. Kamal al-Din Qorab, whose book [in Persian] on Baluchistan was published in 1985, contends that Iranian Baluchistan

is the opium and heroin paradise of Iran and that 90% of the population earn their livings by smuggling. He adds that the number of doctors in the rural areas of the province is 54 and 94% of the villages lack health facilities.⁷⁴

While most of the middle and entrepreneurial class in Zahedan [capital of Iranian Baluchistan] is non-Baluch, the very small urban-based middle class who emerged in the 1970s, spearheaded the revolt of 1979-80. This class who is quite conscious of its distinct identity and aspires for self-rule is in proximity and contact with its Persian neighbours and undoubtedly feel the humiliation of an inferior status in both bureaucratic and educational institutions. Also the small number of Baluch civil administrators do not enjoy the same benefits, privileges and status as their Persian counterparts while almost all of the military and para-military personnel installed in Baluchistan are non-Baluch.⁷⁵

The situation of the nomadic and agriculturalists of Baluchistan is somehow different. This segment of the population is so remote and insulated that it is truly a separate world by itself. They live in the most primitive and poor conditions and, it is believed, resort to smuggling in order to survive. Almost all sources on

Baluchistan contend that the reasons for rampant smuggling is abject poverty. Qorab who talked to many peasants writes that almost everyone in the remote areas lack an "identification card" which is a vitally important piece of paper in the Islamic Republic. His conversations with a number of peasants is revealing:

- "Q: What is your staple food?

- A: Dry Bread.

- I thought they are exaggerating. I asked: let's say we would be your guests. What kind of food would you offer us, dry bread?

- Somebody said: yogurt. Rich people eat yogurt.

- I asked I mean something cooked. What do you cook to eat?

- They answered: pepper broth!

- Q: what is that?

- A: water, pepper, salt, oil, cumin seeds, all mixed.

Qorab continues that "everyone around us was illiterate except an eleven year old boy who said he has finished the 4th grade. My friend asked him do you know there has been a revolution? Do you know our country is at war? Do you know with whom our country is fighting?

- A: Yes. We Know. With America.

- Q: What/who is America?

- A: Well, I have not met him yet. I don't know him."

The above conversations are not only indicative of the rampant poverty and backwardness in Iranian Baluchistan, they explain why consciousness of ethnic/national identity among the Baluch has been mostly a middle class phenomenon. Hungry people have more important things to worry about than the idea of national solidarity.

Even the Baluch middle class has not been able to establish political organizations of the kind existing in Iranian Kurdistan. Most nationalist Baluch usually aspire to membership in the Pakistani Baluch organizations.

The Islamic regime, however, has been successful in placing a cap on the political turmoil in Baluchistan both by recognition of its religious leadership as the new interlocutors and by sheer military presence. For the dominant group, the Baluch are nothing but a nuisance; a group who potentially can offer nothing to the central government but be a burden. The notion of power-sharing is absolutely absurd in a situation where there is such a great imbalance between the center and the periphery.

The Baluch although have moved further ahead in the direction of ethnic consciousness are still lacking sufficient solidarity to be able to confront the Persians.

Moreover the Persian-Azari dominated state is stronger and more omnipotent than ever. Modern technology which enables the state to fend off external aggression, enables it to easily crush the internal disturbances. The Baluch with their relatively smaller population, their nascent middle class and intelligentsia and their isolated and marginal mass of peasantry and nomadic population are no match for the sophisticated civil and military organizations of the modern state.

The consequences of such backwardness and neglect in Baluchistan has been the Baluch unequal status vis-a-vis the Persians. Nothing indicates more sharply the extent of differential treatment than the behavior by the so-called law-enforcement agents in Baluchistan. During the Pahlavi era the gendarmes and at present the revolutionary guards have the legitimate right to the use of violence. Naser Askari writes that during the Pahlavi period the gendarmes were so hated and feared that whenever a mother needed to punish her mischivous child she would say "I am going to call the gendarme."⁷⁶

All this has created a segregated situation. The Baluch have been a distant minority who have been and may permanently stay in a segregated minority position. The Shi'i stress of the Islamic regime has made the Baluch

emphasize their Sunni institutions much to the chagrin of the regime who actively seeks conversion. They have also persisted on retaining their language and been endogamous. The emerging Baluch middle class and educated youth, however, are aspiring a better life. The demand for autonomy will not go away. Thus the military presence of the state will be continued.

