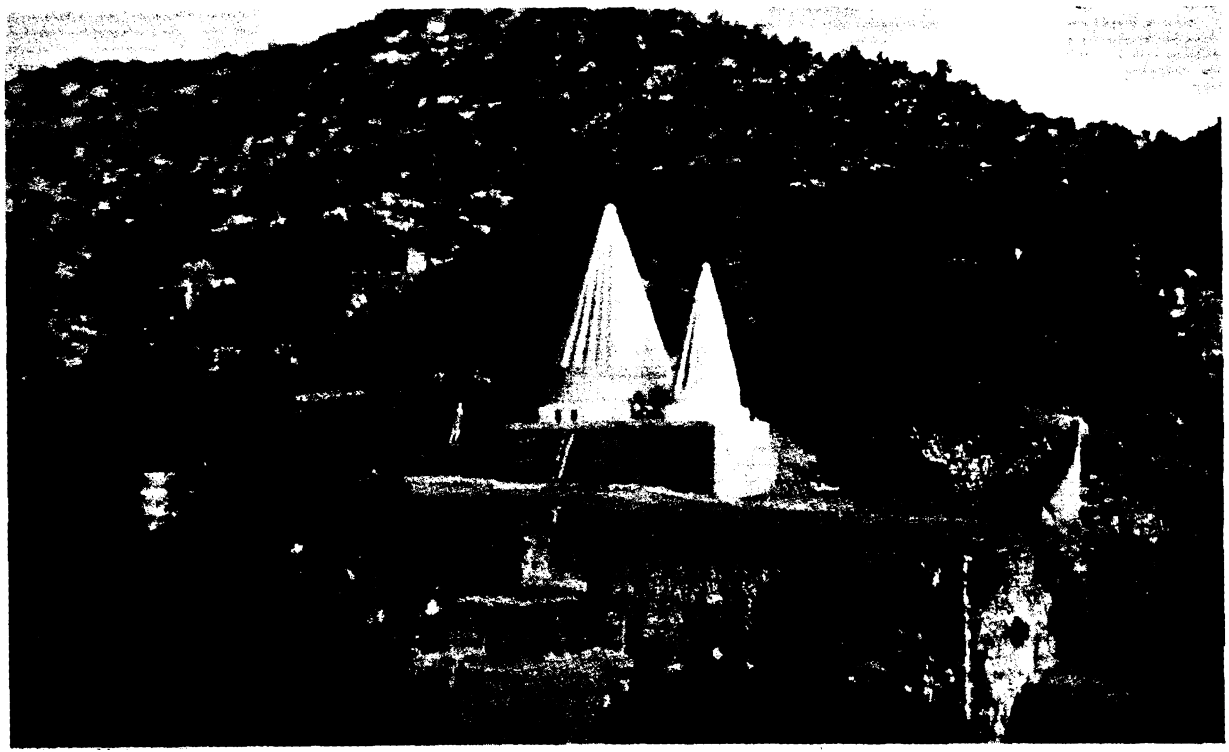


The Shrine of Shaykh Ādī (from the south).

PRIZE PUBLICATION FUND
VOL. XXI

A PILGRIMAGE TO LALISH

by
C. J. EDMONDS

Published by
THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY
OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND
and sold by its agents
LUZAC AND COMPANY LIMITED
46 Great Russell Street London WC1

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN AT
THE UNIVERSITY PRESS
ABERDEEN

IN PIAM MEMORIAM

E. G. BROWNE

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

In this little book it has not been my aim to give a systematic account of the Yazīdī people and their religion. As I said of the paper reproduced as Part I, so in the other Parts, except where the contrary is made quite clear, I have set down only such things as I have seen with my own eyes or have learnt at first hand in the course of my official duties or in conversation with the votaries themselves. Just as there are many earnest churchmen in this country whose knowledge of early Church history is defective or whose exposition of Christian dogma would hardly command general acceptance, so too I make no claim that what I have recorded here is a definitive statement of Yazīdī beliefs and practices with which all would agree.

The matter is based for the most part on entries in my diaries between 1930 and 1945. Now that, twenty or more years later, I have found time to collate these disjointed notes I realize that many of the gaps and obscurities in my picture could have been filled or clarified by quite short periods of sustained inquiry. My hope is that they will prove useful to future research workers in this field, as a starting point, perhaps, for some, for others as a new source worthy of consideration with other sources with which they are already familiar.

Proper names have been transliterated in accordance with the rules recommended by the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names for Arabic and Kurdish place names, except that to represent Arabic *ة* in Arabic names I have preferred *-a* to *-ah* as more convenient for a region where Arabic and Kurdish names are found side by side, and are not always easily distinguishable. Kurdish words and phrases quoted as such have been transliterated according to the system used in the *Kurdish-English Dictionary* compiled by Colonel T. Wahby and myself (the Clarendon Press, 1966): of this I only need explain here that the vowels *a* and *o* are always long, other long vowels are distinguished by the circumflex accent, the consonants *c* and *j* have their Turkish values of English *j* and French *j* respectively, and *x* represents خ.

There have been many changes in Iraq since I left the country in 1945, and I have often found it difficult to decide whether to

use the present or the past tense; I must ask the reader's indulgence for any inconsistency he may detect in this respect.

I have to thank Sir Reader Bullard and Professor A. K. S. Lambton, who kindly read through the typescript, for valuable comments and advice.

Although for many years I held posts in Her Majesty's Foreign Service and under the Government of Iraq any views expressed in this book, and the responsibility for them, are mine alone.

C.J.E.

PART I

THE AUTUMN FESTIVAL OF THE YAZĪDĪS

(A paper read to the Royal Asiatic Society on the occasion of the presentation of the Burton Memorial Medal, 14 February 1963)

My first duty is to express my deep sense of gratitude for an honour as unexpected as it is highly appreciated: unexpected for obvious reasons; appreciated because it has been awarded by this Society, because it is associated with the name of Richard Burton who, ever since my youthful thoughts first turned towards a career in Asia, has been one of my heroes and whose *Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah and Meccah* is still a never-ending source of instruction and delight, and because, when I look at the list of my predecessors, I feel very proud to find myself in such company.

Although I spent the greater part of my career in an Arab land, any original exploration and research that I have been able to carry out has been on its non-Arab fringes or across the border in Persia. I have to thank your President for his generous interpretation of the word 'cognate', and so for allowing me to choose a subject relating to the Kurds and to describe my own pilgrimage, one that involved no danger or hardship, to the Metropolitan Shrine of the Yazīdīs on the occasion of their great Autumn Festival.

The Yazīdīs and the problems of their origins and their beliefs have given rise to a considerable literature. In this paper, however, I propose (except where the contrary is explicitly stated) to report only things which I have seen with my own eyes, or which I have learnt at first hand in the course of my official duties or in conversation with the votaries themselves. I will only say by way of preface that all my information supports the view, now accepted, I believe, by the majority of competent scholars, that, whatever elements their theology may have retained from older systems or however far afield it may have been led by later metaphysical speculation or ingenious punning legends, the organization of the community is essentially that of an Islamic dervish brotherhood, and that its founder was Shaykh 'Adī ibn Musāfir, an orthodox Muslim mystic of repute, who died and

was buried at Lālish, thirty miles NNE of Mosul, in about the year A.D. 1160.

They relate that when Shaykh Ādī (as the Yazīdīs generally pronounce the name) first withdrew from Syria to the calm of this secluded valley he found already established in an oratory built by two Christians, Hanna and Barhanna, four saintly personages: Mīr Shaykh Shams and Malak Shaykh Farkhadīn, sons of Ēzdīna Mīr by one wife, and Mīr Shaykh Sajādīn and Malak Shaykh Nāsirdīn, his sons by another wife, and that they were reinforced shortly afterwards by a fifth, Shaykh Assin. (Again I use the garbled forms of the common Islamic names as generally pronounced. In conversation with strangers the Yazīdīs often refer to Assin as Shaykh Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, the name of a celebrated Muslim mystic of the seventh century A.D.) These six personages, transformed from ordinary corporeal beings in this world into purely spiritual beings in heaven, together with Tāūs-ē Malak, the Peacock Angel, who presides, constitute the Heptad of Angels who meet in solemn conclave every autumn at the shrine of Shaykh Ādī, to decide the course of events for the coming year, the President himself being responsible for the execution of the decisions. This is the occasion of the great Autumn Festival of the Jamā'iyya or Assembly.

The six Shaykh-Angels are in turn identified with four archangels of the original creation known to Islam, Jabrā'īl, Mikā'īl, 'Izrā'īl and Isrāfīl, together with Shamkhā'īl and Dardā'īl; two independent informants equated Sajādīn with Jabrā'īl but there was no agreement about the other identifications. As regards Tāūs-ē Malak, the frankest of my informants told me the story of how he refused to obey God's command to bow down and worship Adam on the ground that it would be wrong for an archangel thus to admit the superiority of a mortal. This certainly seems to identify him with Iblīs, Satan, of the Qur'ān, but with the important difference that in the Yazīdī version the Almighty, with becoming magnanimity, at once admitted that he had been in error to issue such a preposterous order. For them Tāūs-ē Malak is thus not Old Nick, the Devil, but the best and most beautiful of the archangels who, after this little domestic difficulty with the Creator, was rehabilitated and, as I have already mentioned, was made Chairman and Managing Director of the Board appointed to conduct the business of this world.

The great majority of the Yazīdī people are today established in Iraq. On the basis of my own village lists and the census of 1957 I estimate their numbers at between forty and forty-five thousand, rather more than half of them in some seventy-five villages on the north and south sides of the Jabal Sinjār, the great hog's back rising out of the Syrian desert west of Mosul, and the rest (apart from a small group farther north) in some fifty-five villages in the *qaḍās* of Dihōk and Shaykhān ('the Shaykhān group' for short) scattered astride a line running eastwards from the Tigris to the Khāzir river roughly twenty-five miles north of the latitude of that city. Their social organization is at the same time tribal and theocratic.

In Sinjār there are about sixteen tribes more or less homogeneously settled in their own villages and divided (except for the Faqīrān to be discussed later, one minor clan, and some tent-dwellers) into two major confederations, Juwāna and Khuwērkī, the men and women of which are distinguishable by their costumes and their hair-styles. In Shaykhān also there are about sixteen tribes, but the population of most villages is more mixed.

Theocratically Yazīdī society is divided into six classes: the princely family; three other hereditary castes of Shaykhs, Pīrs and Qawwāls; an ascetic order of Faqīrs; and the commoners, generally referred as Murīds, the disciples, though the term is slightly misleading.

The Shaykhs are grouped in three endogamous dynasties descended from the saints of the original foundation: the first, called Shamsānī, from four sons of Ēzdīna Mīr; the second, called Ādānī from Shaykh Assin; and the third, called Qātānī, not from Shaykh Ādī himself who was childless, but from three collaterals of the Musāfir family, the Shaykhs Ōbakr, Ismā'īl Anzal and Avdalqādir Raḥmānī. For purposes of marriage the princely family is included in the Qātānī dynasty. Two of the Shamsānī families and the Ādānī dynasty are further subdivided under the names of certain second generation ancestors: Āmadīn and Bābik, sons of Shams; Mand and Khātūn-ā Farkha, son and 'daughter' of Farkhadīn; and Sharfadīn, Ibrāhīm Khatnī and Mūs, sons of Shaykh Assin.

Amongst the Juwāna of Sinjār, where he was sent by Shaykh Ādī to introduce the mystic way, Sharfadīn enjoys a status almost

equal to that of Shaykh Ādī himself; indeed I was more than once assured there that he was the 'real founder' of the religion. He has a large shrine at the village of Rāshid in North Sinjār and, in obedience to his ordinance, the Juwāna men wear their hair long, often braided into a number of rat-tail plaits (*goskê*) falling down on each side of the face.

In this connexion the words 'ancestor', 'son' and 'descendant' are not in all cases to be taken literally. The miraculous creation of men without the intervention of a mother is a common feature of Yazīdī legend: according to one story Shaykh Assin himself was created by Shaykh Ādī from a tooth (hence the name) extracted from the jaw of Farkhadīn; the Shaykhs of the Mand family are not descended from his sons naturally born but from three male children created by him out of an apple, a snake, and a staff; and so on.

At this point I ought perhaps to mention another difficulty which the inquirer with a tidy mind will always encounter. For people who believe in the transmigration of souls what appear to us to be the most appalling inconsistencies and anachronisms present no difficulty whatever: it is as silly to say that Shaykh X and Shaykh Y whose appearances on earth seem to have been separated by one or more centuries, or even the archangel Gabriel and Shaykh Sajādin, cannot be 'the same' as to try to make out that Mr Jones who was seen last night in tails, white waistcoat and decorations cannot be the same as Mr Jones who was seen the day before in a lounge suit or last summer in shorts and an open shirt.

Next to the Shaykhs come the Pīrs. They are comparatively unimportant and I recorded no legend regarding their origin. There are four main families, Ḥasan Mamān, Āfāt, Jarwān and Hājālī, each with its subdivisions.

The Qawwāls are defined in the *Shaykhān Memorial* (a document I shall be discussing in a moment) as the 'religious mentors and preachers of the community and the bearers of the Standards (*sincaq*) among the Yazīdīs'. They must be able to read and write and are recruited from two families (which the other Yazīdīs call Tāzhī, Arabians) now resident at the villages of Bāzān and Ba'shīqa, situated in the plain, well to the south of the others of the Shaykhān group. The standards are said to be made of brass in the form of a peacock set on a stand, made in sections, like a

tall candlestick; they are exhibited to the faithful by the Qawwāls on their tours to collect their alms and oblations.

The Faqīrs are an ascetic order, admission to which is by initiation and which includes Shaykhs (of the Ōbakr and Ibrāhīm Khatnī families), Pīrs (of the Hōmar Khāla section of Pīr Jarwān), and commoners (of the Dīnādī and Sharqī tribes of Sinjār and the Rūbanishtī of Shaykhān). Members wear next to the skin a black shirt of rough wool (but other garments may be worn over it), a red woven girdle round the waist, and a headdress, in one form or another, also generally of black. They are supposed to live saintly lives and to be secure from assault in return; if a Faqīr should intervene between two fighting forces it would be an act of gross impiety not to desist from battle. In the Jabal Sinjār, however, that is not so easy; and in 1918, when the British army was advancing up the Tigris, it was the chief of the Dīnādī, a doughty old warrior named Hamō Shērō, who communicated with the British commander to offer co-operation against the Turks and, by reason of his military prowess, was recognized as 'Chief of the Mountain'. Of them the *Shaykhān Memorial* says: 'They are ascetics and the servants of Shaykh Ādī within the shrine and are headed by the Steward of the Kitchen of Shaykh Ādī, who is appointed by the Mīr.'

Every Yazīdī is born the Murīd, that is disciple or client, of a Shaykh and a Pīr to whom, in return for ghostly comfort and other services connected with birth, marriage and death, he must pay certain dues glorified by the name of alms to the patrons' eponymous ancestors; although most of them are illiterate the Shayhks are expected, by reason of their superior sophistication and wealth, to guide their clients in worldly matters also, and to look after any that fall on evil days. After reaching the age of puberty the Yazīdī must adopt a Brother and/or a Sister of the Hereafter (*bira-ê axiretê, xushk-a axiretê*), chosen in theory from any Shaykh or Pīr family but generally (and in the case of a member of a shaykhly family always) from that of the novice's own Patron-Shaykh. According to some he is 'inherited' by or must choose yet a fourth spiritual guide styled Murabbī or Tutor, also from a Shaykh or Pīr family. The whole arrangement thus gives the impression of being a clever swindle, planned to enable a few privileged families to live as parasites on a credulous community discouraged by a religious taboo from learning to

read and write. Every Shaykh and Pīr is himself the Murīd of a Shaykh and a Pīr, not of his own dynasty it is true, but here income and expenditure must more or less cancel out. All these obligations apply to women as well as to men.

