

# Kurdish Folk Music from Western Iran

Recorded by Dieter and Nerthus Christensen

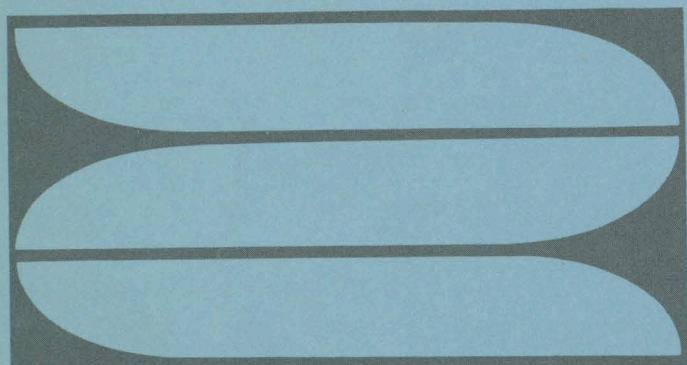
Notes by Dieter Christensen / Edited by Frank Gillis

Kurdish texts translated by Ali Quazi and Dieter Christensen

Master tapes prepared in the Recording Laboratory of the Archiv

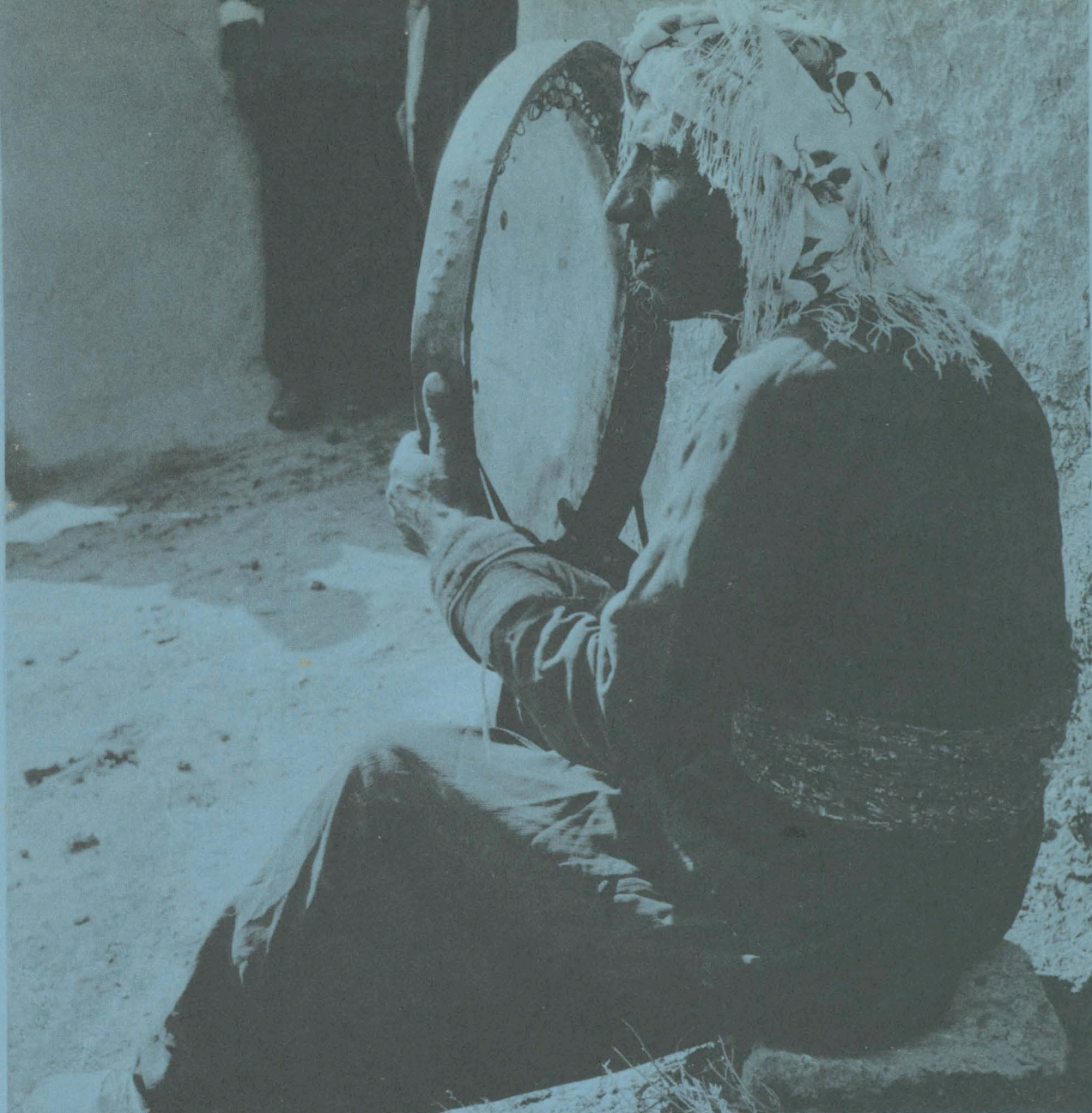
Traditional Music by Judy McCulloh

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**INDIANA UNIVERSITY**  
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Ethnomusicological Series

George List, series editor



M  
1820  
K97  
1966

MUSIC LP



"Pisderamedî mahôr" (instrumental)  
 "Behare" (love song)  
 "Xanê Keyra" and Pasbend (epic song, beyt)  
 "Sor Mehmûd û Xatî Merzêngan" (narration with sung recitations)  
 "Genc Xelî" (love song, lawk)  
 "Qazêlê Nalî" (religious song)  
 "Heyran" (love song)  
 "Qetar" and Pasbend (love song)  
 "Dupeyî" (instrumental dance tunes)  
 "Gî bû cî î kirdim" (dance-song, roynê)  
 "Mang le 'asman gosey kyasa" (wedding song, serdare)  
 "Kelhorî" (song for travelling, working or hunting)  
 "Lâlîlî" (lullaby)  
 "Manga lawaneh" (milking song, gawas)  
 "Leylî çuye humanî" (love song)

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COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

KURDISH FOLK MUSIC FROM WESTERN IRAN



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## INTRODUCTION

### I. The People and the Land

The Kurds of Iran form approximately one-third of the Kurdish people who live mainly in an area of about 75,000 square miles presently divided among Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran. Small isolated groups of Kurds are scattered throughout this area as well as in southern Soviet Armenia. Although limited groups of Kurds have at times obtained a short-lived autonomy, a majority of them have been united repeatedly in the past within the greater limits of Iran or the Ottoman Empire. The separation of the Iranian Kurds from their relatives in northern Iraq, northern Syria and eastern Turkey theoretically dates from 1638, when the border between the Ottoman Empire and Iran was established. This border duplicated almost exactly the present western border of Iran. On the other hand, the separation of the Turkish, Syrian and Iraqi Kurds is a result of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire during World War I.

These separations, however, did not mean an interruption of all contacts. Until about 1935, all borders were crossed regularly and legally by nomadic groups on their seasonal migrations between winter and summer pastures. After this date, with the closing of the borders in connection with a planned sedentarization of the nomads, a vast illegal traffic continued to cross the mountainous border lines. An effective control of this illicit traffic has been achieved to some extent only during the last decade.

It is well to point out that national borders do not in any way coincide with Kurdish cultural or ethnic limits; in many instances these same borders even cut across tribal units. The Mangur tribe, for example, lives on both sides of the Iraqi-Iranian border, and cousins are frequently found living on opposite sides of the national frontier. There are, however, cultural differences between Kurds of different regions which have been carried in the tradition or are the result of more recent political and social developments.