External Influences and a Forward Look:

Some external factors have acted as elements of change in Iranian Baluchistan. Since 1970s many Iranian Baluch have found their way into the Persian Gulf city-states in search of employment. They usually come back to Baluchistan with money, some luxury items to sell and new ideas. The Gulf connection, however, has been more influential for Baluch of Pakistani origins who have been active in Oman playing mercenaries for Sultan Qabus⁷⁷ and advocating support for Baluch national movement in Pakistan.⁷⁸

The Arab, particularly Iraqi, enthusiasm for the cause of the Iranian Baluch increased after the success of the Revolution in Iran and the Ayatollah's attempts to export the Revolution. There is no evidence the Arab or

Iraqi connection which is being supported by a businessman of Baluch origin in Bahrain⁷⁹ has had any real effects in Iranian Baluchistan. At present with the demise of Iraq and the Soviet Union and a more moderate foreign policy in Iran, the Baluch of Iran cannot depend on the Arab support for their national cause. The Gulf connection, however, will be a dynamic factor that will help enhance Baluch consciousness.

Another factor is, of course, the existence of co-ethnics in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Although many Iranian Baluch freely travel to Pakistani and Afghan Baluch inhabited areas and it is said that some actually carry passports belonging to these countries,⁸⁰ this interaction has failed to create a significant national organization in both Iran and Afghanistan. In Iran, the small Baluch nationalists look toward the Pakistani Baluch national movement which at times have been united with the national movement of the Pakistani Pathans [Pushtuns].⁸¹ The Baluch national movement in Pakistan has gone through ebbs and flows and is relatively dormant at present. The Pakistani Baluch, however, with their larger numbers, their much larger middle class and their leftist-oriented tribal leaders have presented themselves as a formidable force. The impacts, however, on the Iranian Baluch have

not been remarkable.

Much has been said about the Soviet designs for Baluchistan. The Soviets did indeed consider Baluchistan as a way station to the warm waters of the Indian Ocean. But now that there is no more a Soviet Union and the possibility of such aggression is nil, the Baluch leaders, particularly those of Pakistani Baluchistan, will have to come to terms with the new political realities. The Soviet Union was once considered a potential threat to the political stability of the region. Now that such threat is eliminated and the hopes of radical Baluch nationalists for Soviet assistance can not be realized, the Baluch leaders have more reasons for a conciliatory posture vis-a-vis the state either in Pakistan or Iran. At the same time the Gulf War made the United States the uncontested superpower with a visible presence in the area. The United States, however, supports the status quo and the political stability of most of the states in the region. It is thus highly unlikely that the United States would support a Baluch nationalist uprising unless such support could weaken a potentially adversarial state. There is thus no indication that the situation of the Baluch, both in Iran and Pakistan, will drastically change in near future.

* * * *

This chapter examined the emergence of the Islamic Republic and its impact on the relations between the state and the three groups under study. The advent of the Islamic Republic entailed dramatic change in the socio-political and cultural structures of Iran. Indeed as all facets of life were affected by the integration of political and religious institutions, a new state ideology was forged that claimed legitimacy from a completely different source. This new ideology that rejected secularism, Westernism, and other such concepts as democracy, was based on an Islamic/Shii worldview, a view that considered all Muslims as members of a universal community, the community of faithful.

Ayatollah Khomeini, as the ideologue and the leader of the Revolution, had very specific and clear ideas about "political integration" in an Islamic society such as Iran. As the Muslim World is one unit and all Muslims, despite their sectarian divisions, are one people, such approaches to politics as nationalism is nothing but an imperialist plot to divide the Muslims. In this context the communal and parochial aspirations and demands of Muslim but ethno-linguistically distinct groups become irrelevant. Thus in a Shii dominated Iran, Sunni Muslims

cannot be considered "minorities" because they are an integral part of the larger Islamic community.