After the hereditary classes the *Shaykhān Memorial* mentions four appointments, all made by the Mīr: the Bābā Shaykh, the chief religious authority and exponent of the faith, who must be of the family of Farkhadīn; the Pēshīmām with a number of deputies all drawn from the family of Shaykh Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (*scil.* Assin) charged especially with the celebration of marriages (according to some this office is a recent innovation); the Kōchaks, who are volunteers for the religious life and are the 'outdoor servants of Shaykh Ādī who fetch wood and draw water under the orders of Bābā Shaykh'; and the Chāwūsh, the resident caretaker of the shrine, who must be celibate.

One more group remains to be mentioned, the 'nuns' of Shaykh Ādī called Faqra, seven at the time of my pilgrimage, under a Mother Superior styled Dāy Kābānī.

Lastly we come to the Mīr, the supreme head of the Yazīdī community. The late Mīr, Sa'īd Beg, was a debauched profligate. In the year 1930, in consequence of complaints of misbehaviour and maladministration in that he was not only spending the considerable revenues accruing to his office on drink and dancing girls in the city of Mosul, but while in his cups was mortgaging Yazīdī villages with a gang of rascally lawyers there at high interest in order to provide himself with even more cash for his dissipations, we in the Iraqi Ministry of Interior were considering the possibility of dismissing him and devising for the Yazīdīs a Community Law on the lines of laws already enacted to regulate the affairs of the Christian and Jewish religious minorities. We therefore invited the leading Yazīdīs of both Sinjār and Shaykhān to submit their proposals. The result was the *Shaykhān Memorial*, signed by Bābā Shaykh, the Pēshīmām, the senior representative of the family of Shaykh Shams styling himself 'Wazīr of Shaykh Ādī', and the heads of the Qawwāls, the Faqīrs and the Kōchaks; and this is what it said about the Mīr:

The Mīr of Shaykhān is the Supreme Head of our religion; he is free and a law unto himself, and no one has the right to oppose him or negotiate with him; he cannot be removed except by natural death or

assassination (which God forbid). This authority belongs to him from the foundation of this religion to the present day.... His revenues are derived from the alms offered to Shaykh 'Adī, Shaykh Shams and the Standards.

On this rock were wrecked all efforts to introduce reforms. To understand this extraordinary attitude of unquestioning submission, even to a man of Sa'īd Beg's character, I think we must go back to the legend of the origin of the family. When the life of Shaykh Ādī was manifestly ebbing to its close a quarrel broke out among his companions as to which of the three dynasties, Shamsānī, Ādānī or Qātānī, should inherit the primacy. In response to the old man's prayers God deputed Tāūs-ē Malak to settle the matter. The Peacock Angel accordingly came down from heaven, but stopped at a distance of two cubits from the ground, for all who put their feet on earth are mortal and die. Crying in a loud voice, 'I am the Chief of the Archangels and created existence at my will', he made a grasping motion in the air with his right hand, held his closed fist under his left arm-pit for a few moments, and then drew out from under his cloak a man, whom he placed on the ground. This was Chōl Beg (so named because he was created out of the *chol,* that is the void), who became the ancestor of the princely family. The Mīr would then be the 'descendant' (in the sense already discussed) and Representative on Earth of Tāūs-ē Malak himself.

The festival of the Jamā'iyya is celebrated at Lālish every year from 23 to 30 September O.S., that is from 6 to 13 October of our calendar.

The first European to attend and describe it seems to have been A. H. Layard, who was there for three days in 1846 and again for three days in 1849, just three years before Burton's pilgrimage to Mecca. Many other European travellers have since visited and even made rough plans of the shrine. But the only other eyewitness accounts of the Autumn Festival known to me —apparently of a single day in each case—are two articles which appeared in a popular weekly called *Parade* published by General Headquarters, British Middle-East Land Forces, one in 1943 and one in 1946, both very slight in content but illustrated with excellent photographs. It seems almost incredible that no more

serious account of this Festival, the most important in the Yazīdī year, should have been published in a European language since Layard's of 113 years ago. All I can say is that I have not traced one.

It was in 1944, when the clouds of war had rolled back from the Middle East, that I was at last able to take a brief respite from my official duties and realize a long cherished ambition to attend the Jamā'iyya. I had been told that for one unable to remain the whole seven days the last four would be the most interesting. Accordingly my pilgrimage began on 10 October, forenoon, when I was met at the village of Bingalī (about four miles NNW of 'Ayn Sifnī, the administrative headquarters of the *qaḍa* of Shaykhān) by a small deputation of Yazīdīs including Shaykh Ḥājī of the Bābā Shaykh family and the chiefs of the Mahirkān tribe of Sinjār and the Dumilī and Tirk tribes of Shaykhān. They said that this year the attendance was much smaller than usual, partly owing to rationing and the consequent difficulty in obtaining enough of the white calico required for new clothes, and partly owing to the recent death of the Mīr, Sa'īd Beg. Like Gilbert's gondolier 'a taste for drink combined with gout had doubled him up for ever', and the problem of paying off the late chief's mortgages and other debts, amounting, it was said, to £40,000, a considerable sum in those days, and of introducing some kind of order into the administration of the not inconsiderable revenues of the shrine, was a constant topic of conversation during my stay.

From Bingalī we rode northwards through low hills with a mountain stream constantly splashing across a rough track bordered by a tangle of brambles, willows and other scrub. After about half an hour we passed some terraces of irrigated summer cultivation, and the gully broadened out at the confluence of tributary brooks coming in from the east and the west. Here we turned west and breasting a low rise saw before us the two lovely white fluted spires of the shrine rising out of a mass of dark green foliage about a mile away.

The valley of Lālish, which is only about two miles long, is enclosed: at the upper, or western, end by the 4,000-foot peak of Hizrat or, as one of my informants called it, Jūdī; the ridge on the north is Ziyārat (with a minor feature above the shrine named Arafāt); that on the south Mishat.

My tent had been pitched in an olive grove some distance short of the shrine, just by a single-arched bridge of dressed stone called the Ancient Bridge or the Bridge of Prayer, which marks the boundary of the sacred area within which all Yazīdīs go bare foot. New arrivals must run across the bridge, run back, and then over again, before going down to the stream to refresh themselves after the fatigues of the way and to make their good resolutions. The bridge and a niche in a large rock close by are two of the seventy holy stations which the pilgrims circumambulate once or more during the seven days. Those I saw generally came down in little groups of three or four, men and women or boys and girls. As they crossed the bridge each would bend down and kiss a coping stone, or touch it with the right hand and then lift the hand to the lips, before going on to the rock and then down to the water out of sight for a few moments. This done, some of them would pick a sprig of olive to wear in the turban.

A few minutes after my arrival Taḥsīn Beg, the new Mīr, a small boy of about twelve, came down with other members of the princely family to call. He was followed by the Bābā Shaykh and his attendant Kōchaks, dignified bearded figures, each clad in flowing robes of white, with white turban and cloak, and a woven scarf of orange, or orange and black, thrown over the shoulder and across the breast, in the manner of a deacon's stole. After an interval for lunch and a rest I walked up to the shrine.

The main block, which is oriented east and west, is built on the steep left bank of the stream and is made up of: the sanctuary containing the tombs of Shaykhs Ādī, Assin and Ōbakr; an enclosed forecourt; a confused maze of living quarters, kitchens, store rooms and yards at different levels along the south side of the sanctuary and the forecourt; and a westerly extension consisting in the northern half of a paved market-place with shops, and in the southern half of a low building dedicated to the Chilmēr. The name may refer to a group of forty 'companions' of Shaykh Ādī, but it is also a nickname of Sharfadīn, son of Assin, commemorating an occasion when he lifted with ease a large dressed stone (still to be seen there) which forty men had failed to move, a feat greeted with shouts of '*Aferîn Chilmêre!*', which might be translated 'Bravo, Mr Lever!', *chilmêrde, chilmêre* being the ordinary Kurdish for 'lever'. The roof, moreover, is known as the 'Terrace of Shaykh Assin'.

The Pilgrim's Way, approaching from the east, swings round northwards to pass between the Chilmēr and the baptistry (to which I shall be returning later), and then broadens out into an open paved space which I shall call 'the Court of the Fountains'. From this a large arched gateway leads into the market-place. The buildings are for the most part of dressed stone, but just by this gateway there is an incongruous touch in the shape of a raised belvedere of modern construction with sides of glass and a rusty tin roof; it is used as a guest-room, and is named after Zūrō Āghā, a Caucasian Yazīdī, at whose expense it, or its predecessor, was built. The tomb of Shaykh Shams, a separate building, stands just behind the baptistry, and that of Shaykh Ḥasan al-Musallakh (not to be confused with Ḥasan al-Baṣrī) a little farther on. Other tombs, oratories, and hostels for the reception of pilgrims, are scattered over the hillsides.

I was welcomed onto the terrace of Shaykh Assin by the Mīr and his party, which included his grandmother, Mayān Khātūn. Mixed dancing was in progress in a square, paved 'well', open onto the road but enclosed on three sides by the flight of steps leading up onto the terrace and two walls. Music was provided by a double flute (*mizwij*) and a drum (*tumbilk*). The figure seemed to me to be the common *Milanê*, a swaying, revolving line with each dancer holding his or her neighbour's hand, with fingers interlocked, down at the full length of the arm but pressed backwards so as to bring their shoulders together.

There were a few high conical felt caps (*qim*) and long white gowns from Sinjār among the men; but most of them were Shaykhānīs in white drawers, coloured zouave jackets, and turbans generally of red and white check but some all white, and one or two head-cloths worn Arab fashion. Many had a white bandage tied over the turban; this is issued by the administrator of Shaykh Shams's to the votary for his ritual visits to two sacred springs, the White Spring (*Kanî-a Sipî*) which feeds the baptistry, and Zamzam which rises inside the sanctuary; after dipping it into the water the recipient wears it until he reaches home after the festival, when it is deposited with the family treasures.

Similarly most if not all the women in the line were Shaykhānīs (there were no Khuwērkī from Sinjār easily distinguished by their all-white costumes and large white turbans). Most of them wore a white skirt, a coloured zouave jacket, a woven 'shawl'

(*mêzer*) of white homespun wool draped over one shoulder, a small turban of dark silk with a solid crown of silver coins arranged in spirals showing above and more coins strung round it, a necklace of large beads mostly amber and red, as well as other gold and silver ornaments hanging down over the chest; some wore over the right temple a curious gilt ornament like a small old-fashioned ear-trumpet; some had their eyes darkened and enlarged with *kohl*. Married women (many of them looked quite children) were distinguished by a narrow white scarf (*lechek*) involved in the turban and brought down to be wound round the neck or the mouth. The women tended to join the line in fours or fives together, but not invariably. Most of them wore the most solemn expressions as they danced, but here and there I noticed eyes twinkling with excitement, and on this and subsequent days there was one gay spark who always seemed to manage to get between two girls and keep them giggling with some kind of gallant nonsense.

Several times during the afternoon the report of a rifle-shot from the hill above announced the arrival of a belated pilgrim. At one point the dance was interrupted to make way for the Bābā Shaykh, the Kōchaks and the Chāwūsh as, in the course of their circumambulation before returning to the shrine for other ceremonies to be performed after sunset, they entered the well in solemn procession to 'visit' one of the stations, a stone, black with the soot left by the little olive-oil flares regularly lit there, in one of the side walls.

Finally the dancing ceased and I returned to my tent. It was resumed after dark and I could hear singing in the direction of the shrine. But I had so much to record while my impressions of all I had seen and heard were fresh that I felt it would be wise to stifle my curiosity.

The next morning, 11 October, I was awakened by the shrill voices of girls and boys coming down to 'visit' the bridge and the rock. About seven o'clock I went up to the shrine. Entering the market place from the Court of the Fountains through the great arched gateway I was ushered across to a door at the far end, the door of Āmadīn (by whose name the market place is also distinguished), up through a sort of guardroom and down a flight of steps into the forecourt of the sanctuary.

This forecourt, the Parlour of Shaykh Ādī, is enclosed on the

north by a plain wall of dressed stone and on the west and south by the complex of living rooms, kitchens, stores and the Chilmēr, which I have already mentioned. The north-western corner of the court is fenced off from the rest by two low walls and shaded by a trellis of climbing vines to form the Parlour of Farkhadīn, reserved for his descendant, the Bābā Shaykh. The west façade of the sanctuary constitutes the eastern side of the court. This too is of ashlar and is pierced at its northern end by the main entrance, an elaborately carved doorway. Immediately to the right of the door, in low relief, is an upright black snake about six feet high glistening, at the time of my visit, with a fresh application of olive-oil soot. Both above the door and on the wall to the right of the snake are carved a number of curious designs including two birds which I could not identify, sun, moon and stars within a circle, other circles decorated internally which they called 'shields', a comb, something that looked like a pierced ladle, and a crook. At the southern end of the same wall a plainer opening leads to what are at festival time the private quarters of the Mīr, a long terrace, again really a roof nearly on the same level as the floor of the forecourt, called the Terrace of the Goats (*Ban-ê Bizna*).

I found the Bābā Shaykh holding court in the Parlour of Farkhadīn, sitting on the ground with his back to the low wall, flanked by his attendant Kōchaks in their orange-and-black stoles, and smoking a pipe with a stem which I judged to be quite three feet long. I was invited to sit opposite him on a bench of beaten earth with Mayān Khātūn on my left. In spite of my efforts to guide the conversation into more interesting channels they would keep reverting to their grievances against their neighbours, the rascally lawyers of Mosul, and the local administration for its indifference to their complaints. I was therefore greatly relieved when the Chāwūsh offered to show me over the sanctuary.

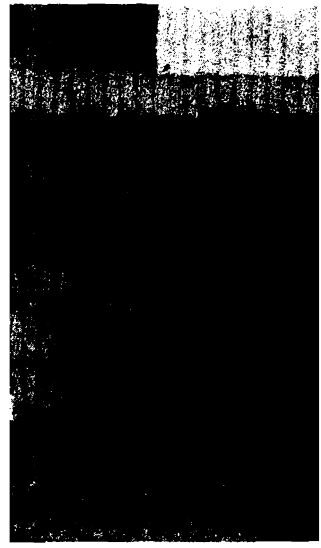
The door with the snake leads directly into the main hall, which is divided in length by a line of five arches into two parallel naves, the southern nave, with a floor of beaten earth, being a little lower than the other. In the south-west corner the Cistern of Nasirdīn, a rectangular tank almost flush with the floor and measuring perhaps six feet by a little more and about three feet deep, was brimming to the lip with the feed and waste pipes passing under the walls. Several iron lamp-stands, each provided with four iron 'saucers' to take the little olive-oil flares, were set

PLATE I

(*a*) Mīr Taḥsīn Beg and Mayān Khātūn.

(*b*) Mixed Dancing at Shaykh Ādī's.

(*c*) Forecourt of Shaykh Ādī's.



(*d*) **The Chāwūsh on the Roof.**

in niches in the south wall; the floor below them was befouled with greasy splashes of oil.

I had, of course, taken off my shoes before stepping over the threshold, so as not to touch it with my feet, into the sanctuary. At the far end of the north nave we turned left through an opening in the wall into a chapel containing the shabbily-draped altar-tomb of Shaykh Assin, and thence back westwards into the larger chapel of Shaykh Ādī, whose altar-tomb, about six feet high and covered with a bright cloth of red and green, my companions kissed devoutly; it could be seen, but not reached, from the nave through a gap in the wall. Continuing in the same direction we passed into a large room, I judged about fifteen yards long, with great jars of olive oil, some full some empty, ranged on each side, and thence into an untidy chamber containing the tomb of Ōbakr with no cover at all to hide its leprous plaster and looking very neglected.