The present study is limited to the Kurds of Western Iran.<sup>1</sup> This territory is roughly defined in the west by the Iranian border from Mount Ararat to somewhat south of Qasre-Shirin on the Kermanshah-Baghdad road; in the south approximately by the Qasre-Shirin - Kermanshah - Hamadan road, including the city of Kermanshah, but excluding Hamadan; and in the east by a line connecting Hamadan with Mount Ararat.<sup>2</sup> Along the southern and eastern limits of this area there are broad regions with ethnically mixed populations,

that is, Kurds living among Lurs, Persians, Turks and Arabs.

Most Iranian Kurds are Moslems of the Sunnite confession, in contrast to their Persian, Lur and Azerbaijanian neighbors who are Shiites.<sup>3</sup> The internal ethnic grouping is very complex. From the linguistic point of view the two main groups are the Mukri in the Lake Urmia - Mahabad - Saqiz region, who are almost identical with the so-called Sorani of northern Iraq, and the Kurdestani of the Iranian province of Kurdistan, with Senandadj as its capital. The Kurds west of Lake Urmia, near the Iran-Turkey border, speak the Kirmandji dialect.<sup>4</sup>

Since the sedentarization forced by Reza Shah in the late 1920's and 1930's there are few completely nomadic groups left. Aside from the urban population almost all Kurds in Iran are firmly settled peasants, though seasonal seminomadism is practiced in some regions where pastures are available for keeping larger flocks. Even in the past the settled population apparently outnumbered by far the semi-nomadic and fully nomadic groups.

Among the settled peasants the tribe as a political organization is almost extinct. It has retained, however, its significance as an ethnic group of common dialect and habits.

All arable land, except for a very small percentage of domain lands, is private property. The bulk of the rural population does not own land, and tenants or farmhands make their living in a variety of ways depending upon the region and types of tools and animals in their possession. On the other hand, land ownership among the Kurds is not concentrated in the hands of a few to the degree in which this was prevalent in other parts of Iran before the land reforms of the early 1960's. Frequently, the ownership of a village is split among several families who cultivate the land together with farmhands and tenants. Absentee landlords are comparatively rare.

The common village is an irregular accumulation of houses. In the narrow valleys of the higher Zagros ranges the houses are usually built partly into the slopes, side by side. In the wider valleys and high plains to the east, where there is a water supply nearby, the villages stand in the center of open fields. The common peasant dwelling is built of stone, adobe or mud walls, with a flat, wood roof covered with mud. Houses of more than one story are limited to the village aristocracy as they generally have to be built by specialists hired from the towns. Usually, the more prosperous landowners possess a *divankhan*, a house in which they can discuss

and settle village affairs and accommodate and entertain guests. It is separated from their private compound, as guests are not expected to enter the living quarters of an upper-class family. Formal entertainment of guests in the *divankhan* includes performances by local or urban musicians, although the radio is gradually taking over this role.

### II. The Music and the Players

Speaking broadly, Kurdish music in Iran can be divided into three general types or classes reflecting differences in locale, social strata, and degree of professionalism.

The first class includes urban popular music performed by professional musicians. Its stylistic range is wide and covers the field from adapted traditional folk tunes to Persian-Arabic art and popular music. Western influences in style are rare. A common feature of this class is the use of Persian-derived instruments such as the long-neck lute, *tar*, and the goblet-shaped drum, *dimbek* (Persian, *zar*). In accompanied songs the instrumental parts are in urban Persian style even when the tune itself is Kurdish. The popularity of this music is growing rapidly, mainly due to its dissemination by the radio. There are several radio stations in the Kurdish part of Iran which in their local programs continually broadcast this type of music.

Secondly, there is rural music, the performance of which requires special training and abilities. The performers do not usually hold full professional status as musicians, that is, they do not depend exclusively upon music for their living. They are fairly well spread over the rural districts of the country and are known either locally or over various distances, depending upon their reputation as performers.

The musical styles representative of this class are diverse. Included are all rural instrumental musics and, among the vocal types, the epic songs, *beyt*, and the lyric genres, *lawk*, *heyran* and *qetar*. The bulk of rural instrumental music is either used in accompaniment for the dance or consists of instrumental performances of the *lawk*, *heyran*, and *qetar*. Thus, in general, the instrumental music derives its rhythmic and melodic patterns from the vocal music. In the vocal music, the recitation of epics and the singing of the lyric genres have in common the use of extended free-meter recitativo strophes, using melodic patterns which gradually descend from the fourth or fifth to the basic tone. The performances of these patterns are subject to alterations according to personal and/or local styles and to texts to be sung. The genres *lawk*, *heyran* and *qetar*, which are



known among the Iraqi Kurds as well, are peculiar in that each seems to represent a distinct melodic type. This is substantiated by a statement from the Kurds themselves who affirm that 'each of these genres has its own melody which is always the same,' and by the fact that each of these types, even in purely instrumental performances (on flute, clarinet or oboe), is easily recognized by any local audience.

Performers in this class are chiefly peasants and dervishes with a semi-professional status as musicians. However, the dervishes in addition keep alive a special tradition of religious and non-religious music and use the frame drum, defe, as a self accompanying rhythm instrument. Musical practice among the dervishes includes metrically fixed and melodically different styles.

Though not specifically Kurdish, the drum-and-oboe (dehol-û-zurna) music, used particularly at weddings, may be placed in this class. The stylistic elements characteristic of this music are very similar throughout the Near East, the Balkans, and North Africa. It is performed as a rule by Gypsy musicians who are hired for the occasion and who not only provide the villagers with music but with sieves, reed mats, baskets, music instruments, blacksmith ware and tell fortunes as well.

The music classified in this second category was the first to suffer from the social changes which accompanied the disintegration of tribal organizations and from the penetration of radio into the rural districts. The musical entertainment of distinguished guests of landlords and tribal chiefs was formerly the function of bards and dervishes. In many areas the radio has now assumed this role.

The third class is the broadest one. It encompasses those musical activities connected with the daily life of the people and with traditional social events taking place during the course of the year. Common genres are: lullabies, children's play songs, work songs, ceremonial wedding songs, dance songs, and New Year songs. These song types may be performed by all rural people since they do not require any special training or abilities. Some, however, are restricted to specific occasions and to certain groups of performers such as children, women or men. Stylistically, the majority of this music is comparatively narrow in melodic range — the third being the preferred frame interval — more syllabic than melismatic, and organized in strophes of short duration. Complex rhythmic patterns are frequent.

### III. The Musical Instruments

The musical instruments of the Iranian Kurds are few, and there are not many who know how to play them.

The open, straight flute, blwêr or sim-gal, is a tube of about twenty to twenty-four inches in length and one-half to three-quarters of an inch in diameter. It is open at both ends and provided with six stops for the fingers and one stop for the thumb. There are no regulation bores as is usual with Turkish and Arabic flutes of a similar type. The flute was traditionally made of reed. Since this is a fragile material which is difficult to obtain in high quality, it is today usually made of metal. Reed flutes,

however, are preferred for their superior tonal quality. The instruments are manufactured in the bazaars of the towns and traded to the villagers. The flute is the typical instrument of shepherds, and is played during periods of leisure as well as for dances.

The double clarinet, duzele or zimare (from the Arabic zumâra), is made of reed or of the bones of birds, of those of the raven for example. Two approximately cylindrical tubes with six finger holes each are fixed to each other, side by side, with waxed yarn. A smaller reed mouthpiece, having a single lamella cut from the side of the reed open end down, is stuck into the upper end of each of the tubes. These are primitive clarinet mouthpieces, the upper ends of which are closed by nodes. A piece of string is frequently attached to each mouthpiece and thence to the corresponding tube. These strings are used for readjusting the mouthpiece, that is, for tuning the instrument during playing. The player pulls the mouthpiece deeper into its respective tube by means of the string, thus sharpening its basic pitch without interrupting the performance.