The practical application of this view, however, has proven to be less than perfect. The Islamic state as soon as its inception acquired the trappings of a modern nation-state form and the Ayatollah, himself, behaved as an Iranian/Persian nationalist. Indeed it soon became clear that the universalist aspects of the state ideology was mostly summed up in the idea of exporting the Revolution and within the boundaries of Iran a centralized and authoritarian system based on the hegemony of one group was in place.

The state, thus, vehemently resisted any attempt by various ethnic groups to win autonomy or self-rule. In this light, one can, again, observe a clear continuity between the policies adopted by the Islamic state and its predecessor, the monarchical Pahlavi state. Like the Shah, the Islamic regime also utilized a "carrot and stick" policy but, the Islamic state has shown a much stronger proclivity to use the "stick" as the case of the Kurds clearly demonstrates. In the meantime, it is not known to what extent the Islamic regime has tried to recruit the local political leaders. The Shii Persian and Azari religious/political elite seem to have been

reluctant to share power both at the local and national levels.

It is thus clear that the Islamic or religious nature of the state did not weaken the "nation-state" form in Iran since the universalist Islamic state failed to emerge. At the same time, the nature of the relations between the state and different ethnic groups remained the same although the state experienced drastic changes in ideology and different structures.

NOTES

- 1- For a comprehensive treatment of all these see:
Amouzegar, Jahangir. 1991. The Dynamics of the Iranian Revolution: The Pahlavis' Triumph and Tragedy. Albany: State university of New York Press. PP. 23-79.
- 2- Najmabadi, Afsaneh. 1987. "Depoliticization of a Rentier State: The Case of Pahlavi Iran." In The Rentier State, ed. Hamzeh Beblawi and Giacomo Luciani. London: Croom Helm. P. 214.
- 3- Ibid. P. 224.
- 4- See for details: Ashraf, Ahmad. and Ali Banuazizi. 1985. "The State, Classes and Modes of Mobilization in the Iranian Revolution." State, Culture and Society 1. P. 25.
- 5- Ibid.
- 6- Pahlavi, Mohammad Reza Shah. 1974. Mission For My Country. London: Hutchinson. P. 49.
- 7- Harrison, Selig. In Afghanistan's Shadow. PP. 158-159.
- 8- See for details: Bill, James A. 1972. The Politics of Iran. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Co. PP. 60-62.
- 9- See for details: Savory, Roger M. 1980. Iran Under the Safavids. New York: Cambridge University Press; and idem. 1970. The Cambridge History of Iran, ed. P.M. Holt, Ann K.S. Lambton and Bernard Louis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P. 398. See also Amir Arjomand, S. 1979. "Religion, Political Action and Legitimate Domination in Shi'ite Iran: Fourteenth to Eighteenth Centuries A.D." Archives Europeennes de Sociologie 20.
- 10- Ibid.
- 11- See for details: Algar, H. 1980. Religion and State in Iran, 1785-1906. Berkeley: University of California Press. P. 19.
- 12- See for details: Keddie, Nikki R. 1966. Religion and Rebellion in Iran: The Iranian Tobacco Protest of 1891-1892. London: Frank Cass.
- 13- It is argued, by some scholars, that one of the most important reasons that the clergy actively participated in the revolt was mere self-interest. The Qajar state had embarked upon policies that would infringe on Ulama's political and socio-economic prerogatives. See, for example: Floor, William M. 1980. "The Revolutionary

Character of the Iranian Ulama: Wishful Thinking or Reality?" International Journal of Middle East Studies 12. PP. 501-502.

14- Compiled from the date in: Akhavi, Shahrough. 1980. Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran: Clergy-State Relations in the Pahlavi Period. Albany: State University of New York Press. P. 97.

15- See Ibid., chs. III and IV.

16- Ibid. See also the tables in the Appendix.

17- Fischer, M. 1980. Iran: From Religious Dispute to Revolution. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. PP. 77.