Retracing our steps through the chapel of Shaykh Assin to the north nave we passed through a door in the east wall into another hall, the Hall (*heywan*) of Sharfadīn, where a servant was waiting with my shoes. From a verandah we looked down onto a yard called the Shambles (*gaykuj*), some way down the slope but within the outer wall of the precincts, an open-air kitchen where there were immense stacks of firewood, several large cauldrons, many smaller cooking-pots, two live oxen tied up, and pools of blood where animals had already been slaughtered. From here we went down to the Shambles and thence into a most extraordinary maze of passages and rooms with a fast-flowing stream which ran through them at floor level or below, feeding several tanks on the way, under the Terrace of the Goats; for convenience I will call it the Mīr's basement.

The inspection of the interior completed, we climbed up onto the roof of the sanctuary. A rectangular superstructure of ashlar about twelve feet high, the south face decorated with reliefs and carvings resembling those on the façade, encloses the domes of the two major chapels where these come above the general level of the roof; and it is from the roof of this superstructure that rise the two spires. They were gleaming with fresh white gypsum, and masons superintended by a Kōchak were putting the finishing touches to the smaller spire of Ōbakr which rests immediately on the main roof.

Towards eleven o'clock there were unmistakable signs of mounting excitement. A space was cleared down the middle of the market place and the pilgrims lined the sides against the shops, or climbed to other points of vantage, to witness the ceremony known as the Qabākh, in which only members of the Māmūsī, Qā'idī and Tirk tribes take part. (The majority if not all the members of the Qā'idī and Tirk are affiliated to Ōbakr, and the Māmūsī to Ismā'īl, both of the Qātānī dynasty, whereas the ceremony is associated with Shams; there is, no doubt, a legend explaining the reasons for this but I have no record of it). A group of young men armed with rifles climbed to the ridge above the shrine, fired three salvoes, and then raced down the slope to the containing wall, where they fired another volley. After that another group of young men, some with rifles and others carrying newly-cut rods, came dashing through an opening to the left of the door of Āmadīn, and across the cleared space; this was a false alarm. There was a similar second false alarm before a bull galloped out in full career, with the hue and cry in close pursuit, and out through the great archway. But, instead of taking the path to the tomb of Shaykh Shams as I suppose was intended, it broke away to the left down the Pilgrim's Way past my tent. There was a long chase before it was dragged back in triumph by a rope round its neck, through the Court of the Fountains and up the track to the tomb, to be slaughtered. The whole valley echoed with the shrill trilling of the female spectators. Some of the young men were carrying a white cloth, called the 'Presentation' (*xelat*), as a portable canopy while other jostled to acquire merit by touching, or better still getting under, it. There was a general move up to follow the bull but I did not myself see the subsequent proceedings. Pronouncing the formula 'With God's permission' (*destûr Ellah*) the administrator slaughters the bull, by cutting the throat, at the foot of the steps leading up to the tomb; but it is at the hostel of Ōbakr that the meat is distributed to those who took part in the chase as *simat*, a ceremonial meal of stewed meat and wheat.

My illustrations will already have shattered some illusions. For us, used as we are to the magnificent specimens bred in this country for stud purposes, or to films of the *corrida* of Spain, the word 'bull' is rather misleading. The local cattle are miserable creatures compared with ours. This particular animal was no

exception, it was not decked with garlands, nor was it white, as so many authors who had never seen the ceremony have alleged it must be. But as the crowds returned to the Court of the Fountains it was a lovely scene, with the musical plash of running water on every side and the sun shining through the thick foliage of plane, mulberry and fig to cast a fretted shade over the sparkling jewellery and the bright colours, advantageously set off by the high proportion of white, of the costumes.

There was more dancing at the Chilmēr well in the afternoon. There were two interruptions: once when the Steward of the Kitchen or Farrāsh in the black clothing of a Faqīr, followed by three of the resident nuns robed all in white, came with his pan of olive oil to place a lighted wick in the niche which Bābā Shaykh had 'visited' the previous day; and once by the Kōchaks on circumambulation. For a time they had two small boys in the middle, miming, cock-fighting and wrestling, all in time to the music. Then a gang of young bloods started a livelier step, which quickly degenerated into horse-play. Finally the party broke up and the pilgrims dispersed for the *simat* distributed by the custodian (*micêwer*) attached to each hostel.

After dark I found the dancing again in full swing. The numbers were much greater than during the day, and the well could not hold them all. The line, revolving anticlockwise, spread up the steps on one side, round in an arc behind our seats on the terrace, and down again the other side. It was pitch dark with no moon, and the only light was from tapers held by onlookers sitting on the terrace, on the steps (now within the circle of dancers), or on the platform of the baptistry opposite, or standing in the well itself. At one time six tapers held close together on the steps gave quite a good light; at others there was just enough for one to distinguish the line of white drawers of the men and here and there white patches rising to shoulder height where there was a group of girls draped in their white 'shawls'. Once or twice some youths tried to start a song; but there was no confident voice to lead and it did not get very far. The necklace of one girl broke and there was a busy search for the beads, fortunately large. The music never stopped the whole hour I was there.

The next morning, 12 October, I invited Shaykh Ḥājī to come with me for a stroll over Arafāt. At the hospice of Ōbakr we met the grandson of Hamō Shērō, the Grand Old Man of the

Jabal Sinjār, who had just completed a ritual 'visit'. From here we had a splendid view down onto the complex of buildings that make up the shrine, and the busy crowds of pilgrims, like so many ants, moving hither and thither through the shady courts, for trees grow in them all in spite of their stone pavements. After inspecting the hostels of Khātūn-ā Farkha (the only female shaykhly eponym) and Shaykh Ismā'īl, we went on to a cave with a wishing pillar known as *ustûn-a meraz* (if you can get your arms around it your wish will be fulfilled), and so down to the hostel of Pīr Hājālī, a neat, well-kept building with two chained lions facing each other carved on the lintel. The custodian had been in the British-officered Levies, and I had some difficulty in persuading him to relax from his sergeant-major's stance for the photograph.

Walking across to the tomb of Shaykh Shams I was just in time to witness an interesting scene of which I had not been warned. In the distance, but gradually coming nearer, I could hear the plaintive wail of a pipe accompanied by the slow beats of a drum. The Bābā Shaykh himself then appeared from the direction of the Court of the Fountains marching slowly in procession up the steep path and carrying, with assistance, the great twin gilded balls for the top of the spire. All the bystanders stepped forward to kiss the sacred symbol. Then followed an auction, the balls to be hauled up the spiral scaffolding and placed in position in the name of the person offering the highest contribution to the charity; the honour went to two brothers who bid six dinars (£6). A second auction for a similar honour attached to the first application of white gypsum plaster for the new coat raised four dinars. Two of the nuns were in the crowd, each with a white mark like a Hindu caste mark on the forehead, a dab of the consecrated plaster applied with the finger. I had noticed the same mark on the forehead of the young Mīr when he called at my tent on the first day and now concluded, rightly as I was later informed, that there must have been a ceremony of the same kind for the spires of Shaykh's Ādī and Assin earlier that morning, before I arrived. The mark is called *tobîrk*, that is the Arabic *tabarruk*, 'blessing'. The preparation of the plaster is itself a ceremonial act, and on the previous day I had witnessed the pounding of the gypsum to the accompaniment of pipes.

Over the door of the tomb, which is approached through an

open paved forecourt, is carved a rough representation of the characteristic fluted spire, and I could see a small flame glimmering in the darkness of the interior. Shaykh Shams was, as I mentioned earlier, the senior Companion of Shaykh Ādī, his Wazīr. But today (as is stated in the *Shaykhān Memorial* signed by, among others, the representative of the Shams family) the considerable revenues offered in his name go, not to his descendants but to the Mīr. They are collected on his behalf by an administrator who need not even be a member of the family.

The baptistry, just below, is a solid stone construction built on a raised terrace and surmounted, like a tomb, by a fluted spire. On the south side a small vestibule opens into the baptismal chamber for girls (*kanî-a kîjka*), where by the light of a dim taper I could see an oblong tank with the water welling up in one of the far corners. Access to the chamber for boys (*kanî-a kurka*) is by a door in the north wall: this was much lighter; the tank, more nearly square, about five feet by four and three deep, contains a large species of piebald newts called *horî* after the Houris of Paradise. From the tanks the water spills over into two troughs in the Court of the Fountains, where all and sundry may come to water their animals, wash their cooking-pots, and so on.

My tour of inspection finished I made my way to Bābā Shaykh's Parlour and found the old gentleman holding court as before. From time to time as we talked men and boys came in and knelt to kiss his right knee or a small pile of coins, to which they added, just by it. At decent intervals he removed the mounting pile to a bag kept under the corner of the carpet, but leaving a few suggestive pieces for all the world like a cloakroom attendant here at home. To one small boy, however, he actually gave a coin.

The next ceremony, at about half past ten, was the distribution of the *simat* of Shaykh Ādī in the forecourt, which I watched from the roof of a living-room at the south-west corner. First Bābā Chāwūsh, wearing of course the orange stole, appeared in the arched doorway by the south end of the sanctuary façade, and marshalled ten or a dozen servants bringing wooden bowls of the stew from the lower Shambles kitchen, while the prospective diners, including Bābā Shaykh and his retinue, stood up and ranged themselves round the walls. The Farrāsh, having called upon the company to be ready, signalled to Bābā Chāwūsh, who

led in the procession. The bowls were distributed, and all fell to with fervent invocations of Shaykh Ādī.

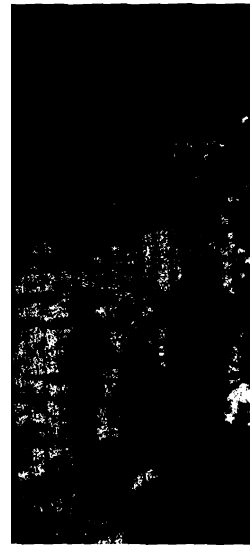
This was followed almost immediately by the *simat* offered by the Mīr in memory of his ancestors, in particular his grandfather ʿAlī Beg and his recently deceased father, Saʿīd. I was invited to go through to the private terrace, the Roof of the Goats. The Mīr and members of the family were sitting in a long bower of branches at the west end. Towards the east end, round a corner, Mayān Khātūn was supervising three wenches cooking the meal in three large cauldrons. I sat with the family until, at about eleven o'clock, people began to assemble. Sensing that I was not intended to witness what was to follow I made my way through the lines of waiting guests out into the forecourt and thence to the Chilmēr.

The baptistry terrace opposite was lined on all sides with youths and young women sitting on three low surrounding walls or on the ground up against the building; five or six of the resident nuns occupied the bank behind the west wall. This terrace is the usual place for the *Govend*, a solemn religious dance in which only a limited number of dancers takes part. But it does not last long, and very soon one of the small boys of the previous day was posturing in the centre of the stage to the sound of pipe and drum; from time to time the crowd would clap their hands to the music or burst into peals of laughter at some particularly amusing contortion or piece of miming. Punctually at half past eleven the dancing ended and most of the crowd filed off through the market-place into the sanctuary.

In the meantime, in the kitchen of the Chilmēr below, another meal was cooking, one reserved for the villagers of ʿAyn Sifnī alone. But it was not due to be eaten for another two hours, and I was glad of this respite to return to my tent to make notes of what I had seen during a very full morning.

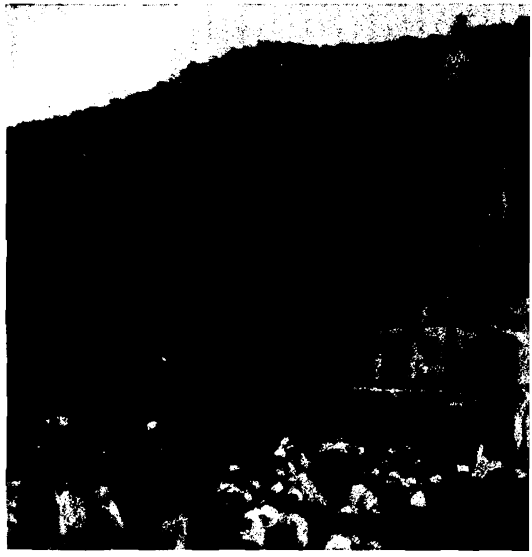
The *simat* of the Chilmēr differs from the normal *simat* in that it consists of meat only without the wheat, and that it is not handed round in the ordinary way; the pieces are thrown into the crowd for a scramble, commemorating an incident in the early legendary history of the sect. Shaykh Shams, having quarrelled with Shaykh Ādī, left Lālish in dudgeon and for seven years rejected all his chief's overtures for a reconciliation. One day, as the men of ʿAyn Sifnī were sitting on the fallen trunk of a

(*a*) The Qabākh.



(*b*) Bringing in the Bull.

(*c*) In the Market P



(*d*) The Auction at Shayk

great mulberry at the Chilmēr, watching the dancing while they waited for their meal, a panting messenger arrived with the good news that Shams was on the way back and had already reached the Bridge of Prayer. Those nearest the kitchen dashed in, grabbed the meat, still underdone and before the wheat had been added, and flung the pieces to the others outside. The whole party then hurried down to the bridge, eating as they went, to welcome the returning saint.

When I got back to the Chilmēr the lads of 'Ayn Sifnī were already assembled, armed with sticks and staves to drive off any stranger who might try to intrude. This is evidently part of the ritual, for I had been warned to expect it, and indeed the scramble had hardly begun when an interloper was detected in the seething mass and was soundly beaten. But he took it badly (genuinely as it seemed to me), drew his dagger, and had to be dragged away by the police who had been standing by.

Except for a short time when the little Mīr was watching the scramble (and, greatly privileged, got hold of a piece of meat, I did not see how) the members of the princely family had not been much in evidence since I had left them to their *simat* in the middle of the morning; they had been busy, they told me later, with 'certain ceremonies', no doubt the more secret rites marking the close of the year's Conclave of the Seven Angels.

All that afternoon and from an early hour the next morning, 13 October, there was a steady stream of pilgrims moving homewards down the road, most of them stopping at the bridge for a final act of piety. After a leisurely breakfast, interrupted several times by callers coming in to say good-bye as they passed, I joined the stream—on foot at first and turning constantly for just one more glimpse of those pale cool, gleaming, spires and the lovely valley of Lālish, the Mecca of a most attractive but grievously misunderstood and misrepresented people.

PART

II

THE SHAYKHĀN MEMORIAL

(Translated from the Arabic)

You asked us verbally to submit to you the fundamental rules observed by us. These concern: (A) Appointments; (B) Alms; and (C) Traditional Observances.

(A) *Appointments*

(1) *The Mīr.* The Mīr of Shaykhān is the supreme Head of our religion. He is free and independent and no one has the right to oppose or to negotiate with him. He cannot be dismissed or removed except by natural death or by assassination (which God forbid). His authority prevails over the whole Yazīdī community in Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Russia, and over the tribes of Rashkān, Hōwērī and Māsakī, and over all who call themselves Yazīdīs. This authority belongs to him since the foundation of this religion until the present day. He is the head over the house of Shaykh ʿAdī, for he is of his descent.

(2) If the Mīr dies all the Yazīdī chiefs or their representatives meet and elect a member of the Mīr's family to be Mīr over them. This new Mīr is bound to settle the debts of the previous Mīr and to provide for the livelihood of his children.