The instrument is played mainly as an accompaniment to dancing. Playing it is quite exhausting. The performer places the whole mouthpiece into his mouth and must be able to fill his lungs through his nose while forcing air from his mouth cavity into the instrument. When the quantity of air in his mouth has been exhausted, he moves to the reservoir in his lungs for a fresh supply without a perceptible gap in the sound emitted. Playing in this manner, uninterrupted performances of about twenty minutes duration have been recorded. This same breathing technique is employed in the playing of the flute, discussed previously, and the oboe.

The oboe, zurna or saz, is made and played, as a rule, by Gypsies as a complementary instrument to the drum, dehol.<sup>5</sup> Sixteen to twenty inches in length, it is composed of five essential parts and various additional ornaments. The wooden body is cylindrical for about two-thirds of its length, with a cylindrical bore. The final third is funnel-shaped, with a corresponding bore. There are seven upper stops and one for the thumb. The first stop can be closed from the inside by turning a fork-shaped wooden part which fits into the upper end of the wooden body of the instrument. Into the uppermost end of the body a metal tube is inserted which bears at its free end the double-reed mouthpiece forming the vibratory mechanism. An integral part of the instrument is a disc of wood or horn through which the metal mouthpiece tube of the instrument protrudes. The player places the mouthpiece inside his mouth and rests his lips against the disc.

The dehol is a large cylindrical drum with two membranes. It is never used except to accompany the oboe. The frame is a thin strip of wood bent to a circle and usually sewn together with string. The two membranes at the top and bottom are made of the skin of a goat or a cow and are held in place by a tension lace arranged in a zig-zag pattern. In carrying the drum it is held by a strap in such a manner that it is fixed almost vertically in front of the player. He beats each side with a different drum stick. The large drum stick, gorz, has a charac-

teristically bent head, the smaller, terke, is thin and flexible.

As dehol-û-zurna music is relatively well known and quite similar in all of the Near East, its representation in this album has been omitted in favor of less familiar music.

The frame drum, defe or daire, is composed of a single membrane attached to a wood frame. Metal rattle chains are also fixed to the frame.<sup>6</sup> The defe is the traditional instrument of the dervishes who use it to accompany religious and other songs. The daire, found mainly among the southernmost Kurds, may be played by any male. Although both instruments are used in varying social functions and are characterized by some minor organological differences, both names denote the same type of musical instrument.

The goblet-shaped drum, dimbek, is identical to the Persian zar. The single membrane is pasted to one end of the body, the lower end of which is open. The fine old specimens are made of wood and richly inlaid in the khatam technique with bone, brass, colored wood and turquoise. New, inferior pieces are made of tin. The size of the dimbek is generally eighteen inches in length, with a diameter of ten inches. The instrument represents the Persian influence in Kurdistan and is used almost exclusively by urban professional musicians.

The lute, tar, with its long neck and body in the form of an hourglass, is also found among musicians in the larger cities. It is made of wood — the finger board frequently being bone-plated — and is characterized by a soundbox covered with skin. Its six metal strings are plucked with a metal plectrum. The size of the tar varies considerably.

Other Persian music instruments occur in urban musical bands but as they are neither specifically Kurdish nor of special significance in the musical life of the Kurds they are not represented in these recordings and, consequently, are not described here.

One instrument, the dutepil, a pair of small kettle drums, must be mentioned. Previous to the early 1930's the private armies of Kurdish chiefs were accompanied into battle by singers who attempted to demoralize the enemy and encourage their own troops by playing pairs of kettle drums, dutepil, while on horseback. With the decline of the private armies, which had been based on a feudal type of organization, tribal warfare ceased and the dutepil lost its function. It is still to be found, however, in a Kurdish elite squadron of the Imperial Iranian Army in Senandadj.

### IV. The Christensen Collection

The Christensen Collection, a portion of which is presented here, was made during an ethnomusicological and anthropological field survey in Western Iran in 1962. The expedition was jointly sponsored by the Institute of Ethnology, Free University, and the Ethnomusicological Division (formerly the Phonogramm-Archiv), Museum of Anthropology, both of Berlin, Germany.



The number in parentheses given after the title of each band refers to the number of that recording in the collection 'Christensen Westpersien 1962' deposited with the latter institution. The collection, as Earliest Copy 216-237, is also on deposit in the Indiana University Archives of Traditional Music.

A battery-operated portable Butoba, model TS 61, was used to make the recordings which were recorded at 3.75 i. p. s. on dual track BASF LGS 52 tape. The microphones used were the Sennheiser MD 19 and MD 21.

The collectors owe a debt of gratitude to German and Iranian authorities who facilitated the research. They are also deeply indebted to many Kurds who not only willingly and patiently served as informants but who offered and granted unlimited hospitality.



Derwis Hemebor, beating the frame drum, defe, and singing into it.

#### NOTES

1. An introduction to the history and present situation of the Kurds in general is given by Ralph S. Solecki in the accompanying notes to his recorded album of Kurdish folk music from northern Iraq (Folkways Ethnic Series FE 4469, Kurdish Folk Songs and Dances).
2. See shaded portion in the general map of the Iran area.
3. The Sunnites and Shiites are the two principal sects of the Moslem religion.
4. Throughout these notes English forms have been used for the transcription of Persian and Kurdish proper names; for musical expressions and Kurdish texts, the Kurdish-Latin alphabet of Emir Kamuran Aali Bedir-Khan has been applied.
5. The dehol and zurna are depicted in Figure 5.
6. Illustrated in photo, left.