18- Eliash, Joseph. 1979. "Misconceptions Regarding the Juridical Status of the Iranian Ulama." International Journal of Middle East Studies 10. P. 24.

19- Khomeini, Ruhollah. n.d. Kashf al-Asrar [To Discover Secrets]. Tehran. PP. 183-185.

20- Khomeini, Ruhollah. 1981. Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini. Trans. Hamid Algar. Berkeley: Mizan Press. P.62.

21- Ibid.

22- Ibid. P. 145.

23- Enayat, Hamid. 1983. "Iran: Khumayni's Concept of the 'Guardianship of the Jurisconsult.'" In Islam in the Political Process, ed. James P. Piscatori. New York. P.

161.

24- Khomeini, Islam and Revolution.. P 302.

25- Ibid.

26- The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Trans. Rouhollah K. Ramazani. 1980. Middle East Journal 34. P. 185.

27- Ibid., p. 190.

28- Ibid.

29- Menashri, David. 1982. "The Shah and Khomeini: Conflicting Nationalisms." Crossroads 8. P. 65.

30- Rejaii, Farhang. 1983. Islamic Values and World View: Khomeyni on Man, the State and International Politics. Lantham: University Press of America. P. 77.

31- Menashri, David. 1980. "Shi'ite Leadership: In the Shadow of Conflicting Ideologies." Iranian Studies XIII. P. 131.

32- For details see: Fischer, Micheal J. 1980. Iran: From Religious Dispute to Revolution. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press. P. 195.

33- For details on the differences between Khomeini and

- Sharia'tmadari see: Menashri, David. "Shi'ite Leadership..." PP. 119-145.
- 34- Ibid. PP. 127-128.
- 35- Ibid.
- 36- Ibid. P. 130.
- 37- Ibid., p. 131.
- 38- For details on this event see: Arani, Sharif. 1980. "The Iranian Revolution: Year Zero." Dissent 27. PP. 146-148.
- 39- Halliday, Fred. 1979. "Revolt of the Largest Minority." New Statesman 98. P, 929.
- 40- Khamenei is born in Mashhad, Khorasan province to an Azari family from the town of Khameneh in Azarbaijan.
- 41- Even during the Shah's period Azari religious students constituted the largest numbers in Qum Madrassas [religious schools]. Their number of 1,118 was by far the largest, in 1975, compared to the number of religious students originated from other provinces. See: Fischer, M.J. From Religious Dispute to Revolution. P. 79.
- 42- For details on the persistence of religious institutions in AzarbaijanSSR see: Nissman, David. 1983. "Iran and Soviet Islam: The Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan SSRs." Central Asian Survey II. PP. 45-60.
- 43- Direct telephone communication was restored after the success of Revolution in Iran.
- 44- Nissman, David. The Soviet Union and Iranian Azarbaijan. PP. 70-71.
- 45- For details see: Saroyan, Mark. 1988. "Beyond the Nation-State: Culture and Ethnic Politics in Soviet Transcaucasia." Soviet Union/Union Sovietique 15. P. 227.
- 46- Ibid. P. 238.
- 47- Ibid. P. 239.
- 48- See : "The Other Country with Some Awkward Azeris." The Economist January 20, 1990.
- 49- This information was conveyed to me by Professor Ali Banuazizi.
- 50- Beck, Lois. 1990. "Tribes, and the State in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Iran." In Tribe and State Formation in the Middle East. Berkeley: University of California Press. P. 212.
- 51- Entesar, Nader. "The Kurdish Mosaic of Discord." Third World Quarterly 11. P. 88.
- 52- Menashri. David. 1978-79. "Iran." Middle East Contemporary Survey 3. P. 527.