(3) The Mīr's revenues are derived from the alms of Shaykh ʿAdī, Shaykh Shams ad-Dīn and the Standards. From these revenues he provides for the livelihood of the Mīr's family, that is the brothers, the uncles, and their children within the house. He also supplies them with summer and winter clothing and offers hospitality to the guests of all religions. He has to provide for the kitchen of Shaykh ʿAdī and for repairs to its special parts (known to us). He has three Standards, that is flags, which are carried on tour among all the Yazīdīs. The first Standard tours Shaykhān and neighbourhood in charge of Qawwāls three times a year and returns to the house of the Mīr. The second tours the *qaḍa* of Sinjār with the Rashkān and Hōwērī twice a year and returns to the house of the Mīr. The third Standard tours in Syria and among all the Yazīdīs who are outside Iraq once a year and returns to the house of the Mīr. No Yazīdī other than

the Mīr has any right to take the Standards or to keep them in his house, because that would be injurious to our religion.

(4) *Bābā Shaykh.* He is chosen by the Mīr from the family of Bābā Shaykh or from among his blood-relations. He cannot be removed except by death or by reason of his leaving the Yazīdī religion. He receives his pay from the alms offered by the community in the name of Malak Fakhr ad-Dīn.

(5) *Pēshīmām.* He is appointed by the Mīr from among the members of the family of that name. He cannot be removed except by death or by reason of his leaving the Yazīdī religion. He receives his pay from the alms offered by the community in the name of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. He is the authority for celebrating marriages and fixing dowries, these in the presence of four witnesses and the agents of the man and the girl to be married.

(6) *Shaykhs.* They live on the tithes from their own client-disciples.

(7) *Qawwāls.* They are the religious mentors and preachers for the community and are the bearers of the Standards among the Yazīdīs.

(8) *Faqīrs.* They are hermits and servants of Shaykh ʿAdī within the shrine. They are headed by the Steward of the Kitchen of Shaykh ʿAdī, who is appointed by the Mīr.

(9) *Kōchaks.* They are the outdoor servants of Shaykh ʿAdī. They fetch wood, draw water, and so on, under the authority of Bābā Shaykh. They have no alms allotted to them.

(10) *Chāwūsh.* He is the doorkeeper (*farrāsh*) and servant of Bābā Shaykh at Shaykh ʿAdī's. He is appointed and dismissed by the Mīr.

(B) *Alms*

The alms (*khayrāt*) of Muḥammad Rashān belong to his own family. The alms of Hājālī belong to his descendants. The alms of Shaqsī (*sic in the translation*) belong to the administrator (*mutawallī*) and his family. The alms of Sharaf ad-Dīn—a part of them are kept in a cave in the Jabal and the other part goes to his family.

(C) *Traditional Observances*

(1) Marriage is celebrated by agreement between the man and the girl acting through agents in the presence of four witnesses and the Pēshīmām or one of his family.

(2) Inheritance is in the male line only; females have no rights of inheritance. Inheritance is limited to the son, the grandson and below, and, in the absence of such, to the father and grandfather. Failing these, inheritance is limited to the uncles, and after them it appertains to the Treasury (*bayt al-māl*), that is to say the house of the Mīr, and he is the sole guardian of the existing heirs and provides for their livelihood until the age of puberty.

(3) The commoners are charged with obedience and submission to the Mīr, and after him to their other chiefs and Shaykhs. They have the right to elect a Mīr when the office falls vacant, and also to take part in religious affairs.

These are our fundamental rules and our religion, the appointments and the alms, on which the life of the community is based, from the beginning until now. No Yazīdī may go against them. The person doing so is a contravener of our religion and a creator of disturbance, and we consider him a renegade. We therefore request the authorities concerned to confirm our statement set out above and to rebuff all who oppose these things, from which they can never escape. Thus only will there be an end to the disturbances and troubles among us.

We are in duty bound to obey the laws of our respected government under the shelter of our beloved King.
Signed:

Shaykh Ḥājī son of Shaykh Nāṣir, Bābā Shaykh, Supreme Spiritual Head.
Shaykh Ibrāhīm son of Shaykh Ramaḍān, Wazīr of Shaykhān.
Faqīr Ḥusayn son of Faqīr Ḥasan, Head Faqīr.
Shaykh ʿUthmān son of Shaykh Bashīr, Pēshīmām.
Qawwāl Savdīn son of Qawwāl Sulaymān, Head Qawwāl.
Kōchak Khiḍr, Head Kōchak.
Faqīr Jindī son of Faqīr Ḥasan, Spiritual Head.

COMMENTARY

(i) *The Text*

The *Memorial* was addressed to the Governor (Mutaṣarrif) or the Administrative Inspector of the *liwā* of Mosul. Unfortunately I have no copy of the original Arabic. I have, however, no reason

to doubt the general accuracy of the translation made at the time by the official translator, reproduced here with only minor verbal amendments to improve the English.

The authors were of course mindful that the document was to be read by ministers, civil servants and others. As usual in such cases all personal names are given in their orthodox Islamic forms.

(ii) *The Princely Family*

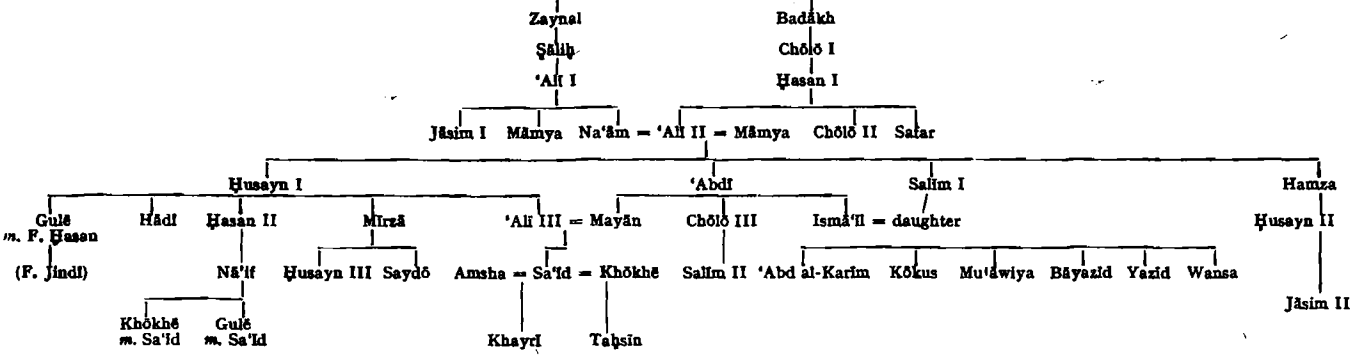
The historical Shaykh Ādī was succeeded as head of the dervish order which he founded first by his brother Sakhar and then by Sakhar's son Barakāt, whose tomb, I was once told (though I was not shown it on any of my visits) is somewhere in the sanctuary at Lālish.

In connexion with the legend according to which the founder was succeeded by Chōl Beg, ancestor of the princely family, it is interesting to note that the story of the fall of Iblīs occurs, with only minor variations, in no fewer than six different chapters of the Qu'rān: II—The Cow; VII—The Partition; XV—Al-Ḥijr; XVII—The Night Journey; XVIII—The Cave; and XXXVIII—Ṣād. After the miraculous creation of Chōl Beg, Shaykh Ādī is said to have commended him to his Companions in the following words: *Heke hon xatir-ê mê tetbînin dil-ê wî me-îshînin; fitw-a sherbik u chira biden e mal-a Chol Beg.*—If you want to please me do not vex his heart (i.e. act against his wishes); give the benefit of soup and lamp to the family of Chōl Beg.

Since, for the purposes of endogamy, the family is grouped with the Qātānī dynasty of Shaykhs, the statement in the *Memorial* that the Mīr is 'of the descent of Shaykh Ādī' is not entirely inconsistent with the legend. One of my informants, however, maintained that this latitude was an innovation of comparatively recent date and that, strictly, it was unlawful for any member of the Chōl Beg family to marry outside it. Their Patron-Shaykh is Assin, and their Pīr Jarwān.

The tree opposite shows the relationship of the principal members of the family for the last eight generations. Their history has been one of bloody internecine strife. 'Alī I, son of Ṣāliḥ, the last of the Mīrs of the senior branch, murdered Chōlō II and Safar, sons of his kinsman Ḥasan I of the junior branch,

THE PRINCELY FAMILY



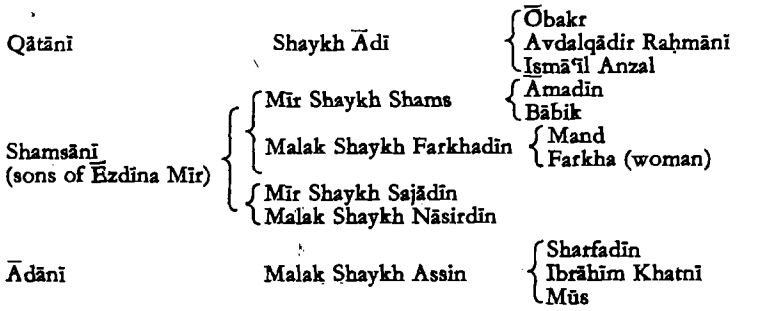
but gave his daughters Na'ām and Māmya in marriage to the other son, 'Alī II. Ḥusayn I, son of 'Alī and Māmya, killed his maternal uncle Jāsim and so secured the succession for the junior branch. Ḥusayn having unlawfully married Ghazzō, a girl of the Shamsānī family, his two eldest sons by a lawful marriage, Hādī and Ḥasan, rebelled against their father, stole the Peacock-Standard of Shaykhān, and actually collected the alms accruing to it for one year; the Ottoman authorities, however, supported Ḥusayn and compassed the death of the two rebels. Layard (*Nineveh and its Remains*, chapter IX) describes how he spent the night before the beginning of the Autumn Festival of 1846 as the guest of Ḥusayn Beg and how, invited thereto in accordance with Kurdish custom, he chose the name 'Alī for the son whose birth was announced that very night. The good wishes which he coupled with the choice were destined not to be fulfilled, for in 1913 'Alī Beg, who succeeded his brother Mīrzā (see p. 60), perished in suspicious circumstances, murdered, according to some, by his wife's paramour, an Āghā of the Muslim Dōskī tribe, and with her connivance. However that may be, the widow, Mayān Khātūn, a very masterful lady, was officially recognized as the guardian, first of her own son, Sa'īd, and in 1944 of her grandson Taḥsīn.

Taḥsīn, whose mother Khōkhē was of the princely family, was preferred to his elder brother Khayrī, whose mother was an Avdalqādir woman. The rule permitting marriage with Qātānīs extends to girls; the Faqīr Ḥasan shown in the tree as having married Ḥusayn Beg's daughter Gulē, for instance, was an Ōbakr Shaykh; their son, Faqīr Jindī, became the administrator of Shaykh Ādī's, where he occupied the Mīr's apartments except when the Mīr was himself in residence.

The title of Mīr Ḥajj is given to the member of the princely family appointed to take charge of the arrangements and general discipline at the Autumn Festival; in 1944 it was Salīm Beg, son of Chōlō III.

(iii) *Shaykhs*

The following table shows the three endogamous dynasties of Patron-Shaykhs with their branches:



The names Qātānī and Ādānī seem to echo the 'Adnān and Qahtān of the two separate and rival legendary lines of descent of the Arabs, southern and northern, but I do not know whether the Yazīdīs themselves feel any connexion. I sometimes thought that I detected a note of disparagement in the references of my Shamsānī informants to Assin, for instance in the statement that he was the last of the original Shaykhs to arrive at Lālish, in the legends of Farkadīn's tooth (conflicting with the other story which names his mother) or the defeat at the hands of Shams in the miracle-working competition (see p. 41), and in their contemptuous attitude towards the office of Pēshīmām; against this must be set the great veneration in which his son, Sharfadīn, is held in Sinjār. Side by side with other legends regarding their origins it is sometimes claimed that tribally the princely family and the Ādānī are Hakārī, the Qātānī are Khāltī, and the Shamsānī are Khatārī.

Tradition has preserved the names of the mothers of the original group of Shaykhs at Lālish, each with the title Istiyā prefixed: Yēs of Shaykh Ādī, Hazrat of Ēzdīna Mīr, Ḥabīb (or Zīn) of Shams and Farkhadīn, Arab of Sajādīn and Nāsirdīn, and Khajīj of Assin; an Istiyā Naqāsh is also mentioned, perhaps the mother of Ōbakr.

Shaykh Ādī was childless and the eponyms shown against his name were 'cousins'. All the Shaykhs of the Ōbakr line are at the same time Faqīrs.

The titles Mīr and Malak prefixed to the names of the five original Shaykhs denote a special relationship with Shaykh Ādī and Tāūs-ē Malak respectively; the distinguishing title

seemed to be used regularly with the name of Farkhadīn, less so with the others.

Shaykh Shams, the Wazīr of Shaykh Ādī, had nine sons, but only the two names given in the table appear in my records as those of eponymous Patron-Shaykhs, Āmadīn frequently, Bābik once. The names of the others are Khiḍr, ʿAlī, Avdāl, Bābadīn, Hawind, Ḥasan and Tōqil. I do not know why today some branches of the shaykhly families are known by the name of the common ancestor and others by that of a son. The Shaykh Ibrāhīm who signed the *Memorial* as 'Wazīr of Shaykhān' (or perhaps 'of the Shaykhs') belonged to the Khiḍr branch, which must therefore have been of some importance; I believe that with his death it became extinct.

The world was originally covered by the ocean. In it Farkhadīn made a great hole, so that the waters drained away from part of it until he stopped up the hole again with a great rock, now the Jabal Maqlūb, twenty miles north-east of Mosul. He is thus in a sense creator of the world as well as the creator of Adam. He has appeared on earth many times, always as the guide and friend of the prophets (all except Muḥammad), for instance when he prevented Abraham from killing Ishmael. He is 'the same' as Rabbān Hurmuzd, whose monastery is above the Christian village of Alqōsh, twenty-eight miles from Mosul, and from where a subterranean passage, now blocked up, leads to Lālish, emerging at the tomb of Farkhadīn, the one with no spire near the baptistry. On one occasion when he was returning from a journey to Alqōsh in the season of great heat the dogs rushed out almost rabid with thirst; he smote the ground with his staff, water gushed out, and the place is known as Bākalbā to this day. The people too flocked out to welcome him; he allowed the men and the children to kiss his hand but not the grown-up girls and women; one girl, fanatically determined to kiss it nevertheless, wrapped a stone in swaddling clothes, hoping thus to be allowed to come within reach; but the saint saw through the device and turned the stone into a man, Shamʿūn Kēpā, Simon Peter.

Farkhadīn of the Lālish dispensation had two sons, Badradīn (who was turned into a stone for trying to usurp his father's place and left no progeny) and Mand, and a daughter, Farkha, the only female eponymous Shaykh in the pantheon. The present-day

members of this family are freely referred to by the name of Farkhadīn as well as by the names of Mand or Farkha. The legend of the children of Mand is recorded elsewhere (p. 6); the Mand Shaykhs credited with power over snakes and ability to cure snake-bite belong presumably to the branch claiming descent from the snake.

As the *Memorial* states, the Bābā Shaykh, under the Mīr the Supreme Pontiff of the religion and exponent of its tenets, must be chosen from the family of Farkhadīn. Until the time of Sa'īd Beg the succession to this office had passed directly from father to son for at least five generations: the Shaykhs Hāmir, Rashka, Nāṣir (Layard's friend), 'Alī and Ismā'īl. On the death of the last-named a dispute arose between his son, Shaykh Ḥājī and a cousin in the third generation from Nāṣir. The Mīr therefore used his prerogative and appointed another Shaykh Ḥājī from another section of the family.