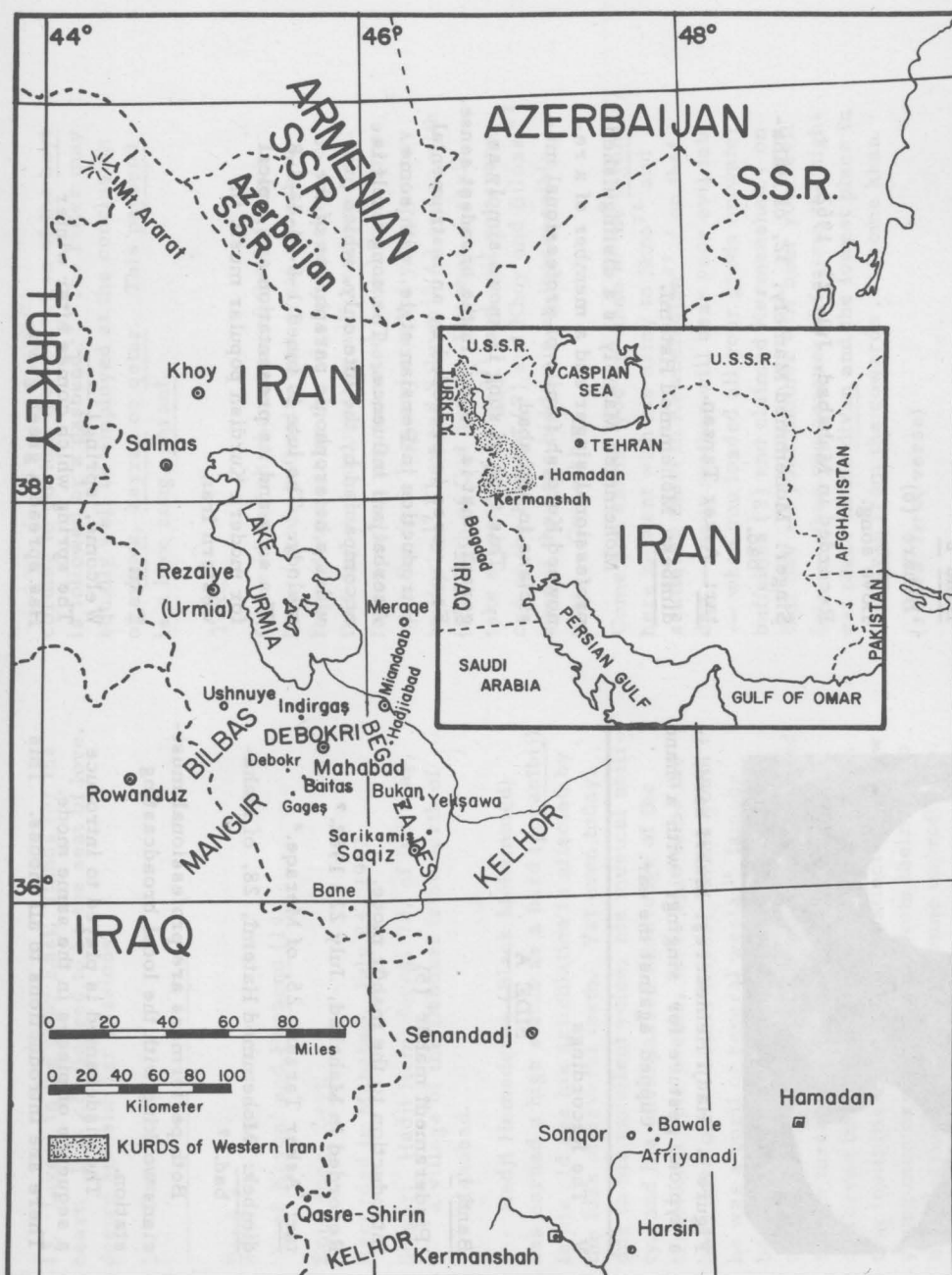


Figure 1. Debokr, village of the Mangur tribe in the mountains west of Mahabad, showing houses built partly into the slopes.



Figure 2. Compound of a noble family, surrounded by a high clay wall. Yekşawa Village, in the Begzade region, east of Bukan.



Figure 3. Bazaar of Mahabad, the principal town of the Mukri area.



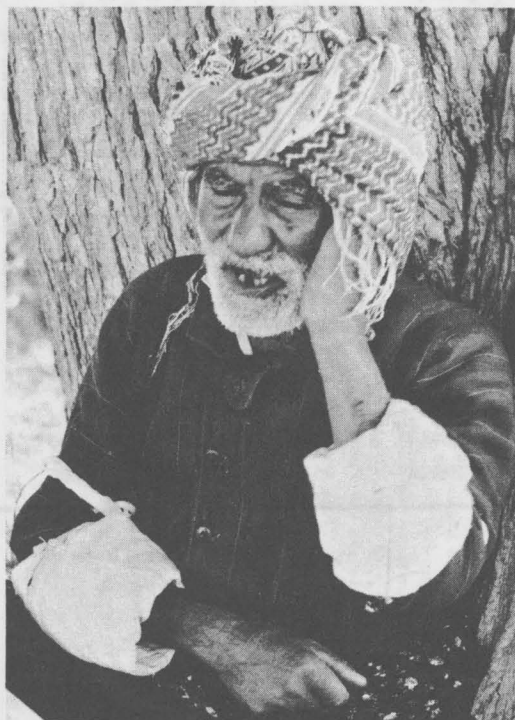


Figure 4. Hadji Hemedereş, Mukri bard, in a typical gesture for singing, with a hand cupped against the ear.

## V. The Recordings

### SIDE A

#### Band 1

'Pişderamedî mahôr' (5)

Introduction to the mahôr mode.

Recorded in Mahabad, July 23, 1962.<sup>7</sup>

tar: Asker Tarzan, 25, of Meraqe.<sup>8</sup>

dimbek: Mohemmed Hatemî, 28, of Mahabad.<sup>9</sup>

Both performers are professional musicians working with the local broadcasting station.

The pişderamed is played to introduce a sequence of pieces in the same mode. There are introductions to all modes. This

procedure has been adopted from the destgah, a form of Persian art music.

The lute (tar) is tuned 1-8-5-5-8-8. The dull, deep, muffled beats in the foreground, easily distinguished from those of the drum, are produced by the player beating upon the skin cover of his tar with one or two fingers of his right hand. He simultaneously plucks the strings with a plectrum held in the same hand.

7. See Figure 3.

8. See Figure 4.

9. See Figure 6.

#### Band 2

'Behare' (6)

Love song.

Recorded in Mahabad, July 23, 1962.

Singer: Mohemmed Mamely, 32, of Mahabad.

tar: Asker Tarzan.

dimbek: Mohemmed Hatemî.

Mohemmed Mamely is a distinguished professional singer and a member of a renowned Kurdish family of professional musicians in Mahabad.

This type of song is known simply as goranî, that is, 'song' in the broadest sense. Each verse is preceded by an instrumental introduction in Persian style, with some Azerbaijani influence. The song itself is accompanied by the lute only, which provides a heterophonic paraphrase of the melody. The lute is tuned 1-8-4-4-8-8. The song and its presentation are typical for modern Kurdish popular music in western Iran.

Text:

Welcome, spring!

The spring which comes after winter  
Has spread a green gown

From here to Turan.<sup>10</sup>

The nightingale fell madly in love with the flower.<sup>11</sup>

She began to lament.

The northwind rages.

The rain drizzles.

Oh Lord, give happiness to our souls,

Alas! through two lovely eyes.

(repeat two lines)

Welcome spring!

The spring after Newruz.<sup>12</sup>

Because of the Pleiades-eyed beloved

I am burning with love

Since the world has become full of colors to me

And (my heart) was released from the dust of sorrow,

But her sparkling eyelashes, oh my soul,

are burning in the roots of my liver.<sup>13</sup>

(repeat two lines)

The heart affecting flowers

Move their stems in rows.

I have seen some of these flowers,

The poppy flowers and the wild tulips.

Come! Look at the flowers

If your heart is wretched.

This world is perfidious

But for all that, it is amiable and bright!

(repeat two lines)

A mountain of sorrows rises,

Never giving rest to me,

Neither day nor night:

The grief for my beloved.

I am too wretched.

My stars are sinking.<sup>14</sup>

Perhaps my soul will come to peace,

Alas! only for the color of spring.

(repeat two lines)

10. Turan is a district in Central Asia; its use here implies the meaning 'end of the world.'

11. The text gives şêda as the name of a flower for which the English equivalent is not known to this collector.

12. Newruz is the Iranian New Year feast, the spring equinox.



13. Liver, in the Near East, stands for the heart. It is considered to be the seat of love, desire and similar passions.

14. I am dying.

### Band 3

'Xane Keyqa' and Pasbend (14)

Epic song, beyt.

Recorded in Mahabad, July 24, 1962.

Singer: Hadji Hemederes, 70, of Indirgas, a village of the Debokri tribe north of Mahabad.

Hadji Hemederes (Black Mohammed)

In his old age his articulation is affected by the loss of several teeth. Yet even today, due to his excellent voice, his musical ability, and his unsurpassed knowledge of the traditional epic poems, he is said to be the best bard of the Mukri Kurds. In his youth he was a pupil of several westa,<sup>16</sup> famous bards who maintained informal schools of traditional folk poetry. Good bards accepted two or three gifted pupils who in turn paid or served them as servants. Unfortunately, this institution is becoming extinct since few young men are willing to devote their life to a profession which has become unprofitable. There were in the past — and are today in eastern Turkey — bards who subsisted on gabas alone.<sup>17</sup> Today, Hadji Hemederes is making his living as a tenant farmer working for his village landlord. His occasional performances are rewarded by gabas. After making the recording given here he was presented with sugar and flour since money was felt to be inadequate.

The beyt relates the exploits of a Kurdish knight named Xane Keyqa. Though there is no information available regarding the historical background of the song, it becomes clear from the tribes and places mentioned that the narrative (of which only a fraction is presented here) relates to the western Mukri area. This song is said to date back to the nineteenth century or earlier. Ac-

According to custom the recitation of the beyt is followed by a pasbend.<sup>18</sup> The latter may equally well be employed at the conclusion of a lawk, heyran or qetar. This pasbend is a love song, gorant.