- 53- See for details: O'Ballance, Edgar. 1988. The Gulf War. London: Brassey's Defence Publishers. PP. 132-133.
- 54- Van Bruinessen, Martin. "Kurdish Tribes and Simko's Revolt." PP. 394-5.
- 55- Bakhsh, Shaul. 1989. "The Politics of Land, Law, and Social Justice in Iran." Middle East Journal 43. PP. 186-188.
- 56- Van Bruinessen, Martin. "Kurdish Tribes...." P. 395.
- 57- See: Ettela'at. December, 29, 1979. Draft of the Kurdish delegation on Kurdish autonomy.
- 58- "Iran's Kurds Autonomy or Else." April 28, 1979. The Economist 271. P. 69.
- 59- See for details: MacDonald, Charles G. 1988. "The Kurdish Question in the 1980s." In Ethnicity, Pluralism and the State in the Middle East, ed. Milton J. Esman and Itamar Rabinovich. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. P. 243.
- 60- Menashri, David. 1982--83. "Iran." Middle East Contemporary Survey 7. PP. 536-537.
- 61- For details see: Van Bruinessen, Martin. "The Kurds Between Iran and Iraq." PP. 14-15.
- 62- Alaolmolki, Nozar. 1987. "The New Iranian Left." The Middle East Journal 41. PP. 230-232.
- 63- Entesar, Nader. "The Kurdish Mosaic of Discord." P. 90.
- 64- Hassanpour, Amir. 1991. "State Policy On the Kurdish Language: The Politics of Status planning." Kurdish Times 4. P. 68.
- 65- Ibid.
- 66- Amirahmadi, Hooshang. 1988. "War Damage and Reconstruction in the Islamic Republic of Iran." In Post-Revolutionary Iran, ed. Hooshang Amirahmadi and Manoucher Parvin. Boulder: Westview Press. P. 128.
- 67- See, for example, Pelletiere, Stephen C. 1991. "The Kurds and Their Agas: An Assessment of the Situation in Northern Iraq." PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College. P. 8.
- 68- See for details: "Ekhtelaf-e rahbaran-e Kurdhay-e iraqi shaddat yaft." [Increasing Disagreement among Iraqi Kurdish Leaders]. November 8, 1991. Iran Times XXI. P. 3.
- 69- "Baluchistan: Its Political Economy and History." 1980. RIPEH IV. P. 82.
- 70- Ibid.

- 71- For a detailed analysis of relative deprivation theory see: Aberle, David F. 1962. "A Note on Relative Deprivation Theory." In Millennial Dreams in Action Essays in Comparative Study, ed. Sulvia L. Thrupp. The Hague: Mouton. PP. 209-214.
- 72- Gupte, Pranay. 1979. "Reporter's Notebook: Ethnic Unrest in Iran." New York Times December 27. P. 12.
- 73- "Baluchistan..." RIPEH. P. 75.
- 74- Qorab, Kamal al-Din. 1364/1985. Baluchistan: yadegar-e matrud-e garn. PP. 87-95.
- 75- Qorab writes that they are mostly from the cities of Isfahan, Bam, Bandar Abbas and Kerman. Ibid. P. 126.
- 76- Askari, Naser. Mogadameh-i bar shenakht-e... P. 115.
- 77- For details see: Harriso, Selig. In Afghanistan's Shadow. P. 120.
- 78- For details see: Amin, Tahir. 1988. Ethno-National Movements of Pakistan: Domestic and International Factors. Islamabad: Institute of Policy Studies. P. 155.
- 79- Harrison, Selig. In Afghanistan's Shadow. PP. 123-125.
- 80- Askari, Naser. Mogadameh-e bar shenakht-e.....
- 81- See for details: Baloch, Inayatullah. 1980. "Afghanistan, Pashtunistan, Baluchistan." Aussenpolitik 31. PP. 283-301.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

This study has been an attempt to examine the relations between the Iranian state and three ethnic groups -Azaris, Kurds and Baluch- over three periods of Iranian history. The Qajar period represented the traditional political structure while that of the Pahlavis' a modernizing/modern one. The period since the emergence of the Islamic Republic was also analyzed in order to understand whether the drastic change in the socio-political structures and in the state ideology helped change the relationship between these groups and the state.

an important aspect of this study has been the examination of this relationship at several critical periods in the political history of the country, periods during which the central government had been weakened or was otherwise undergoing significant changes. These critical periods are the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911, the two World War periods, the oil nationalization crisis of early 1950s, the collapse of the Pahlavi regime and the triumph of the Revolution and the advent of the Islamic Republic.