To the outside world, as has already been mentioned, Malak Shaykh Assin is Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, who received Assin's 'secret' in the time of Bahlūl the Mad and is thus, in the Yazīdī sense, 'the same'. At one time all the descendants of his son Ibrāhīm Khatnī were, like those of Ōbakr, Faqīrs, but that is no longer always the case. For some reason the affiliation of the Murīds of this family is nearly always described as being to Assin, and only rarely to one of the sons, even Sharfadīn.

The office of Pēshīmām vested in the family of Assin is said to be a recent innovation, dating back only to the 'Year of the General' (see p. 60), when it was established with a view to conciliating the Muslims and so removing one cause of persecution. In 1944 the Pēshīmām and two deputies were resident at Bāzān, Ba'shīqa and Sirēskī (in Alqōsh *nāḥiya*), and there was a third deputy, a Faqīr of Ibrāhīm Khatnī, at Simēhēstir in Sinjār North; other members of the family also may officiate.

There is another Shaykh Ḥasan, surnamed al-Musallakh or al-Musallal, the Naked, with a tomb at Lālish, but I recorded no information about him.

As among themselves the Shamsānī and the Ādānī Shaykhs are affiliated to each other mutually, and the Qātānī together with the princely family to the Ādānī (in particular Ōbakr to Mūs).

In general members of a tribe are affiliated to a particular family of Shaykhs. Exceptions probably represent an outside element which at some time, for political or economic reasons, has attached itself to and become naturalized in that tribe, but has continued in the religious sphere to be 'inherited' by the Patron-Shaykh of its ancestors.

(iv) *Pīrs*

It is curious that the *Memorial* should have contained no reference to the Pīrs as a class in the hierarchy, although two of their endowments are mentioned. Their duties are connected in particular with death and burial, and their dues are said to amount to about half those payable to the Shaykhs.

The following table shows the four endogamous families with their subdivisions:

Ḥasan Mamān	Hasnālkā Khatībasī (woman)
Pīr Āfāt	Muḥammad Rashān Buwāl Pīr-ē Darbēs
Pīr Jarwān	Īsībiyā Ḥājī Muḥammad Ḥōmar Khāla Qadbalbān
Pīr Hājālī	Pīr-ē Baḥrī

Ḥasan Mamān is the senior family and acts as Patron-Pīr to the other three; the functions of Patron-Pīr to Ḥasān Mamān, however, are performed by their Patron-Shaykh.

There are certain links between the various families of Shaykhs and Pīrs, but the information I recorded is incomplete and not always consistent. The following statement is therefore quite tentative but may be useful as a starting point for further investigation. Shams and Āfāt act as Shaykh and Pīr to each other. Farkhadīn is affiliated to Ḥasān Mamān (Mand to Hasnālkā, Farkha to Khatībasī), Sajādīn and Nāsirdīn to Jarwān (Īsībiyā), the Princely Family and two of the Qātānīs to Jarwān (Ōbakr to Īsībiyā, Ismā'īl to Qadbalbān) but Avdalqādir to Hājālī. Assin

is affiliated part to Ḥasan Mamān and part to Jarwān (Ḥājī Muḥammad). In several of these cases also the relationship is probably mutual as in the case of Shams and Āfāt, but obviously not in all; Hājālī, for instance, is affiliated to Farkhadīn. A commoner is affiliated to a Pīr of the family linked with that of his Shaykh, so that, for instance, all the Māl-ā Khālitī of Sinjār, who have Assin as their Shaykh, have Ḥasan Mamān as their Pīr.

Tribally the Pīr Āfāt family claim to be Hakārī.

(v) *Qawwāls*

The name means 'speaker' or 'reciter'. The two families from which they are drawn are affiliated to the Shaykhs of their tribes of origin, that of Bāzān, being Hakārī, to Assin, and that of Ba'shīqa, being Dumilī, to Nāsirdīn. The son of a Qawwāl who remains illiterate ranks as an ordinary commoner; but interruption for this reason, even for several generations, does not disqualify a literate descendant from embracing the profession. In 1944 the Chief Qawwāl was Sulaymān Khachōlē; Sulaymān was an infant when his father died and was in consequence, as frequently happens in Kurdistan, known as the son of the mother who brought him up.

(vi) *Faqīrs*

The legend regarding the foundation of the order runs as follows. In the days of Shaykh Ādī three of his Murīds, a carpenter, a seller of ready-made clothes, and another, were on their way to 'visit' him at Lālish. They were overtaken by darkness and agreed to keep watch in turn, each for two hours. The first watch fell to the carpenter, who, to while away the time and to keep himself awake, fashioned out of a log the image of a man and set it up a few paces away. His watch completed he roused the clothes-merchant and, saying nothing of how he had passed the time, composed himself to sleep. The new sentry had hardly taken over his duty when he descried the shape of a man faintly outlined in the darkness. His heart was thumping with terror, but, receiving no answer to his challenge and seeing no movement when he threw stones at it, he ventured to edge nearer, only to find that he had been frightened by a log. Cursing the

carpenter for his scurvy trick he opened his pack, clothed the log in a ready-made suit, and in his turn handed over to his successor without any mention of how he and the carpenter had passed their time. The third traveller, after a similar fright, managed to stifle the curse which he was about to pronounce upon his companions for their cruel deception and, instead, called upon Shaykh Ādī to bring the figure to life. The Shaykh in Lālish heard the appeal and in his turn invoked the intervention of the Almighty, who immediately answered his prayer. The watchman, thereafter known as 'Du'āqabūl' (Prayer-answered) then woke the others saying, 'See, we are four'. They then resumed their journey to Lālish where the new creation received the name of 'Tamīmēdērī', Made-all-of-wood, and became the founder of the order of the Faqīrs.

I must confess that I can see no logical connexion at all between this ordinary folk-tale of the animation of a tailor's dummy and the foundation of an ascetic religious order, but that is the story as it was told to me. More plausible, superficially at any rate, is the other legend that the Faqīrs are the successors of a monkish community established at Lālish at the time of Hanna and Barhanna.

Only the son of a Faqīr may be initiated into the order, and that after he has reached man's estate. One who has misbehaved may be unfrocked by the Mīr, whereupon he reverts to his previous status.

As regards marriage initiation makes no difference to the rules for Shaykhs and Pīrs; there is no restriction on commoners, male or female.

Commoner-Faqīrs are drawn from three clans: Ēd Hamō or Dīnādī who correspond to the Rūbanishtī of Shaykhān, affiliated to Mand; Ēd Jindō or Sharqī affiliated to Ōbakr, and Ēd Zērō, also classed by some as Sharqī, affiliated to Bābik. It seems curious that only one out of the three should be affiliated to a shaykhly family connected with the order.

(vii) *Kōchaks*

At ordinary times the Kōchaks live at home in their own villages. At Lālish they don the stole as a sign that they are in attendance on Bābā Shaykh and on duty.

(viii) *Chāwūsh*

The Chāwūsh, or Bābā Chāwūsh as he is generally called, may be selected from any class of the community. He must be celibate and must be prepared to devote himself entirely to the religious life. He lives in the precincts of Shaykh Ādī's all the year round, is in charge of the premises, and among his other duties supervises the collection and stacking of the wood for the kitchen. At the time of which I am writing the incumbent was a Pīr of the Isībiyā family; he wore an all-orange stole, but the choice between all-orange and orange-and-black check has no particular significance.

(ix) *Farrāsh*

The *Memorial* (as translated) defines the Chāwūsh as the Farrāsh of Shaykh Ādī, but in my experience the title is applied to the Steward of the Kitchen mentioned under the heading Faqīrs; he must also be a Pīr and therefore of the Hōmar Khāla family, and has a room near the Chāwūsh.

(x) *Rashkān, Hōwerī and Māsakī*

These three tribes are selected for mention in the first paragraph of the *Memorial* presumably because the majority are located, well away from the two principal agglomerations, up in the north-west corner of the country near the point where Iraq, Syria and Turkey meet, Hōwērī and Māsakī in five villages on the left bank of the Tigris (Silēfānī) and Rashkān in one village on the right bank (Zumār). The Māsakī also have one village in Shaykhān. About half the Rashkān and Hōwērī are nomadic tent-dwellers, and scattered elements of both these tribes are found in Sinjār, and of Hōwērī in Shaykhān.

(xi) *Alms and Endowments*

Of the sources of the Mīr's revenues mentioned the Standards are discussed in the next section.

The administrator of the endowment of Shaykh Ādī must be a Faqīr of the Ōbakr family. In theory the office may be farmed out to the highest qualified bidder, but for five years up to 1944 it had been given for an agreed sum to Faqīr Jindī, for eight or

nine years before that to his elder brother Ḥusayn (who signed the *Memorial* as 'Head of the Faqīrs'), and for thirty odd years before that to their father, Ḥasan. The Farrāsh is responsible to the administrator, who supervises the hospitality offered to all pilgrims and guests other than the Yazīdīs of Shaykhān; these are entertained at the various hostels according to their affiliations.

The endowment of Shaykh Shams comes next in importance, for all pilgrims and visitors to Lālish are expected to make an offering there also. The task of collection may be farmed out by auction to the highest bidder without restriction as to his class. In 1944 there had been no bids and a minor Shaykh of the Shams family was collecting on commission.

The names of Muḥammad Rashān and Hājālī will be found in the table of Pīrs (p. 34). The reputed tomb of Muḥammad Rashān is a large building on the north-eastern slope of the Jabal Maqlūb. Each Yazīdī family residing in a group of eight near-by villages (Bāqasra, Jarwāna, Kandālī, Mahid, Maḥmūdān, Māmrashān, Muqubla and Mūsakān, collectively known as Bāskī) delivers there at harvest time one load of wheat and one of barley as cut for the threshing-floor, and three times a year the whole of the produce one day's milking; I cannot explain why the villages should be associated in this way with a Pīr family to which, it would seem, the majority are not affiliated (see Appendix I). I have no details on record of the endowment of Pīr Hājālī.

Shaqsē (of the translation) appears to be meant for Shakhsēbāt, the name of a large building (whether it is a tomb or some kind of hospice I do not know) at Bābīra about three miles from the Tigris in the district of Alqōsh, so named because Āmadīn son of Shams once spent the night (*bāt*) there. The administrator is a member of the Āmadīn family, the revenues are derived from free-will offerings from the Qā'idī tribe, whose Shaykh, again curiously, is not Shams but Ōbakr.

The endowment of Sharfadīn here referred to consists of an annual tithe on flocks and the harvest of the dozen Māl-ā Khālitī villages in Sinjār North. Half is paid in the first place to the administrator of the shrine at the village of Rāshid. If, as was once suggested to me, the custom of throwing the proceeds of the other half into a pit in a cave up in the mountain behind the villages was originally instituted in order to create a general reserve

for use by the community in an emergency, this seems to have been forgotten.

(xii) *The Standards*

The mention of only three Standards reflects the restrictions on travel since the First World War. Previously there were seven, allotted to the various regions where Yazīdīs are found, and were associated one with Shaykh Ādī and the others with one or other of the eponymous Shaykhs. According to one informant only the alms collected in Shaykhān in the name of Shaykh Ādī were originally paid to the family of Chōl Beg, the income from the other regions going to the family of the Shaykh associated with the particular Standard: Sinjār to Sharfadīn (Assin), Aleppo and Mardīn to Farkhadīn, Vān to Sajādīn ('whose throne is on the yellow rock surmounted by the castle and overlooking the lake'), Tabrīz and the Caucasus to Shams, Diyārbakir to Ōbakr, and an ill-defined region to Nāsirdīn.

On one of the occasions when the Kurdish Amīr of Bōtān, Badr Khān, invaded Shaykhān he demanded the surrender to him of a beautiful girl of the princely family; to save the line from such desecration the Mīr persuaded the beneficiaries to surrender their income to him so that he could bribe the oppressor to leave the community in peace. Although, by the miraculous intervention of Providence, the girl had died before the deal was concluded, the offer to pay was enforced annually until the fall of Badr Khān (1847), after which the Mīr kept the income from all the Standards for himself, and no one could say him nay.

The first two Standards have special names, 'Anzal' for Shaykhān and 'Bizarb' for Sinjār.

(xiii) *Marriage*

As has already been mentioned the intervention of the Pēshīmām in the ceremony of marriage is considered by some to be superfluous; if he is brought in, the bride and bridegroom are also generally present. When a marriage has been arranged the usual Kurdish customs of fetching the bride and general merrymakings continue for seven days. The bridegroom's Patron-Shaykh attends daily to bless the food (if the parents are poor the Shaykh

may even supply it); he also hangs up the curtain behind which the bride retires, and removes it when the proceedings are over. The really binding part of the ceremonies is the firing of a rifle to announce consummation. When a young couple elopes the mere act of cohabitation constitutes a valid union, a kind of marriage by promise *subsequente copula*. A consummated marriage is indissoluble. In case of failure to consummate within one year the Shaykh may pronounce the marriage dissolved; formerly the period was seven years.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

(xiv) *Brothers and Sisters of the Hereafter*

The statements of my informants about Sisters of the Hereafter were conflicting, perhaps owing to a certain hesitation to discuss women at all or at least to admit the existence of an institution which might be misrepresented by ill-wishers. One went so far as to maintain that there were no such things; others said, variously, that only girls took Sisters, that young people of either sex could take either a Brother or a Sister but not both, or that boys and girls alike took both a Brother and a Sister.

One informant, to underline the importance of the institution, quoted one of those rhymes in which the doctrines of the esoteric sects are so often recorded:

Shêx fer -e, Pîr nîshan;
Ferẓ-e bira-ê axîretê, ferẓêk-e giran.
The Shaykh is an obligation, the Pīr a sign,
The Brother of the Hereafter is an obligation,
a weighty obligation.

Another, in support of the statement that the Brother should be chosen from the patronal shaykhly family quoted:

Shêx-ê mê bira-ê mê
Pîr-ê mê desdar-ê mê.
'Allāh rabbu' l- 'ālamayn' pasha-ê mê.
My Shaykh is my Brother;
My Pīr is my helper;
God, Lord of the two Worlds, is my King.

The legend of the foundation of the institution was related to me as follows:

In the early days at Lālish, although the sons of Ēzdīna Mīr

were prepared to accept Shaykh Ādī as head of the fraternity, Assin, who had no small conceit of himself, refused. As an inducement to him to change his mind they all offered to accept him as their Patron-Shaykh, and proposed Shams as the most appropriate Patron for him. Assin, however, objected to one so manifestly his inferior, as he claimed, in *karāma*, the gift of performing miracles by divine grace. Thereupon Shaykh Ādī blindfolded Shams and caused him to disappear. Assin, for his part, betook himself first to the summit of Mount Hizrat, then up into the sky, then to the uttermost parts of the sea, and then back to Lālish, but wherever he went he found Shams already there before him. Next Shaykh Ādī blindfolded Assin in his turn for a few moments and then sent him forth, this time to look for Shams, who was no longer to be seen, for he had taken the opportunity to turn himself into a small flower and hide in Assin's beard, close up against the chin. After searching far and wide without success Assin returned crestfallen to the presence of Shaykh Ādī, who bade him go to the White Spring and accept as his Patron-Shaykh the person he would meet there. This, of course, was Shams, who jumped out of the beard as he arrived. Assin having acknowledged defeat, the pair agreed to an exchange of Bors, the miraculous mounts which carried the Shaykhs of the Lālish dispensation on their travels, and to the mutual relationship of Patron-Shaykh and Brother of the Hereafter.