### Text:

Come khan, oh khan, you of the lofty sublime / your authority was great enough to let a plate rest on the edge of a sickle / on that day — your mother will bear your evil fate — when you mounted your brown horse with the dark legs and started your journey to Herir,<sup>19</sup> Khoy and Salmas<sup>20</sup> / I swear with (the) oath of God and the Prophet, I shall take a spear of 18 qed<sup>21</sup> and will not spare one of the Kamēni (?) and Khoy and Bilbas,<sup>22</sup> even if they are hidden in an inaccessible place. Come khan.

Come you khans, you my khan of the divans<sup>23</sup> / here he went with his army to Shno<sup>24</sup> and scattered them in Kewneladjan<sup>25</sup> / on that day — your mother will bear your evil fate — when you loaded all your goods on water buffaloes (?) and claimed Kermanshah / on that day — your mother will bear your evil fate — when you conquered for me the highest place in the divan and the lowest place in the divan from the cowards . . . come khan.

(repeat first verse)

### Pasbend:

It is spring, how sadly sings the nightingale! How long shall I lament for your love? Oh my flower, my bud, you have encouraged my heart, encouraged my heart.

My inside is burnt from longing to see you.<sup>26</sup> At once I have lost my wits and my understanding. My soul shall be your sacrifice, my heart shall be yours, there is nothing left of me, be faithful! There is nothing left of me, be faithful!

- I am full of pains, my heart has become kebab, I am drunk without hemp and without wine.
- I am drunk without hemp and without wine.
15. Hadji Hemederes is shown in Figure 4. From the Persian Ustad: masters or teachers.
16. Gabas are gifts.
17. Pasbend means, literally, 'after-verse.'
18. District near Rowanduz in northern Iraq.
19. Towns north of Lake Urmia.
20. A qed is equal to the span of a hand.
21. The Bilbas, still in existence, is a tribal group located at the western border of the Mukri area.
22. Assembly halls of the nobles.
23. Local name for Ushnuye, a town northwest of Mahabad.
24. A district northwest of Mahabad.
25. I am very much ashamed, or very unhappy.

### Band 4

'Sor Mehmud b Xatu Merzengun' (24)

Narration with inserted sung recitations, beyt.

Recorded in Hadjiabad, July 26, 1962.

Told and sung by Sir Ali, 60, bard and peasant at Hadjiabad, near Miandoab.

Sir Ali illustrated his rendition of the story with movements of his arms and head. The story is also known in this area as 'Pirdewan' ('The Bridge Watchman'). Sir Ali learned it many years ago from a derwish named Mehmud. It was confirmed by the audience that the story is very old and that there are few who still remember it. Again, there is no information available



concerning its historical background, but the action takes place in the Mangur region southwest of Mahabad.<sup>27</sup>

#### Synopsis of the Story

Once there lived a tribal chief, Xalereş, who was required every year to supply the Shah of Iran with 7000 horsemen. One year he is one horseman short. The Shah offers Xalereş the choice of supplying the horseman he is lacking, fighting a battle, or giving him his beautiful daughter, the Xatû Merzengan.

Xalereş is very sad at these conditions. When Şor Mehmûd, his brother's son, asks him why he looks so wretched he tells him of the Shah's conditions. On hearing his tale, Şor Mehmûd offers to be the 7000th horseman provided he is promised the beautiful Xatû Merzengan.

Xalereş agrees and Şor Mehmûd leaves with all the horsemen to fight for the Shah. He fights seven years in Tepewlat Turkman, and seven more years in the region of Khamsul-Mehreban. His return journey takes another year. All the time Şor Mehmûd is away Xatû Merzengan has neither news nor a letter from him and she loses all hope that he might ever return.

One day, while seated with the women at the river's bank, a group of horsemen approaches. The women tell her that the knight in front is Şor Mehmûd but she does not believe them. She addresses him with a song, he answers in turn singing, and they recognize each other.<sup>28</sup>

When Şor Mehmûd has recovered from the wars and his journey, he asks his uncle to fulfill his promise. Xalereş refuses. Şor Mehmûd then gives Xalereş three choices: either give him his daughter, fight with him, or leave the country with his tribe. Xalereş asks for time to consider this but furtively he calls his tribesmen together and has them swear by the Koran that they will accompany him to the region of Gageş, to the slopes of Djewalereşan.

When Xatû Merzengan sees preparations being made for moving, she asks her mother

for an explanation. She thus learns of the three choices and that her father has chosen to leave the country. She runs to see Şor Mehmûd and finds him sleeping. Waking him, she says: This is no time for sleeping, my father is going to leave the country and will not give me to you. Go and persuade the horsemen to stay, and whoever stays behind will receive a bushel of gold from me.

When Şor Mehmûd approaches the horsemen, they answer: Şor Mehmûd, we love you and would like to fulfill your wishes. But your uncle was cunning enough to have us swear by the Koran that we will move with him to the mountains. As we must not break our oath, we shall move with him to the mountain pastures and stay there three days. But after that we shall return and you will get Xatû Merzengan. And we will not take any money, we will but wish you happiness.

But Şor Mehmûd is impatient and rides to the summer pastures of the Haledinan and speaks to their tribal chief: Give me warriors to win Xatû Merzengan from my uncle. She was promised to me and I gave many years of my life for her! The chief of the Haledinan agrees, but asks for time to collect his horsemen. Şor Mehmûd, however, is still impatient and starts out alone to follow his uncle's traces to the mountains.

Xatû Merzengan moves with her father's huge caravan to the summer pasture. One night she has a dream. She sees Şor Mehmûd falling from a bridge into a river and being drowned. The next day the caravan passes a bridge and Xatû Merzengan recognizes the bridge she has seen in her dream. Terrified, she stays behind to talk to the watchman who takes care of the bridge. Her father sees her in conversation with him and hides himself under the bridge so that he might overhear their conversation.

Xatû Merzengan tells the watchman about the wonderful knight who is going to come, wearing a spear of extraordinary length, and asks him to help the knight to cross the bridge. The watchman promises to do so. But when she has rejoined the caravan her father comes up from under

the bridge and describes Şor Mehmûd as an evil man who will endanger the lives of both himself and the watchman if he happens to pass the bridge: Xalereş offers the watchman 100 toman and says: Swear by the Koran that you will prevent him from crossing the bridge and that you will tell the knight what I say. He will ask you whether the tribe of Xalereş has passed the bridge. You must say: There was a large tribe passing the bridge, so large that it took several days for them to pass, but I do not know which tribe it was. There was a girl with them, riding on a white mule. On the bridge her white mule had been fighting with a black mule, and when she dismounted, she fell into the water and was drowned. She was a very beautiful girl; I believe her name was Xatû Merzengan. This is what you have to tell the knight. The watchman swears by the Koran, and Xalereş rejoins his caravan.

At the same time that Şor Mehmûd is approaching the bridge, Xatû Merzengan, who is riding with the caravan, becomes restless and says to her mother: I must return and see what is happening at the bridge. But as Şor Mehmûd is riding on horseback and she is walking, he arrives at the bridge first and asks the watchman about the tribe of Xalereş. The watchman repeats to him exactly what Xalereş has told him. Şor Mehmûd becomes very sorrowful and asks the watchman to bring him some water. He exercises his ritual ablution (wuzu), prays the two req'at of the morning prayer and two other req'at for the time in his life he might have neglected to pray, asks God to forgive him, and jumps into the river and is drowned.

When Xatû Merzengan arrives at the bridge she sees Şor Mehmûd's horse standing alone. Asking the watchman for an explanation, she is told all about the cunning of her father and the death of Şor Mehmûd. Xatû Merzengan then writes a letter and hides it in the saddle of Şor Mehmûd's horse. After that, she exercises her ritual ablution, prays, and drowns herself in the river.





Figure 5. Gypsy musicians in the Kerma-  
shah region playing the oboe and drum

(dehol-ā-zurna).

## Band 5

'Geng xelri' (17)

Love song, lawk.

Recorded in Mahabad, July 24, 1962.