For each period, the general political background was

described while subsequently each group's particular relationship with the state and its response to the state's policies was examined. Since all the three groups are trans-border groups, the impact of the inter-state power politics and the demonstration effects of the political activities of the co-ethnics on the other side of the borders could not be overlooked. Thus, in addition to internal dynamics, external influences such as intervention by foreign powers as well as trans-border influences have been analyzed.

Of particular interest to this study was the difference that could be observed in the relations between the Iranian state and the above-mentioned groups since 19th century. This study has thus attempted to find plausible explanations for such a difference. A comparison of the relationship between the traditional state and these groups with that of the modern state demonstrated a relative historical continuity. The Azaris, within both traditional and modern political structures, have been a privileged group while the history of such relationship with the Kurds and the Baluch is one of conquest, confrontation and sometimes appeasement and compromise. Why have Azaris, while being culturally restricted by the modern state, been

accommodated while the relationship of the state with the Kurds and the Baluch has been one of "carrot and stick?" The answer may be found in the historical context in which the Iranian state and these three groups have interacted. An examination of the history of these relationships will reveal the reasons and causes for the ways in which these relationships have evolved through time.

The traditional state of the Qajars was a sort of segmented political organization that embraced a ruling dynasty who did not have the ability to rule directly but was able to extend its authority over its territory either through military expeditions or by making alliances with local political elite such as the tribal chiefs, landlords, and religious leaders and sometimes by playing these local leaders against each other.

In such a state the sense of identity and solidarity to a great extent was derived from the population's religious identity. Thus all Muslims were theoretically part of the community of the state and the body politic.

In Iran the Shii character of the ruling dynasty made a Shii identity more relevant. Other groups such as the Kurds, the Baluch, the Turkomans, all Sunnis, were peripheral, closed communities, marginal to the power structure at the center and usually inhabiting the

intermittent zones of the influence of the central power.

For the masses of the Shii population as well as the more marginal Sunni groups, ethnic or linguistic identities and solidarity based on such identities were of little significance. Although ethnic and linguistic distinctiveness was maintained, the emphasis was on other aspects of group solidarity such as religious loyalty, tribal affiliations, etc.

The traditional Iranian state, however, had a particular relationship with the Azaris. As Turkish-speaking, Shii Muslims, not only could they identify with the Turkish-speaking Qajar rulers, their homeland, i.e., Azarbaijan was a natural extension of the Qajar politico-territorial realm. This was not a territory that was ruled intermittently but one considered a vital part of the Shah's realm, i.e., an extension of the "core."

On the other hand, the relationship between the state and such groups as the Kurds or the Baluch was a very limited one restricted to collection of taxes and conscription of men for the army. This relationship was, at times, based on conquest and coercion, i.e., when the state was weak these groups were practically independent and when it was stronger they were subdued. Thus in contrast to the Azari community, the Qajar state remained

external to these communities and their social and political structures.

The transformation brought about by the advent of the modern state in Iran began only in the 1920s and reached its peak in 1970s. This transformation entailed, among other things, the breakdown of traditional socio-political structures, increased urbanization, universal education and higher rates of literacy, the improvement of transportation and communication infra-structures and the formation of new ideologies with regard to politics and the state. The most significant aspect of this process was the imposition of a secular "nation-state" model, in the Western sense, on the heterogeneous Iranian society. There is no doubt that, initially, the concept of the secular "nation-state," individualized citizenship and secular law were alien even to many Persians who could potentially identify with such a state. The question of legitimacy was thus a salient problem for the modern state in Iran. Therefore, an ideological framework was forged on the basis of which this secular "nation-state" was validated and at the same time Persian politico-cultural hegemony justified.