The ceremony of adopting such a spiritual Brother or Sister takes place in complete privacy, preferably at Lālish (the Autumn Festival being for practical reasons the most convenient time) and consists of the taking of three sips of White-Spring water from his or her cupped hands. It may however be celebrated elsewhere with the help of a *berat*, earth from Lālish moulded with water from the White Spring or from Zamzam into a small ball and obtainable, for a consideration, from Bābā Shaykh; the Brother or Sister bites off a piece, grinds it with the teeth into a powder, and lets it drop into a spoonful of water, from which the novice takes the three sips.

(xv) *Murabbī*

The office of Murabbī or Tutor is not mentioned in the *Memorial* and none of my Yazīdī friends ever spontaneously

referred to it. In reply to my specific questions several, including a number of commoners from Sinjār, denied the existence of such a function, generally suggesting that I must be thinking of Mutarabbī, the style accorded to two families of Sinjār North charged with the collection of the tithe of Sharfadīn. On the other hand two from Shaykhān stated that all members of the community were born clients of a Tutor who might be a Shaykh or a Pīr, for instance Ōbakr of Ḥasan Mamān, the Shamsānīs and Assin of Ōbakr; and a Hakārī commoner gave his own affiliations as Shams as Shaykh, Āfāt as Pīr and Ōbakr as Tutor. One maintained that some people took a Tutor as a supererogatory gesture, and, in view of the conflict of evidence and the undoubted fact that most of my informants had no Tutor themselves, this seems the most likely explanation, at any rate of the present position.

(xvi) *Festivals*

In 1960, before the wave of liberalism that so often characterizes the early days of a revolutionary régime had spent itself, ʿAbd al-Karīm Qāsim promulgated a decree (no. 36) amending the Law of Public Holidays in Iraq by the addition of the following feast-days for the Yazīdī community (all dates Old Style):

1. The first Friday in December, one day;
2. The first Wednesday in April, one day;
3. From 18 to 21 July, three days;
4. From 23 to 30 September, seven days.

The first holiday is the birthday of Yazīd and is preceded by three days of fasting. The second is New Year's Day. The third marks the end of the forty days (*chelexan* or *chile*) considered to constitute the heart of summer and is celebrated by the people of Shaykhān at Lālish; the Bābā Shaykh visits the shrine on the first, twentieth and fortieth days of the *chelaxan*; he and some of the faithful fast for the first thirty-nine days, but most only for the last two days before the fortieth. The fourth holiday is, of course, the great Autumn Festival.

An important feast-day not included in the official list is that of Khiḍr Alyās on 1 February O.S., which marks the end of the forty days of mid winter and is preceded by two or three days of fasting; the procedure is much the same as for the summer

festival except that for climatic reasons fewer people make the journey to Lālish. The Muslim feasts of Fiṭr and Aḍḥá, with two or three days of fasting before each, are sometimes included in the Yazīdī lists, but I do not know how far this is a genuine survival from more orthodox days or a concession to the susceptibilities of their neighbours.

'Fasting' for the Yazīdīs means the same as for Muslims, total abstinence by day with no limitations at night, except in the case of Khiḍr Alyās when, I was assured, total abstinence day and night is the rule.

(xvii) *Costume and Taboos*

In connexion with the enforcement of compulsory military service in 1936 I have preserved notes of a petition presented by the Yazīdīs asking that certain religious obligations of men conscripted should be respected. The feast-days mentioned included nos. 1, 3 and 4 of the decree of 1960, the end of the winter *chelexan*, and the two Muslim 'Īds. The other requests were: (1) that they should not be required to wear blue in their clothes or shirts open down the front; (2) that they should have the services of a co-religionist as barber; (3) that they should not be given cabbage or lettuce to eat; and (4) that the words *shayṭān* and *shaṭṭ* should not be pronounced in their presence.

Subject to the two taboos mentioned, the costume of the Yazīdīs is in general similar to that of their non-Yazīdī Kurdish neighbours, but fashions in details, male and female, tend to differ from district to district or tribe to tribe. In all parts of Kurdistan it is often possible to make a shrewd guess at a man's tribe or religion from the way he ties his turban or even the angle at which he wears it. On one occasion I was showing a photograph of five Yazīdī women to a Yazīdī and was surprised when he exclaimed, as if taken aback, that four of them were 'Kurds'; what he meant was that although the photograph was taken at Ba'shīqa only one of the group was wearing a headdress that showed her to be a Tāzhī.

The regulation neck-opening in the front of men's shirts is a kind of semi-decolleté called *tewq* (see Plate III(d)); the opening in a Faqīr's shirt is rather smaller than the normal. It is considered a grave act of sacrilege to tear the *tewq*. Except in the case of the

Faqīrs the shirts and drawers are of white calico. Trousers of any colour except blue may be worn over the drawers. The men's turban-cloths, whether tied round a skull-cap or the felt hat of Sinjār, or worn Arab-fashion with an *'aqāl*, is most commonly of pink-and-white or red-and-white check, sometimes all white. Shaykhs wash their own turban-cloths.

The characteristic male costume of Sinjār is quite unlike that of any other part of Kurdistan known to me. First there is the high felt hat with rounded top already mentioned; then the long 'night-shirt' reaching to the ankles so that the drawers are not seen, with perhaps a girdle of one kind or another holding it in at the waist; then, sometimes, a loose jacket of coarse natural-coloured home-spun cloth hanging to the hips or a little below. An unusually high proportion of the men, as compared with villagers elsewhere, seem to affect a cloak, sometimes the ordinary *'abā* but more characteristically an oblong of loosely-woven fabric thrown lengthwise over the shoulders so that it hangs quite short behind but long over the arms and down the sides. The high hat, the absence of bright colours, the untrimmed moustaches and the hair of the head worn long (sometimes unkempt, sometimes in neat plaits) combine to give them a dervish-like appearance belied only by the bandoliers and rifles. This costume is, in fact, not peculiar to the Yazīdīs but is worn, except that the shirt is open down the front by the orthodox Muslims and the Bābāwīs (adherents of an unorthodox sect of the Qizilbāsh-Baktāshī group), who together outnumber the Yazīdīs in the township of Balad Sinjār and share a number of other villages on the south side of the mountain.

The costume of the women has been described elsewhere. The white turban-cloth of the Khuwērkī women is said to be five yards long; but unmarried girls and brides in their first year wear colours, and a widow may wear a black turban for four or five months after her bereavement. The costume of the nuns of Shaykh Ādī resembles that of the Khuwērkī women, but they do not wear the 'shawl' draped over the shoulder.

(xviii) *Baptism*

Children are baptized (*mor kirin*, sealing) by total immersion before they complete their second year. If possible this should be

in the White-Spring baptistry at Lālish; but in case of difficulty it is permissible to use water into which a *berat* from Shaykh Ādī's has been powdered.

A certain Pīr Darwēsh of the Mijēwar branch of the Pīr Buwāl family claimed that the professional Baptist at the White Spring was always a Mijēwar, in 1944 his nephew. Darwēsh was the confidant of the Mīr. Combining a curious simplicity with great self-importance he was frequently in Baghdad on some errand for his master and, after Sa'īd's death, generally accompanied young Taḥsīn and his grandmother on their travels.

(xix) *Karīf*

In the *liwā* of Mosul there is a curious custom whereby Muslims take their sons to be circumcised on the knees of a Yazīdī; the blood which trickles onto the knees establishes a blood relationship between the two, the boy becoming *karīf* to the Yazīdī. This custom first came to my notice when old Darwēsh Mijēwar came down to Baghdad to plead, on behalf of Mīr Sa'īd Beg, for three young men who had been condemned to death for murder. In the course of my questioning it transpired, to my great astonishment, that two of the men for whom he was pleading so earnestly, were Muslims. He explained that they were *karīfs* of the Mīr himself, who was thus under an obligation to do everything he could on their behalf. Shaykh Sufūk, chief of the Shammar, told me that he was *karīf* to Shaykh Khalaf of the Haskān. The practice is not limited to tribesmen, for a member of a prominent Mosul family who became a Mutaṣarrif similarly told me that he was *karīf* to a Yazīdī. I believe that Muslim boys are circumcised on the knees of Christians in the same way, but I cannot quote a specific case known to me.

(xx) *Early Legendary History*

The Yazīdīs are descended from Adam but not Eve. The couple, having quarrelled as to which was the more important partner in the procreation of the children hitherto born to them, they agreed to try to settle the question by sealing up separately in two pots a small quantity of the generative fluid of each. When after nine months they opened the pots a boy jumped out of

Adam's, but Eve's was found to contain nothing but worms. The boy was named Shāhid ibn Jarr, Witness son of Pot (Arabic *jarra,* earthenware jar).

Jabrā'īl is the Messenger of God, who used to employ him to guide the actions of earthly kings at the time when they had no independent will of their own (but this is no longer the case).

When Dānēra was King of the Jews God sent Jabrā'īl to warn him that there was present, camped among his people, a small tribe of tent-dwellers called Azdāyim, fifty families in all, who were not of his religion; he should take steps to convert them, otherwise they would one day rise against him and drive him from his throne; but the conversion must be by persuasion and not by force.

So Dānēra called together his Wazīrs and consulted them as to how he should proceed. They suggested that the first thing to do was to persuade the Azdāyim to do something or other at his behest; he might, for instance, dress in humble costume and visit them, taking a supply of spirituous liquor with him; if he could persuade them to drink some of the *'araq* that would be the first limited objective achieved, and he could then go on to the next.

Dānēra and the Wazīrs accordingly disguised themselves and went to the tents of the headmen of the Azdāyim. As strangers they were, of course, received hospitably, lambs were slaughtered, the meat was cooked and set before them. The guests insisted that their hosts should sit down with them and then, producing the bottles, praised the qualities of the liquid and tried to induce them to drink; but all in vain.

After whispered consultations Dānēra and his Ministers decided that if the headmen were too worldly-wise to fall into the trap they might have a better chance with the shepherds in the fields. So they left the tents and made for the flocks they could see in the distance. The shepherds took off their felt overcoats, laid them on the ground for their guests to sit on, killed a lamb, collected some brushwood, and grilled the meat on the fire, apologizing for this humble fare. The strangers again produced the bottles, but with no more success than before. They then tried their luck with some little boys who were tending the lambs and kids, presenting the stuff in the bottles as something nice and

sweet. But the little boys were frightened of the strangers, burst into tears, and ran away.

Dānēra and the Ministers returned to Jerusalem discomfited.

Some time after this Jabrā'īl appeared to a little fatherless Azdāyim boy as he was sleeping beside his mother in their tent, told him that his name would become famous as Bakhtēnasr (Nebuchadnezzar), and bade him go and conquer Jerusalem. He woke his mother and told her what had happened, but she laughed at him and told him to turn over and go to sleep again.

But the archangel came again another night and said: 'O Bakhtēnasr, why have you not done as I bade you?' The boy answered that he was an orphan, that the whole tribe numbered no more than fifty tents, and that his mother had scoffed at his story. Jabrā'īl replied that he need only start out with five horsemen; each day the number would be doubled—ten, twenty, forty, eighty and so on, but he would not be able to distinguish his original companions from the new arrivals; he would have some hard fighting, but a messenger from God would come and touch the lips of all his followers who were killed so that they would come to life again while the enemy killed would, of course, remain dead; finally he would come to an armoured gate, but this need not hold him up—there would be sitting on his shoulders two messengers from God who, as soon as he prayed for help, would jump down, turn into rams and batter it open.

So the boy did as he was ordered and, after subduing the whole region, finally came to Jerusalem, where further progress was held up by the gates. Only after several attacks had been repulsed did he remember his instructions. He had no sooner uttered his prayer then the angelic beings jumped down, turned into rams, butted open the gates and let the invaders through: *Mêrêk hat e sema w nazîl bu ser mil-ê Bextênesr u xo-y ber da erdê, bu be beran-ê qochzêrîn*—a man jumped up, descended onto the neck of Bakhtēnasr and threw himself onto the ground, he turned into a ram with golden horns.

Shortly after the conquest of Jerusalem Jabrā'īl appeared to Bakhtēnasr and said: 'I have brought a book from God and its name is Masḥaf-ā Rash, the Black Scripture; go to such and such a place and there you will see an oven and in it a book; take the book and keep it carefully.' Eventually Shaykh Shams became the custodian of the book.

After the capture of Jerusalem the Azdāyim were known as Mutaḥayyir (Arabic, perplexed, distraught; can this be an echo of Nebuchadnezzar's nervous break-down?), and later as Ēzdārī. The *Sharafnāma*, the History of the Kurds, by Sharaf ad-Dīn Bitlīsī (1596), mentions the name Dāsinī as that of an important Yazīdī tribe whose chief, Ḥusayn Beg, was for a time appointed by Sulṭān Salīm I (1512–20) Governor of the whole province of Arbīl, including Rawāndiz. Most of my informants, however, seemed to be using it as the name of the whole community before the adoption of the name Yazīdī.

(xxi) *Yazīd*

Yazīd was not a Muslim.

The seat of the power or virtue of the Prophet Muḥammad was a point in the front of his head just above the forelock. One day when Mu'āwiya was shaving the Prophet's head he cut a nick in the skin, just above the forehead, and licked away the little bead of blood that formed there. The Prophet, feeling that virtue had gone out of him, asked Mu'āwiya what he had done, and, hearing the explanation, exclaimed: 'Woe! woe! what is this that you have done? this virtue has passed into you, and when you marry it will be this virtue and not anything of yours that will pass into your wife; the child will not be a Muslim but will be an enemy of my house and will destroy it.'

Thereupon Mu'āwiya promised the Prophet not to marry or touch any woman. He kept his promise until well into middle age. But one day a scorpion crawled up his leg and stung him in his private parts. The part swelled up and he was in excruciating pain. The doctors and magicians tried every remedy, but nothing served to reduce the swelling or to ease the pain. A new doctor who was called in declared that the only remedy was for him to have relations with a woman. Mu'āwiya, remembering the incident of the spot of blood and his promise to the Prophet, refused, saying that he would rather die of the poison or of the torture he was suffering.

Finally a relation suggested that he should take an old woman who was still a virgin but being nearly ninety years of age could not possibly have a child. So Mu'āwiya slept with her that night and received instant relief. But she did conceive. When he heard

this Mu'āwiya wished to cut her open and destroy the child but was dissuaded on the grounds that it might be a girl. But a boy was born.

When the boy grew up he made a journey to the mountains of the north, where he introduced himself to the Dāsinīs as no Muslim but as one of them. He extended his conquests and became king of all the land.

The story of Yazīd is a good example of the Yazīdī practice of taking the name of an historical Muslim personage and adopting it, in its original or in a modified form, into their own hagiology with the claim, either that the Muslims had not understood his true nature, or that the two are just separate manifestations of the same person, or that they are practically 'the same' by reason of the transfer of his 'secret' from one to the other. Nor is this tendency limited to Muslims. The feeling that such doublets are 'the same' is so strong that, for instance, the name of a patronyomic Shaykh of the Lālish dispensation may be used in connexion with activities which are clearly those of the corresponding archangel of the original creation or of a personage of a different religious dispensation altogether. Several identifications of these kinds have already been mentioned. Others which have been given to me at various times are: Musāfir ash-Shāmī with Mu'āwiya, Shaykh Ādī with Khiḍr Alyās and with Yazīd, Yazīd in his turn with Bakhtēnasr and Bahlūl-ē Dīwāna, Ōbakr with Abū Bakr the first Caliph, Avdalqādir with Abd al-Qādir al-Gīlānī, Shams Ēzdīn with Jesus and Ṣhams ad-Dīn of Tabrīz, Farkhadīn with Moses (as well as Rabbān Hurmuzd), Sajādīn with 'Alī, Nāsirdīn with 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, Assin with Muḥammad (as well as with Ḥasan al-Baṣrī).