Singer: Hadji Hemederes, 70.<sup>34</sup>

This is an outstanding performance of a  
typical lawk. It consists of two verses,<sup>35</sup>  
each beginning with a line of repeated calls,  
'were lele.'<sup>36</sup> This opening line is followed  
by six text lines in rapid, metrically free  
recitation. (These are indicated below by  
Arabic numerals.) The last or closing line  
consists of exclamations, 'de le de lele,'  
and a stereotypic sentence.  
The six text lines are distributed equally  
over three musical phrases. (The latter are  
indicated below by Roman numerals.) All  
musical phrases follow a melodic pattern  
which leads from the fourth degree to the  
basic tone. Some melodic variation is text  
conditioned.  
In the original performance the lawk was  
immediately followed by a royme dance-song

Now Xatî Merzengan called to the knight at  
the hill:

..... (Moslem Invocation)

I heard from your own mouth

That it is fifteen years this year since she

was left a virgin in her father's house.

Her black hair she has made white because

of her knight.

I am the poor Merzengan, whose father's

house is devastated.<sup>32</sup>

Now Gor Mehmûd called to the Merzengan:

You are my Merzengan!

If you are torment for the people — for me

you are a cure.

If you are grass, thorn, tree for the people —

basilium.

Xatî Merzengan says:

But my dear cousin, do not go on the bridge of

of Niseye. I dreamt you will be drowned

there because you cannot swim.<sup>33</sup>

27. Gages, mentioned in the text, is a vil-  
lage of the Mangur tribe.

28. See text of song, which follows.

29. There are several different divisions or  
levels of reference used in the text of the

song. The singer is both referring to him-  
self in the third person (Now he says) and

describing the action (Xatî Merzengan called

to the rider at the hill). At times he has

Xatî Merzengan and Gor Mehmûd addressing

each other directly (Is that you, . . . ; Oh

maiden, . . . ), speaking to themselves

(This year it is fifteen years since my knight

went abroad), or using the third person (Her

black hair she has made white . . . ).

30. Translations of the invocations are not

available.

31. Is he dead?

32. Unhappy.

33. These lines were erroneously given by

the singer. They belong in a later episode

of the story.

A short time later the horsemen of the  
Haledinan tribe arrive at the bridge and see  
the horse of Gor Mehmûd standing alone.  
They find the letter hidden in the saddle and  
read what has happened to Gor Mehmûd and  
Xatî Merzengan. Angered by what had taken  
place, they kill the watchman and attack the  
tribe of Xaleres, killing many people and  
taking the goods and flocks.  
When the mother of Gor Mehmûd comes  
to the bridge she sings of the heroic deeds  
of her son, and drops a flower into the riv-  
er.

The recording of the complete story re-  
quired approximately twenty-four minutes.

Most of it is spoken prose; the dialogues,

however, are mainly sung in rhymed verses.

The excerpt of the song given here de-

picts the scene when Gor Mehmûd returns

after fifteen years of journeying and fight-

ing and is recognized by Xatî Merzengan.

The dialogue which is included is sung within

the framework of a fifth, the third being the

main tone of recitation. In the first of the

four verses the singer sets the tonal struc-

ture of the recitation which follows.

Text of song:

Now he says:<sup>29</sup>

Xatî Merzengan called to the rider at the hill:

..... (Moslem Invocation)<sup>30</sup>

Is that you, by the Lord of Heaven!

This year it is fifteen years since my knight

went abroad,

But, by the Lord, is he alive or did he obey

the command of God?<sup>31</sup>

Now Gor Mehmûd called:

Oh maiden, you tall and slim figure with the

hemp-drunk eyes!

..... (Moslem Invocation)

This is the fifteenth year since I went abroad,

But I left something precious in the house of

her father.

Oh my Lord, is she still there or has she

married?



functioning as a paşbend. This last has been omitted here.

Text:

- I
1. Come lêlê come lêlê . . . . little one.  
My (beloved) is a tender swan,  
A swan from the river Kelwe, <sup>37</sup>
  2. A black basilium,  
A hyacinth, a lily  
from the banks of the river Rinwê.
- II
3. The girl says: I am a black basilium  
from the little gardens near the gate  
of Urmia.
  4. The boy says: This is the seventh  
year  
that I wander about after her slender  
figure.
- III
5. The slim girls says: I do not know to  
whom God has destined me.
  6. De lê de lêlê . . . Oh Lord, I shall  
not remain single, ah!
- I
1. Come lêlê come lêlê . . . little one.  
Today a caravan comes and passes by  
again and again.
  2. A caravan passes by. Oh leader of  
the caravan, by your life!  
Halt your caravan at a goldsmith's  
door.
- II
3. For the girl says: Make two earrings  
for me, for my slim figure.  
But these earrings must not be put on  
an anvil, and must not be  
Seized with pincers, and must not be  
forged with hammers,
  4. But they shall be placed on a flat hand  
and be shaped with the eyes . . .  
And the filigree shall be formed by  
the kiss of a tender girl.
- III
5. The boy says: The ears of my beloved  
are very tender and lovely.  
They cannot bear heavy earrings with  
chains.
  6. De lê de lêlê . . . Oh Lord, I shall  
not remain single!

34. See notes to Side A, Band 3.

35. Other lawk may have more verses.

36. The Kurdish word 'were' means 'come' in English; 'lêlê' has no meaning, as such, being used here for its alliterative value or sonorous quality. In other lawk, 'lolo,' or 'loyloy' are occasionally used instead of 'lêlê.'

37. Near Ushnuye.

## SIDE B

### Band 1

'Qazelê Nalî' (72)

Religious Song, qazel.

Recorded in Yekşawa, August 9, 1962.

Singer: Derwiş Hemebor, 33, of Yekşawa, accompanying himself on the frame drum, defe. <sup>38</sup>

Derwiş Hemebor is a member of a dervish order which meets in a tekke, a religious house near Saqiz. Besides his religious activities he makes his living as a tenant to the landlord of Yekşawa, a village near Bukan in the possession of a branch of the famous Baba Miri Mukri family. The dervish accompanies both his epic and his religious songs with the defe. In those parts of the song in which he sings in a low voice he keeps the drum vertically in front of him, singing into it and using it simultaneously as a resonator, mirliton and percussion instrument. In purely instrumental interludes or in parts of the song which are performed loudly the drum is held diagonally, away from the body. It is held with both thumbs, beaten vigorously with the fingers of both hands, and occasionally struck against the ball of the left thumb. The rattle of the attached chains is most prominent in the latter circumstances.

Text:

Ay ay ay ay,  
Great God, Lord of the Mysteries,  
Covered with precious silk;

Prince from the hot lands, <sup>39</sup>  
Oh, the token of our religion,  
The stature like a stone-pine,  
. . . . . water (from Mecca),  
Like the moon of the fourteenth night <sup>40</sup>  
— Oh messenger of God, I am repentant —  
Surrounded with a frame of clouds.

Ay ay ay ay,  
He is not like Darius, and not like Alexander,  
There is not the pomp of Solomon,  
He is the prince (of the Lewlaks?)  
— Oh messenger of God, I am repentant! —  
He brought the token of religion,  
Not like the Jesus of the Christians,  
Not like Moses on the Mountain Tûr, <sup>41</sup>  
Yes, that is the king of Esra,  
Hey, he proclaims from the mehrab. <sup>42</sup>

I have prostrated myself at your door,  
Almighty, I shall become your sacrifice,  
It is the desire of my heart  
To lose myself further to you.  
I have prostrated myself at your door,  
God, I shall be your guest;  
I have prostrated myself at your door,  
Almighty, I shall become your sacrifice.

. . . . .  
. . . . .  
Get up, that is Mohammed, by the Lord!  
His knocking at the door made the universe  
tremble,  
Your dignity is round and huge,  
The Lord of Lords,  
Your name is Mohammed Amin,  
Your title is Prophet.  
Oh by your sweet head, oh messenger,  
My right eye is the resurrection, <sup>43</sup>  
Now I am powerless, I shall be your sacrifice,  
Today is a precious moment!