Thus, the relations that the state initiated with diverse groups inhabiting Iranian territory was based on a

political framework in which the "nation-state" was a dominant concept. However, the secular orientation of the modernizing state made nationalist mobilization at the mass level difficult, if not almost impossible. The fact that the state, although aspiring to be a modern nation-state, still remained a patrimonial and personal rulership, impeded the appearance and consolidation of rational-legal aspects of government. Thus even though the traditional legitimacy had faded away, certain basic modes of traditional government still remained in existence. At the same time it was believed that through coercive assimilationist policies the centrifugal elements would cease to be a source of political instability. The peripheral groups, particularly the tribal ones, were perceived with contempt by the ruling elite. Among all of the ethno-linguistically diverse groups of Iran Azaris were the only group accommodated and accepted as players in the political arena. Even in the case of Azaris, an initial short-term "break" with the past can be observed that affected Azaris' perceptions and expectations. However, with the rule of the second Pahlavi Shah, the modern state, like its traditional predecessor, proved to be more than willing to incorporate Azaris into the national political structures with beneficial results both

for the stability of the state and Azaris themselves.

The modern period is also important because of the impacts of the trans-border contacts on Azari political consciousness. The Kurds experienced these influences relatively later while the backwardness of the Iranian Baluchistan was only matched by that of the Pakistani Baluchistan and thus trans-border influences were minimal. Trans-border influences seem to be particularly important in the creation of political consciousness.

The effects of modernization seem to have been similar to those of trans-border influences. Modernization was an important factor in the emergence of political consciousness among those segments of the population affected by change, but the process cannot be directly linked to endemic ethnic conflict within the country. As industrialization, urbanization, improvement in communication and expansion of literacy and education all enhanced the organizational and cultural penetration of the state, various groups became more aware that they were different. At the same time, modernization created drastic transformation in the economic and socio-political structures of these diverse communities. In its initial phase [Reza Shah's period] modernization entailed policies that transformed tribal chiefs into private proprietors

and landlords. Subsequent policies [Mohammad Reza Shah's period] attempted to break the power of landlords and in the process deruralized some of the peasantry. All these structural and institutional transformations went hand in hand with the widened inequalities between the dominant group and the rest. As modernization was creating more awareness of distinct identity among various groups it impeded the movement from "tribe" to "nation." However, such awareness did not lead to group confrontation either. Thus at the same time that the modern state and its intellectuals promoted the notion of the nation-state for Iran based on an ideological pursuit of Persian/Iranian nationalism, other Western concepts and ideologies such as democracy, freedom, equality, secularism, etc., were being introduced, not necessarily by the state itself but through communication and interaction with the outside world. This is best illustrated by the fact that it has been only a few decades that such concepts as "ethnic groups" and "nationalities" have become popular and utilized with regard to Iran and is indeed a reflection of the emergence of modern strata among these groups who could appropriate such concepts in the interest of group solidarity. Thus coercive measures, although succeeded to subdue different groups and integrate them within the

state structures, did not succeed to create loyalty and identification towards the state. What was important was the issue of political inclusion and exclusion and the modern state, in the second phase of its consolidation [Mohammad Reza Shah period], tried to deal with that problem as well. Indeed the state did not solely relied on coercion. Like the traditional state, the modern state devised less violent policies. In Baluchistan, the tribal chiefs were co-opted and kept under the thumb of the state. As the area remained utterly backward and undeveloped, the state did not have to worry about the intelligentsia and intellectual dissidents. Some Kurdish local leaders were also placated while the dissidents were dealt with by force. Both among the Kurdish and Baluch political elite the state carried out a policy of "carrot and stick" which was to a large extent successful. However, Azaris, as the most advanced and modernized among these groups, had to be accommodated so that the experience of the "Republic of Azarbaijan" would not be repeated.

These measures, although temporarily kept the periphery calm, only worked as long as the state remained strong and was able to manipulate the local leaders and control the dissidents. Modernization had helped the

emergence of new social forces in these communities. Had the Pahlavi state not been toppled, it probably would have been forced to adopt new strategies to deal with emerging community leaders.