(xxii) *The Sacred Books*

The only information about their sacred books which my friends volunteered was: that they had two books (*ẓubūr*), one called 'Jawl' or 'Kitāb al-Jilwa', the Book of Manifestation, associated with Shaykh Assin, and the other 'Maṣḥaf-ā Rash', the Black Scripture, associated with Shaykh Shams; that the second had come to them in the way described in the story of the Azdāyim, but that it was stolen (the informant spoke as if there had been only one copy in existence) by 'Umar Wahbī

Pāshā (see p. 60) and sold to the Germans for two million pounds—'it must have been from this that the Germans had obtained the secrets for the marvellous inventions that were enabling them to prolong the war (December 1944), otherwise why should they have given two million pounds for it?'

I have in my possession an Arabic manuscript of twenty pages of foolscap size, averaging twenty-six lines to a page, and comprising:

(*a*) A short introduction relating how a 'Consul of the Russian Government' at Mosul visited Ba'shīqa in 1887 and there made friends with a certain Mullā Ḥaydar, whom he persuaded, while in his cups, to divulge to him the secrets of the Yazīdī religion and to show him the two sacred books; followed by

(*b*) The Mulla's account of the religious hierarchy and of the religious beliefs (5 pages);

(*c*) The text of the Book of Manifestation in five short chapters (2 pages);

(*d*) The text of the Black Scripture (6¼ pages);

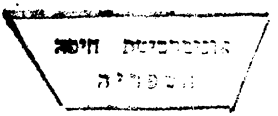
(*e*) Appendix, compiled by Dāūd as-Sā'igh, giving further information about the traditions of the Yazīdīs (6 pages).

This is evidently a copy of a document differing versions of which (including one in Kurdish) have been published at various times in the learned journals of Europe and America, and more recently in Iraq. The authenticity of these 'sacred books' has given rise to some controversy among scholars, one of whom (A. Mingana, 'Devil Worshippers: their Beliefs and their Sacred Books', *JRAS*, 1916, vol. ii, pp. 505–6) denounced them as an impudent forgery attributable to a certain renegade Chaldaean monk, a native of the Christian village of 'Ankāwa near Arbīl and, according to A. H. Parry (*Six Months in a Syrian Monastery*, London, 1895, pp. 252–3; a translation by E. G. Browne of the document is given as an Appendix) not a very estimable character.

However that may be, since the manuscript was procured for me by a Muslim notable of Mosul and did not reach me from a Yazīdī source, I shall not discuss it further here.*

* For a note on the Kurdish version see Appendix IV.

PART III



The 'Shaykhān Yazīdīs' are established in the *nāḥiyas* of Dihōk Headquarters (15 villages), Alqōsh (25 villages) and 'Ayn Sifnī (14 villages), and in the two large villages of Bāẓān and Ba'shīqa, well away from the others to the south, with a total estimated population of 18,500 souls. The tribes are less homogeneously settled than those of Sinjār but, taken in the general direction of north-west to south-east, the more important of them are: Rūbanishtī and Qā'idī in Dihōk; Harāqī, Khāltī and Khatārī in Alqōsh; more Khāltī and Khatārī with Hakārī, Tirk and Dumilī in 'Ayn Sifnī, Bāzān and Ba'shīqa. Rūbanishtī are Faqīrs and are not classed as a tribe by some informants. Detailed lists will be found in Appendix II.

I first met Mīr Sa'īd Beg in October 1926, about a fortnight after that year's Autumn Festival, when I spent a night as his guest at his home at Bā'idhra.

I had motored up from Mosul by way of Alqōsh and the two nearby monasteries, that of Sayyidat az-Zurū', Notre Dame des Semences, and the earlier seventh-century foundation perched up on the craggy heights behind and named after Rabbān Hurmuzd, who, it will be remembered, was 'the same' as Farkhadīn.

The Mīr was a mournful-looking, youngish man of about twenty-five, with a long black beard falling to a point over his chest. Black jacket, black peg-top trousers, and black *'aqāl* over a white head-cloth worn Arab fashion did nothing to relieve the general gloom of his appearance. In the guest room he left most of the conversation to his cousin, Ḥasayn Beg III, until the proceedings were enlivened by the arrival of a sprightly six-year-old daughter, Muḥabbat, who was wearing a gay little quilted jacket, a red skirt, and jewellery consisting of gold earrings, a string of gold coins over the shoulder, and gold pendants attached to two plaits of hair behind; she joined eagerly in the conversation without a trace of shyness and kept us amused for some time. Sa'īd Beg was said to have six wives then living with him in the house, but only Muḥabbat's mother, no doubt one of the three daughters

(whom he married in succession) of another cousin, Nā'if, was known as 'the Lady'.

Ḥusayn Beg, who affected coloured trousers, white jacket and pink-check turban tied in the normal Kurdish way, had been a strong candidate for the primacy in 1913 but had been passed over, more, I was told, in sympathy for the young son of the murdered Mīr, 'Alī Beg, than because of the merits of the rival candidates; but I have little doubt that the real reason was that this was the will of Mayān Khātūn. She was still the power behind the throne, and was at that moment away in Sinjār leading a deputation of Yazīdīs from Shaykhān to complain against her own brother, Ismā'īl Beg, who nourished an ambition to be recognized as head of the Sinjār community independent of the Mīr of Shaykhān and who was alleged to have compassed the theft of the Sinjār Peacock-Standard from the Qawwāls in charge of it, as a first move to this end.

In this connexion my hosts said that news had just been received of the Qawwāls who had left for the Caucasus in 1914, shortly before the outbreak of the war, and had not been heard of since; they hoped that the Government would facilitate their return.

I mounted early the following morning to ride to Lālish. Sa'īd Beg was to have accompanied me but failed to appear; I had little doubt that after he had left me the previous evening he had indulged in his usual potations and that he was still lying in a drunken sleep. My other companions, however, were well representative of the hierarchy: Shaykh Sulaymān of the Bābā Shaykh family, a Pīr also named Sulaymān and Faqīr Ḥusayn, the administrator of Shaykh Ādī's.

Lālish and the precincts of the shrine have already been described in some detail, and here I will not do more than recall the extraordinary impression of holy calm made upon me, as we rode up the valley in a silence broken only by the clatter of our own horses' hooves on the rocky path, by my first distant sight of the lovely, gleaming, fluted spire rising above the dark mass of foliage in the pale autumn sunshine.*

On the other hand this is perhaps the appropriate place to discuss the cryptic phrase in the *Shaykhān Memorial*, 'its special parts known to us'.

* It so happened that on this occasion the spire over Assin's chapel had been taken down for repairs and only one spire was visible.

The two *Parade* articles mentioned on page 9 as describing part of the Autumn Festival are: 'The Feast of the Devil Worshippers' by R. Mason and Gidal (28 August 1943) and 'The Devil Worshippers' by S. Maxton and A. F. Kersting (26 October 1946.)* Other European travellers who have visited and described the shrine at other seasons include: G. P. Badger, *The Nestorians and their Rituals,* 1852, pp. 105–24; W. Bachmann, *Kirchen und Moschen in Armenien und Kurdistan,* 1913, pp. 9–15; W. A. and E. T. A. Wigram, *The Cradle of Mankind,* 1914, 2nd Ed. 1922, pp. 90–110; Gertrude Bell, *Amurath to Amurath,* 1911, 2nd Ed. 1924, pp. 274–80; R. H. W. Empson, *The Cult of the Peacock Angel,* 1928, pp. 112–33; E. S. Stevens (Lady Drower), *By Tigris and Euphrates,* 1923, pp. 179–84, and *Peacock Angel,* 1941, pp. 136–204.

By 'special parts' must presumably be meant the Holy of Holies, the secret cave comprising three chambers where the spring of Zamzam rises and in one of which there are said to be seven thrones for the autumn conclave of the Seven Angels.

On this my first visit the Chāwūsh hesitated to conduct me beyond the olive store and only when assured by Faqīr Ḥusayn and my other companions that there was no objection did he lead me on to a further chamber, which I did not then recognize as the chapel of Ōbakr as I suppose it must have been, and I recorded: 'Spread over a rock (*sic*, perhaps the tomb if it was the chapel) was a pile of locally-woven cloth, looking fairly new, which my guides kissed reverently and described as the clothing of Shaykh Ādī.' But in 1944 the most uninhibited of my informants, after describing the cave, told me that a door leads into it out of the chapel of Ōbakr, which can also be reached by a passage from the Mīr's basement; on a rough sketch I made for him he marked it without hesitation in the hillside behind the oil store.

It is noteworthy that of the authors mentioned above who give plans of the sanctuary, Badger, Bachmann, the Wigrams and Empson, only the second shows the chapel to the west of the oil store. Lady Drower was a privileged visitor (*Peacock Angel,* pp. 196–201); but her guide, when pressed hard to show her the cave, eventually led her, with the air of one doing a great favour,

* For the first reference, and for the loan of the article, I am indebted to Rev. Père Thomas Bois of Carmel St Joseph, Beyrut; Mr Kersting himself was good enough to send me a copy of the second at the time of publication.

by a passage from the Mīr's basement, to the oil store, beyond which no bullyings or cajolings would induce him to take her. Gertrude Bell was conducted without much ado to a small chamber or cellar to the *east* of the chapel of Assin and at a slightly lower level, 'from under the north wall of which gushed a spring which is said to take its source in the well Zemzem at Mecca'. But the cellar she saw bears no resemblance to the 'vast natural cavern teeming with rills of trickling water' to which W. A. Wigram penetrated in 1907, when there were no Yazīdīs there to say him nay (*op. cit.* p. 100). My guess would be that this was the real Holy of Holies, and that the water is led thence through into Miss Bell's cellar, from which it flows under the east wall of the sanctuary out into the open for all to see.

FIRST VISIT TO SINJĀR

From Shaykhān I drove to Balad Sinjār the administrative headquarters of the *qaḍā* of that name.

The Jabal Sinjār consists of the main massif and a lower extension to the west called Jarība. It may be likened to a thickly-inhabited peninsula jutting out about fifty miles into a sea of desert. To the north the plain slopes almost imperceptibly to the Radd (Gōmal to the Yazīdīs), a depression, boggy in winter and spring but valuable as a watering place for flocks in summer and autumn, from twenty to twenty-five miles away.

For purposes of administration the *qaḍā* was divided into two *nāḥiyas* 'North', and 'Headquarters' or 'South'. Except for one small all-Arab village at the eastern end the population of the northern *nāḥiya* was almost exclusively Yazīdī, numbering about 10,000 souls in thirty-eight villages, the principal tribes from west to east being: Samōqa, Āldakhī, Faqīrān, Haskān, Māl-ā Khālitī (Musqora and Aldīn), Bakrān and Mahirkān. In Sinjār South the principal tribes from west to east were: Qīrān, Faqīrān, Chēlkān, Korkorkā, Habābāt, Mandikān and Mahirkān. The western end was almost solidly Yazīdī, but towards the east there was a large admixture of Bābāwīs, Yazīdī converts to Islam, a few Turkomans and finally a solid block of large Arab villages of the Ālbū Mutaywit tribe. In 1945 I estimated the population at about 20,000, divided more or less equally between Yazīdīs and the others; details will be found in Appendix II, but since the Yazīdī converts

PLATE III

(*a*) Faqīr Ḥusayn.

(*b*) Qawwāl and Kōchak.

(*c*) Hamō Shērō.

(*d*) Juwāna Tribesman of Sinjār.

(*e*) Yazīdīs of Jabal Sinjār.

to Islam had for the most part retained their tribal identities, the figure of 12,000 odd there given for Sinjār South, based as it is on tribal lists, may include as many as 2,000 converts.

Balad Sinjār is built up the sides of a detached hill in a broad gully where a number of watercourses from the main range converge. It had a population of about 4,000, half of them Sunnī Muslims from Mosul, the rest Bābāwīs, Christians and Yazīdīs, in that order of importance, with three families of Jews. Most of the senior officials of the *qaḍā* were Christians.

Sheep farming was the most important occupation of the population as a whole, but the Yazīdīs of the mountain villages in particular were industrious and skilful gardeners as the remarkable terracing of the slopes bore witness. The principal products not consumed locally were wool, hides, dried figs (for which Sinjār was justly famous), and a low grade of cotton. Other agricultural produce sufficed for their own needs.

The traditional grazing grounds extend on the north to the Radd, and on the south about the same distance into the Jazīra desert. The most westerly Yazīdī tribe, the Samōqa, lived in tents for three quarters of the year, camping in the Jarība and the plains on both sides. At certain seasons of the year when the Radd and other *wādīs* draining to the Khābūr river are too boggy for sheep, pastoral elements from the Arab Ṭāy and Jubūr tribes from Syria were accustomed to come over and camp near or even among the Yazīdīs.

My first day I had little time to do more than visit two tombs, both in charge of hatchet-faced Bābāwī guardians, indistinguishable from Yazīdīs except by the shirt open down the front. At Sitt Zubayda's, at the top of the hill, there is an upright octagonal stone column, about twelve inches across and standing six feet out of the ground, which women wanting children come to embrace. That of Pīr Zakar is in the gardens below the town. The altar-tomb, draped in the usual way but raised at one end like a bier into a knob, was covered with all kinds of rubbish, pages torn from books, pieces of cotton wool, a match-box, odd used matches, and the like; and there was a strong smell of tallow candle. The visit over, the two guardians invited me to drink coffee with them. When I asked where the Bābāwīs originally came from they answered together, the first saying 'Mecca' and the

other 'Ajam' (Persia), but he could not be more precise. The tomb is venerated by the Yazīdīs also.

The Government *serai*, where I spent the night, was in the lower part of the town. While I was inspecting the police station Nā'if Beg, Mīr Sa'īd Beg's cousin and triple father-in-law, was brought in under arrest to be charged with instigating the theft of the Sinjār Peacock-Standard. I also saw there the formidable Mayān Khātūn, who, as they had already told me at Bā'idhra, had herself come to prosecute the complaint. Nā'if, alarmed by the serious view of the offence taken by the authorities, had sent in the Standard but had himself attempted unsuccessfully to abscond.

A few minutes later Ismā'īl Beg came down from his house on the high western outskirts of the town to invite me in to coffee. He can perhaps best be described as *un original*. He had visited the Caucasus and had served for a time under British command as an officer in the Iraq Levies. He had sent his son 'Abd al-Karīm to Baghdad to be trained as a school teacher, and was having his daughter Wansa, a pretty little thing to judge by the photograph he showed me, educated by the American missionaries in Mosul, both strange departures from the normal for a Yazīdī. Poor Wansa, ill named Felicity; after continuing her education at the American University of Beyrut she was given in marriage to the lecherous and besotted Mīr, ran away, gained the reputation of being no better than she should be, turned Muslim, and was finally murdered.

A man of about forty, with a black straggly beard and the sad, pained expression often worn by leading Yazīdīs at any rate when approaching persons in authority, Ismā'īl Beg presented an extraordinary spectacle in khaki riding breeches and stockings, grey British army shirt, khaki waistcoat, white head-cloth worn Arab fashion, and black *'aqāl*. When we reached the house he changed into a long cossack-type coat, with a revolver and a straight Caucasian dagger slung over the shoulders.

The guest-room floor was heavily carpeted, and the walls were draped with pileless *galīms* to a height of about five feet. Above these was hung a multiplicity of bric-à-brac, cheap coloured prints of the royal families of Europe, biscuit advertisements, a banner representing the crucifixion with a legend in Armenian, three old European prints of the shrine of Shaykh Ādī and another

of his father and grandfather, various photographs including one of himself with his wife and two children, a Caucasian dagger with a 'peacock' engraved on the scabbard, a sword, a sporting rifle with telescopic sights, two or three revolvers, and finally, towards a corner, a bag of striped *galīm*-like material with about twenty-six brass rings sewn on the front in rows of six or seven.