38. Derwiş Hemebor is pictured on page 3.

39. Arabia.

40. The full moon.

41. Mount Sinai.

42. Moslem pulpit.

43. My right eye is: I never forget.



Band 2

'Heyran' (3a)

Love song, heyran.

Recorded at Indirgas, July 23, 1962.

Singer: Hadji Hemederes, 70, of Indirgas.<sup>44</sup>

The singer was unable to give an individual title to this song. Other singers of heyran from both Iran and Iraq have also maintained that individual titles are not utilized for this form.<sup>45</sup> This recording was considered extremely beautiful by many Kurds. It was included in this album for that reason although it was recorded in the open air and therefore is not technically of the best quality.

Text (of first verse):

Oh yes, this night there came to my veranda a group of proud horsemen riding horses with yellow hind legs.<sup>46</sup> Around midnight they went to the house of the father of Heyran<sup>47</sup> and tied their horses there.

Oh yes, the lad says: Friends, God should make it possible that one night of the nights of autumn and three days of the days of spring I shall be a guest to the figure of the beautiful one. How lovely it would be to take in my hands the sweet gemams<sup>48</sup> and the many-hued gemams, and embrace her, and kiss her sleepy eyes.

44. See notes to Side A, Band 3.

45. For information on heyran see the introduction.

46. Arabian horses.

47. Anonymous reference to a beloved girl in heyran songs.

48. Small, fragrant melons.

Band 3

'Qetar' and Pasbend

Love song, qetar.

Recorded at Yekşawa, August 11, 1962.

Singer: Sayid, 30, peasant of Yekşawa.

The singer is a tenant farmer of Yekşawa who because of his musical talents is frequently ordered by the village land-lord to sing for guests. Though his standards are not that of a distinguished bard, he is considered to be a good singer and a fair flute player.

Qetar is a type of song which includes elements of longing and grief. In musical style it is similar to the lawk and heyran. From a total of eight verses recorded, only three are given here. These are followed immediately by the pasbend, a dance-song.

Text:

1. My dear, woe to my heart, to my heart! Like a pomegranate, my heart is bursting like a pomegranate! Side by side, each one is working.<sup>49</sup> A hundred lanes are inside, each one from another town.<sup>50</sup> Woe! For the painful cry of my heart it shall rain stones on you!

2. Woe! First by the night and second by the moon!

First by the night and second by the moon!

Tell the Leyli her lemons are coming out,<sup>51</sup>

Tell the Leyli she shall cover her lemons!

She shall state a price and sell them to me!

(The girl says:)

You wise man, by the Lord, you don't have the value of my lemons in your house,

But maybe I will present them to you (as a gift), dear boy, for the Lord's sake!

3. Your necklace, your earrings, . . . your temple curl and your neck curls were sitting at home and thinking:

That lover whom we killed yesterday, for which of us did he die?

The earrings said: When I was with the

sweet Leyli, sometimes I trembled

with the wind.

The necklace said: oh you drunken ear-rings, you who became arrogant!

The place I was biting, nobody could bite it!<sup>52</sup>

Several princes and chiefs, by the Lord, have lost their heads because of that.

Now the neck curl said: If I would not

fear that my religion might become empty,<sup>53</sup> I would raise my head to

let the little birthmarks become visible. And that would kill the boys

and the children and the unborn! Even the Sufi<sup>54</sup> of Iraq would become slaves!

The temple curl said: I was the only one that counted. I was the one to give

shadow to the cheek. I was the screen on the head of the (slain lover's)

enemy!

.....

.....

Pasbend:

Let them weigh your whole stature for me, (repeat one line)

For I fell in love with Emine; my darling, I am like a dervish.

(repeat one line)

God shall let Braimabad<sup>55</sup> blossom for me always,

Even when it is cold the trees shall blossom. Maybe then the beautiful one will not feel like a stranger.

49. The thickly packed kernels of the pomegranate are expanding.

50. My heart is overcrowded like the narrow streets of a hundred towns.

51. Her breasts are showing.

52. The necklaces from this area, occasionally heavy and roughly formed, actually do 'bite' into the ladies' necks, as do the pas-

sionate lovers.

53. I might lose my religion.

54. Members of a religious order in Iraq.

55. A village.





Figure 6. Mohemmed Hatemî, playing the dimebek.

#### Band 4

'Dupeyî' (35)

Dance tunes, dupeyî.

Recorded at Hadjiabad, July 26, 1962.

Played by Kerim Bayiz, 25, peasant of Hadjiabad, on the double clarinet, duzele.

Kerim Bayiz, a tenant farmer, is the only clarinet player of Hadjiabad. He has made the instrument on which he plays from bird bones. Although fatigued from harvesting, in one instance he played in the manner described in the introduction for more than six minutes without a break. The grunting sounds which are heard on the recording result from the forceful intake of air through the nose at the same time that he is allowing air to escape from his mouth cavity into the clarinet. On the sustained

tones he adjusts the pitch of the duzele by pulling the threads fixed to the mouthpieces.

Dupeyî are very popular types of the many dances known among the Kurds. Kerim plays several dupeyî melodies in succession and adds his own improvisations. All are based on a metrical group of twelve beats which is subdivided in various ways; for example, 7 + 5, 5 + 7, or 4 + 5 + 3. The playing of various dance tunes in succession is customary when a long line of men is dancing to this music. This occurs chiefly at weddings.

#### Band 5

'Çî bû çit lê kirdim' (78)

Dance-song, royne.

Recorded at Yekşawa, August 11, 1962.

Alternating singers: Sayid, 30,<sup>56</sup> and Hasan, 25, peasants of Yekşawa.

The royne is a dance popular especially in the Mukri area. It is danced by men and/or women, according to local custom, who dance it in parallel lines. The verses are sung alternately by two singers. At the refrain the two voice parts overlap. Both the narrow melodic range and short phrases of this song are typical of the musical style associated with the third class of Kurdish music as described in the introduction. The subject matter of the text is of minor importance to both singers and audience; it has been stated repeatedly by Kurds that 'this is only music.' The rhymed verses are usually composed of lines of eight syllables. The order of the verses is not fixed; verses are sung as they come into the performer's mind. He is also free to extend the stroph by adding any lines which rhyme, even though these lines make little sense.

The base of the rhythmic organization is a recurrent metrical group of six beats. However, a complementary sequence of five and seven beat groups is often substituted. A variety of internal divisions of these metrical groups occurs: 2 + 2 + 2, 4 + 2, 3 + 3,

1 + 3 + 2, 2 + 3, 1 + 3 + 3, 3 + 4, 2 + 2 + 3, and others. The use of these aksak rhythms seems in part caused by the textual organization.<sup>57</sup> However, they occur with such regularity at cadential points, despite changes of text at these points, that they can be considered a stable aspect of the musical pattern. The lack of strict organization, both regarding form and rhythm, is a typical feature of eastern and southern Kurdish dance songs when compared with those of the northern Kurdish.

Text:

Your eyes are two stars  
Rising over the peak of Kemetu.<sup>58</sup>

I am Muslim, but for you I shall become a Jew.

Oh, what have you done, what have you done with me!

There was a feast, but you did not invite me.

From the corners of her eyes she stares at me,<sup>59</sup>

Like Manidje (daughter) of Afrasiab.  
Drop by drop I melt away to water.

Oh, what have you done . . .

I swear by the Koran of Mulla Xala,  
I have seen something in this house  
Which might kill a man of a thousand years!

Oh, what have you done . . .

She is walking slowly, slowly.  
Her shoes are black and she is mourning.  
She is without husband and is a widow.  
The black dressed (woman) is my soul.

Oh, what have you done . . .

Her lips are of European cord.<sup>60</sup>  
I send a messenger after her but she is not at home.