Another interesting phenomenon is that the community leaders and the politically conscious strata had to play the game of politics in the "national" arena. The nation-state concept had provided these leaders with a model that they could copy and utilize for their own use and their own communities. The logic has been if the central power refuses to allow various communities to have a stake in the collective future of a state, why shouldn't these community leaders attempt to erect a state of their own?

This, indeed, provides a clue as to why these groups usually resort to violent uprisings when the central government seems weak. It also explains the demand for autonomy. Autonomy is usually the first step toward independence and both the communal leaders and the "national" leaders are aware of this fact and the underplaying of the real intentions does not alleviate the fears of the politicians at the center. Autonomy is indeed sine qua non for the future statehood. The very existence of autonomy promotes the genesis of a new state. A system of common education that incorporates the

national symbols strengthens the feeling of solidarity and unity. An indigenous administrative system also facilitates the conception of a new nation-state in the minds of the people. The indigenous elite takes the model from the state and aspires to make a replica for themselves. Autonomy accelerates the making of a nation; the nation needs a state to validate itself.

The central government, on the other hand, is quite aware of such aspirations whose realization means a truncated territory for the state. That is how and why the goals and aspirations of communal leaders and those of the national leaders become mutually exclusive.

The modern state in Iran, for various reasons, so far has not been able to develop institutional means to deal with centrifugal forces. The emergence of an Islamic regime in Iran did not necessarily change the basic characteristics of such modern state. The Islamic regime is undoubtedly traditional in its approach to issues such as women and their role in the family and society, or other cultural norms and values. But the state is quite similar to the Pahlavi regime in terms of political forms and processes all of which are again based on a nation-state framework. The Islamic regime, contrary to its theoretical and lofty ideals regarding the universality of

Islam and oneness of the Islamic community, has practically advocated a Shii/Persian chauvinism. Its policies regarding the rights of ethno-linguistic communities are mostly a continuation of the policies of the ancien regime. The Azaris are accommodated and allowed to share in the political power even more so than before- while both the Kurds and the Baluch are controlled militarily with attempts to placate some community leaders. Although there has been a relative easing in the use of local languages in printing and broadcasting, the official and instructional use of them are not allowed. One thing is, after all, clear; that Islam as such has not been an integrative force after 1979. Once again the ruling group has had to resort to the coercive means of modern state to control centrifugal forces and supplement its use of military and bureaucratic power with overtures of compromise and reconciliation.

There has thus been a dual process taking place in Iran with regard to the modern state and its integrative attempts. On the one hand, the process of change has caused drastic transformation in the traditional socio-political structures such as tribes. This process has increased consciousness of belonging to a distinct ethno-linguistic community since the state has not attempted to

promote the development of a civil society; one that is based on consent, fair play and justice, freedom and equality. The loyalty to the tribe is thus being replaced with the loyalty to the larger ethnic community and not the state.

The process of modernization, on the other hand, has strengthened and expanded the reaches of the state and has allowed the bureaucratic and military authority of the state to try to forcefully integrate various communities. It is indeed the state itself that through various policies generates/resolves conflict or promotes/delays identity formation. The language policy, for example, adopted by both Pahlavi and Islamic regimes are a case in point. By outlawing a language and banning its use the state effectively delays its literary development. The problem is that the state does not provide any form of incentive or encouragement for most of these groups particularly the educated urban strata to begin to develop loyalty to the state. The case of the Azaris clearly demonstrates that an ethnic group can be quite conscious of its identity and yet identify with the state. This case further indicates that none of the policies implemented by the state is as significant as the incorporation of the group into the body politic. Of

course, in an authoritarian political system such as that of Iran's this literally means the incorporation of the local political elite into the national political process. As the Azari rank and file encounter no discrimination in Iran and enjoy equal rights with the Persians, the power sharing of their political elite with the Persians endow the group as a whole with a large share in the "allocation of prestige" which is a vitally important aspect of ethnic group relations. Indeed it is what the state offers to the group and its elite that in the last analysis will determine conflict or accomodation. As long as the state offers nothing substantial to these groups, coercion will continue to be used to maintain the hegemony of the ruling group.

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