I go myself, she is at the well.

I do not know what to do.

Oh, what have you done . . .

My eye has fallen on the two apples,<sup>61</sup>  
I am crazy and wild and flee to the mountains  
I will grasp your cheeks with my lips.

Oh, what have you done . . .

I let my eye wander over the houses,  
My beloved is not visible among the beauties.  
I follow the traces of her comrades.  
My soul is your sacrifice.



That is what I shall tell you, my bride.

Oh, what have you done ....

May I become your sacrifice, oh Fatima!

Your breasts are like firm little fragrant melons.

I am a coffehouse keeper and need it.

Oh, what have you done ....

I am neither Medjnun nor Farhad,

I took troubles and in vain.

If you fulfill my desire

For Xadjidj or for Fatima

Or for house and fields and goods (?),

I will not give up my hope for you until my death.

Oh, what have you done ....

I swear by your figure which is tall like a vetch,<sup>62</sup>

By your soft temple curl,

Because of the bad people I do not want to say your name:

In the night I shall come three times to greet you.

Oh, what have you done ....

56. See notes to Side B, Band 3.

57. Aksak is a term derived from Turkish musical theory which is now applied generally to uneven divisions of metrical groups. Such uneven divisions are illustrated here and in the description of other recordings offered. In the past the term 'Bulgarian rhythm' has often been applied to this phenomenon since it is of frequent occurrence in Bulgarian folk music. In a metrical group composed of eight eighth notes one might have in aksak rhythm uneven accentual divisions such as 3 + 3 + 2 or 3 + 2 + 3 rather than the even accentual divisions of 2 + 2 + 4 or 4 + 2 + 2 as found in 4/4 meter in Western music.

58. Mountain in the Begzade region, west of Bukan.

59. Again, the references to various persons are difficult to follow. See footnote 31.

60. That is, very narrow.

61. Breasts.

62. Climbing herb.



Figure 7. Askar Tarzan, playing the tar.

#### Band 6

'Mang le 'asman goşey kyeşa' (38)

Wedding song, serdare.

Recorded at Hadjiabad, July 27, 1962.

Singer: Aşref Bikasî, 45, from Albulaq, maid to the landlord of Hadjiabad.

According to the informants this is a ceremonial song which is sung only by women. Although the text does not show any reason why it should be taboo for men, the melody is typical for that of songs sung by women in the Mukri region. Moreover, the timbre of the voice, as far as it has been culturally conditioned, is different from the more forced and nasal voice of the male singers. The wedding song is characterized by the same type of eight-syllable lines as the royne dance-song (Side B, Band 5).

Text:

The moon in the sky has drawn itself out.

The meeting of the lovers is silent.

The beautiful-eyed has drawn the murderer's sword.

You beauty, your pain shall come on me,  
Make me the confidant of your nights,  
I only want to get a kiss from you.

Don't look at my hat, I am a Kurd.<sup>63</sup>

You have robbed me of my memory, intellect,  
and patience:

The black birth mark<sup>64</sup> on the (wonderful)  
red (background),

The pattern near the nipple.

You are a Begzade,<sup>65</sup> I am from Bukan.<sup>66</sup>

63. During the reign of Reza Shah, the tribes had to change their traditional head-dresses for the 'Pahlewi-hat.' The line means: In spite of my Persian hat I am still a Kurd.

64. Birth-marks are considered marks of beauty.

65. Noble claneast of Bukan; the region in their possession is named after them.

66. Small town southeast of Mahabad.

#### Band 7

'Kelhorî' (84)

Song for travelling, working, hunting.

Recorded at Sarikamiş, August 15, 1962.

Singer: Mohammed Emin Brja, 45, peasant from the Kelhor tribe of the Afshar mountains.

The singer came to Sarikamiş, a village at the eastern border of the Mukri region, to have his grain ground in the local mill. His Kurdish dialect is different from that of the Mukri, though it is understood by them to a certain degree.

The Kelhor are a formerly nomadic tribe now living principally in the region southwest of Kermanshah. The settled group in the Afshar mountains seems to have been separated from them a long time ago. Apparently no connections have been maintained.

The musical style of this song is practically identical with that of Kelhorî music from the Kermanshah region. It is clearly



different, however, from all other Kurdish styles as well as from styles associated with the Lurs, Bachtians and Iraqi Arabians. Characteristics of the music are the oscillating melody, the particular timbre, and the manner in which partial glottal stops are used.

The text usually consists of twelve-syllable lines, which are rendered exceedingly long by inserting meaningless syllables. Two lines are frequently connected by a final rhyme. The present example gives only the two initial lines of the song.

#### Text:

She is as beautiful as a flower garden. She made me her prisoner. Ask the Leylî why she is angry with me, why she does not answer my message.

#### Band 8

'Lafla' (113)

Lullaby.

Recorded at Bawale (near Sonqor), September 25, 1962.

Singer: Batul Ziyayî, 26, a married woman from the noble class of the village Bawale.

Kurdish lullabies serve to comfort and quiet small children. According to the informant this is an 'old lullaby.' They are sung by married women only in the private rooms of a family, and never in the presence of adult men outside the harem. The texts of all lullabies, which are very similar, consist of flattering addresses and summons to be quiet or to sleep. The flattering includes the custom of addressing girls as if they were boys.

#### Text:

Dear suckling, sleep, sleep, lai lai lai.  
Child darling, lai lai lai, lai lai lai.

Dear suckling, sleep, lai lai lai, lai lai lai.  
Tender suckling, sleep, sleep.  
Lai lai lai lai, lai lai lai, lai lai lai.  
Beautiful (clean) child, sleep, sleep.

#### Band 9

'Manga lawaneh' (116)

Milking song, gawas.<sup>67</sup>

Recorded at Bawale, September 26, 1962.

Singer: Ziwar Khanum Ziyayî, 35, of Bawale, wife of a local landlord.

Gawas are sung while cows are being milked. These songs, unlike lullabies and some ceremonial wedding songs, may be heard by anyone. In this region milking normally takes place in the courtyard of the house. The call 'pi, pi, pi' is utilized both in the song and separately to cause the cow to remain in place and to stand still during the milking process. The song functions to soothe the cow during milking and the cow is addressed with many affectionate terms, 'You are dear, you are my life, you are my eyes, etc.,' many of which might also be directed by a man to a beloved woman. Other terms, 'You give me my wheat, you are the supporter of my brothers, etc.,' reflect the value placed upon the cows by this group.

#### Text:

Pî pî pî, you are dear, you are my life,  
you are my lifetime, you are my eyes.  
You give me my wheat, you are the supporter of my brothers.  
Pî pî pî, you are my life, my lifetime, the  
light of my eyes, give me your udder  
my dear cow, you are my lifetime,  
you are my eyes . . .

67. From the Kurdish word for cow, gaw.

#### Band 10

'Leylî çuye humam' (112)

Love song.

Recorded at Bawale, September 25, 1962.

Singer: Hasan, 32, peasant from the Bawale region, accompanying himself on the frame drum, dafre.

This type of song is recognizable by its limited melodic ambitus, the scarcity of melismas, and the strict rhythmic organization. It is very popular in the Kermanshah and Kulyai regions where it is a favorite form of men of the nobility, that is, the land-owning class, who spend the long winter evenings drinking local brandy made by Jews, smoking opium and enjoying this type of music which most of them are able to perform themselves. Here it is regarded as quite fashionable for a nobleman to sing and play the dafre, in opposition to the more northern regions where feudal conditions still prevail and the performance of music is generally left to commoners.

The song describes a girl anonymously addressed as Leyla, who is going to the women's bath. First she orders her maid to collect all the necessary toilet articles; then she starts for the bath, which is usually dark, but becomes 'bright like a moonlit night' when she enters. Her clothing and the way she undresses are described. The male interpreter was unable to faithfully translate the text as he was not acquainted with many of the specifically feminine items mentioned in the song.

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