When coffee had been served my host took down the bag and a piece of faded pink silk that had been hanging above it, knelt down in front of a low wooden stool near the wall, spread the silk over it, propped a cushion covered with another piece of silk upright on the stool against the wall, opened the bag, and took out, one after another, the parts of what looked like a brass candlestick, the topmost part being a burner designed, as far as I could see, to take one large wick in the middle and six smaller wicks in little beaks around the circumference. After fitting the parts together he reverently kissed the silk and the 'candlestick' before rising to display it.

He said that it had formerly belonged to the shrine of Shaykh Ādī. The 'peacock' engraved on his dagger seemed to be set on a similar stand, but one having in place of the burner a holder for the bird in the form of five superimposed balls with a flat disc between the top two and the bottom three; the bird, however, looked more like a conventional Noah's-ark duck than a peacock.

I should have liked to spend several days travelling in Sinjār. But a League of Nations Commission under the Esthonian General Laidoner was due in Mosul the next day in connexion with the frontier dispute with Turkey, and I was obliged to hurry back in the morning to meet them.

TROUBLED SINJĀR

The situation of the Yazīdīs in an Islamic state differed fundamentally from that of the Christians of the various denominations and of the Jews, whose presence as religious minorities entitled to certain privileges was recognized by law. They tended to be regarded, rather, as apostates and were thus always exposed to the danger that persons in authority, high or low, with a streak of fanaticism in their make-up might think it not only legitimate but even meritorious to maltreat them.

This is not the place to recall in detail the savage persecution which the Yazīdīs suffered at the hands of the Turks throughout the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries, marked as they were by a score of major punitive expeditions mounted by the Wālīs of Diyārbakir, Mosul or Baghdad—operations legitimated by *fatwā's* from the *'ulamā* and supported as often as not by the neighbouring Arab and Kurdish tribes. One of the bloodiest was the holy war waged against them in 1832 by the Kurdish Muḥammad Pasha 'Boss-eye' of Rawāndiz, the concluding drama of which is described in Layard's *Nineveh and its Remains* (I. 276–8). In 1846 Layard himself accompanied Tayyār Pāshā to Sinjār on an expedition which started out with the best intentions but went wrong owing to the incurable distrust of the Yazīdīs for their Ottoman masters.

The influence of Layard in Mosul, the intervention of Sir Stratford Canning at Constantinople, and the liberal policy towards religious minorities proclaimed in Sulṭān 'Abd al-Majīd's *Khaṭṭ-i Hamāyūn* of 1856, all seem to have contributed for a time to alleviate their lot. But the improvement did not last very long, and the calamity that now looms largest in the communal memory is the 'Year of the General', 1892, when 'Umar Wahbī Pāshā descended on their villages with fire and sword, giving them the choice between adoption of Islam or death, and looted and desecrated the shrine of Shaykh Ādī, from which he carried off the Peacock-Standards and the Maṣḥaf-ā Rash. Taking with him the Mīr, Mīrzā Beg, one of the few who went through the formality of abjuring their faith, 'Umar Wahbī marched on Sinjār. But the troops were defeated with heavy loss, and before very long the General was recalled to Constantinople, leaving Sinjār unsubdued. During these operations Hamō Shērō captured a number of breech-loading rifles, a rarity in those days, from the Turks; and this was the beginning of his rise to power and eventual appointment as Chief of the Mountain, a position previously held by Sēvōk 'Pāshā', head of the Musqora. But the shrine was restored to the Yazīdīs only after sixteen years.

During the whole of my time in Iraq I never had occasion to go to Shaykhān on duty specifically connected with the Yazīdīs as such. The case of Sinjār was very different: it was the home of a primitive, bellicose people frequently engaged in tribal

warfare both amongst themselves and with their non-Yazīdī neighbours and, owing to memories of bitter persecutions in Ottoman times, still distrustful of a Muslim government; it was moreover situated in an area which was in dispute between Britain and France as Mandataries respectively for Iraq and Syria.

The frontier dispute was referred to the League of Nations in November 1931, a Commission of Inquiry came out in the spring of 1932, the Council of the League announced its decision that autumn, and another League Commission demarcated the line in 1933. The boundary had originally been defined in the Anglo-French Convention of December 1920, which, as a piece of boundary delimitation, was about as unsatisfactory a document as it is possible to imagine: no map was attached to the original or even mentioned, the two parties interpreted it in different ways, the neutral League Commissioners adopted a third interpretation and drew attention to a possible fourth, and during the twelve years between 1920 and 1932 the two administrations had observed a *de-facto* line corresponding to none of the four. This is not the place to discuss these proceedings; suffice to say that the principal battle developed over the ownership of Sinjār, that it was awarded to Iraq (thanks, in part at any rate, to the expressed preference of the Yazīdīs themselves), but that to placate the other side the new frontier line was drawn on the north and west rather closer in than was really justified, cutting off part of the traditional grazing grounds of the villagers.

It fell to me to prepare the Iraqi case for submission to the League, to lead the Anglo-Iraqi delegation on the Commission of Inquiry, and to serve on the Demarcation Commission, tasks which brought me into close personal relations with the Yazīdīs.

In Kurdistan the best way of getting to know the people is, of course, by the old-fashioned, leisurely method of caravan travel. But in Sinjār all the important villages are either well out in the plain or only a short distance up in the great gullies that score the mountain on both sides; they are thus easily accessible by car. Since the business on hand was generally of an urgent nature my contacts here tended to be with the higher ranks of the community, Shaykhs, tribal chiefs, and the like. Four of these it will be convenient to introduce at once.

By the spring of 1932 old Hamō Shērō, now about ninety, had degenerated into a despotic old dotard. Though his mind had

failed his physical vigour had not, and the ages of his surviving male family ranged between the seventy years of the eldest (he looked more like eighty) and the seventy days of the latest addition. His place as Chief of the Mountain had been taken, to all intents and purposes, by the most intelligent of his sons, Khudēdā, a pleasant and sensible man of about forty, capable more than most tribesmen of taking an objective and practical view of events, highly respected by the Bedouin shaykhs, Shammar, Ṭāy and others, with whom he frequently had occasion to negotiate, and one whom the administration was often glad to ask for advice.

Shaykh Khalaf-ē Nāṣir of the Sajādīn family, an immigrant from Shaykhān, by shrewd use of his religious standing had accumulated wealth, acquired land, and established himself as virtually head of the Haskān tribe. Of volatile temperament, his career had been one of periods of favour with Government alternating with others as a fugitive or in jail. He lived at Guhbal well out in the plain on the north side, a convenient first port of call for the traveller approaching the Jabal from the north or north-east.

Shaykh Khiḍr of the Farkhadīn family resembled Shaykh Khalaf alike in the way he had acquired temporal authority over the Qīrān tribe, in his volatile temperament, and in the ups and downs of his relations with the administration. He lived at Sikayniyya, the most westerly permanent village on the south side, but, being particularly rich in flocks which grazed over the Jarība and far out in the desert, he was frequently to be found in his tents like any Bedouin shaykh. He was thus favourably placed to slip away into Syrian territory when trouble threatened. He was if anything more highly strung than Khalaf, but I had no difficulty in establishing relations of confidence with both of them from our first meeting.

Dāwūd-ē Dāwūd, chief of the Mahirkān at the eastern end of the Jabal on both sides and grandson of ʿĪsá Āghā, who fought off Tayyār Pāshā in 1847, was the stormy petrel of Sinjār, nearly always the first in trouble, even in the days of the Mandate (which ended in 1932), when there was a British Administrative Inspector at Mosul influential enough to ensure fair play for the Yazīdīs. How far this was due to real wickedness and how far due to the fact that his enemy Hamō Shērō had been recognized as Chief of

the Mountain and to certain genuine grievances in connexion with his lands I cannot now presume to judge. He spent many years, on and off, as a fugitive from justice in Syria and I met him for the first time only in 1941 in the circumstances described below.

The principal bugbear of the Yazīdīs and the main cause of friction in their relations with Government has been compulsory military service, not because they object to soldiering as such but on account of the incompatibility of a régime laid down for men of another religion with certain requirements of their faith. In 1849, at the instance of Layard (*Nineveh and Babylon*, I. 3–4), Sir Stratford Canning obtained from the Sublime Porte an imperial order for an appropriate mitigation of the regulations. In practice they seem to have succeeded in avoiding conscription until the end of the Ottoman period, but another alarm in 1872 gave rise to the famous petition which for long remained an important if not in every respect reliable source of our information about the sect (G. R. Driver, 'An Account of the Religion of the Yazidi Kurds', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, II, 1922, pp. 207–10).

There had been no compulsory military service in Iraq under the Mandate; but a law was enacted in 1934, and in 1935 a start was made with its application to Sinjār. I was absent at Geneva that summer in connexion with the frontier dispute with Persia and returned in the second half of October to find that a refusal by Dāwūd-ē Dāwūd to register the Mahirkān had been followed by a full-scale military expedition supported by artillery and aircraft and the proclamation of martial law transferring to the Officer Commanding Northern Area supreme administrative and judicial powers, not only in Sinjār but in any neighbouring area he chose to designate; Dāwūd himself had escaped severely wounded to Syria, but a military court had passed a series of the most savage sentences on the men who had been captured or had made submission (9 to death, 69 to life imprisonment, 70 to twenty years, 162 to fifteen years, 33 to ten years, 20 to lesser terms, and 54 to banishment to the south).

In addition to the Yazīdīs two Christian intellectuals of Mosul were hanged. I was never able to ascertain exactly on what evidence they were sentenced. The years 1930 to 1933 had been a period of trepidation and ferment among the racial and religious

minorities of Iraq on account of the ending of the Mandate, and had seen the imprisonment of Kurdish nationalist leaders, the Assyrian affair, and intensive propaganda from Syria among the Yazīdīs in connexion with the frontier dispute. I can only suppose that stale documents dating back to those years had been found in the course of house-to-house searches not confined to Sinjār and had been used as evidence of treasonable activities.

Martial law was lifted in November. In the following July, judging that tempers had had time to cool, I took advantage of the end of a period of martial law on the Euphrates to bring to the notice of the Minister of the Interior (Rashīd ʿĀlī) the scale and savagery of the Sinjār sentences as compared with those inflicted in Barzān at about the same time and still more on the Euphrates, where the troubles had been far more serious, widespread and prolonged; but only twenty-nine pardons had been issued in response to my pressure when the Cabinet was overthrown by the coup d'état of 29 October 1936. I immediately renewed my representations to the new Prime Minister, Ḥikmat Sulaymān, who, with characteristic magnanimity, had all the Yazīdīs released, without exception, within a month of his assumption of office. But he remained in power less than ten months.

Thereafter there was friction almost every summer over the annual call-up of recruits, the degree depending on the good will and tact, or the opposite, of the recruiting officer and the local officials. At best it was quite usual for various Yazīdī headmen judged to be insufficiently co-operative to be deported for internment and then completely forgotten until somebody intervened to secure their release.

In the years about which I am now writing I was frequently absent from the country for several months at a time, generally in summer, either in England or at Geneva on duty connected with Iraq's foreign relations, or on leave. My diary is in consequence somewhat disconnected, but a note to the effect that in the spring of 1939 I secured the release of Shaykh Khiḍr points to some trouble in the summer of 1938.

It was particularly unfortunate that from April 1939 to October 1941 the post of Mutaṣarrif of Mosul was held by a man who was at the same time a poor administrator and, where Yazīdīs were concerned, not free of the taint of fanaticism; he was, moreover, known to be receiving a monthly 'allowance' from Shaykh

'Ajīl al-Yāwar, paramount chief of the Shammar Bedouin, an extremely astute politician then engaged in using his influential position to acquire extensive lands on the fringes of the Yazīdī domain. In his dealings with the Yazīdīs the activities of this official often smacked of the agent provocateur (and, of course, it was never very difficult to put a people as primitive as the men of the Jabal in the wrong) rather than of the Governor of the largest and most important province of Iraq; and once again, in the autumn (1939) I returned to Iraq to find that within three months of his appointment, and before any incident had occurred to justify calling in the military to assist the civil power, he had arranged with the Commander of the Northern District to extend to Sinjār and Shaykhān (the choice of these widely separated districts clearly showed what was intended) the martial law that had been proclaimed in Mosul itself after the murder of the British Consul in April. I have no details of the numerous sentences passed by the military court, but Khalaf and even Khudēdā were in prison (the latter at Ḥilla in Shī'a country, a particularly vindictive choice for a Yazīdī) and Khiḍr was again a fugitive in Syria with many of his tribesmen. Thanks to the good offices of an enlightened Minister of the Interior, 'Umar Naẓmī, a general pardon had been obtained by the middle of February.

On 5 September 1941 the Mutaṣarrif telegraphed to report that the Qā'immaqām had been killed at the Habābāt village of Rambūsī in Sinjār South and that all the Yazīdīs had taken to the mountain in preparation for revolt; he asked for the immediate proclamation of martial law and the dispatch of a punitive column. (It subsequently transpired that pending a reply a regiment of cavalry had immediately left for Balad Sinjār, and that within a few hours the Shammar and other Arab tribes were converging on the Jabal 'to help the Government', looting a number of villages including Guhbal on the way.) I attended a conference of the Prime Minister and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Interior (Muṣṭafá al-'Umarī), where it was agreed that Muṣṭafá and I should leave for Mosul at once.

Our inquiries showed that in a fairly recently appointed Qā'immaqām (the old rule of selecting Christians for Sinjār had long been abandoned) the Mutaṣarrif had found a subordinate after his own heart, and that friction had been mounting throughout the summer. Trifling incidents had been regularly magnified

into major acts of defiance, and on numerous occasions large parties of police had been sent to make sudden descents on villages to search for alleged criminals or absentee conscripts, arresting the headmen instead of enlisting their co-operation in the normal way for tribal areas.

On the day in question the Qā'immaqām had himself taken four armed cars to raid Rambūsī at dawn. According to the Yazīdīs it was he who had started the affray by spraying the village with machine-gun fire. However that might be it was quite clear that this was no premeditated murder but the accidental results of a last act of brutal clumsiness. History had repeated itself very closely, for in 1881 a Turkish Qā'immaqām had been killed in similar circumstances, but by ʿĪsá Āghā's Mahirkān.

Muṣṭafá, whatever his faults in other respects, was an exceptionally able administrator. He agreed that the affair of the Qā'immaqām was the responsibility of the Habābāt and must be kept quite distinct from the long list of charges against all and sundry in the Mutaṣarrif's indictment, and that we should summon the most influential Yazīdī leaders, Khudēdā, Khalaf, Khiḍr and Dāwūd (now back in Iraq for a change), as well as two senior headmen of the Habābāt, to co-operate in finding a settlement which would be just and would at the same time vindicate the prestige of Government; for, whatever the circumstances, the killing of a senior official by tribesmen was no small thing.

Not surprisingly, in view of their previous experiences, there was some hesitation to obey the summons and it was agreed that I should go myself to Bārāna, where they had assembled. The chiefs had come out to *istiqbāl* some three hundred yards from the village with about a hundred riflemen, who lined the route as they conducted me to a black tent pitched in the courtyard of Dāwūd's spotlessly clean house. I listened for a time to their complaints and grievances, which included the allegation by Dāwūd that his nephew, his cousin and the seven followers who had been hanged in 1935, as well as the others who had been sentenced to imprisonment, had come in on safe-conduct; but when I suggested that it was time to leave he refused to budge until I had had a proper meal in his house. To this, of course, I agreed.

It would be tedious to relate in detail the patient negotiations, which lasted a week and which were not helped by the tense

atmosphere in Mosul itself, where public opinion had been deliberately whipped up to the point where citizens whom I should never have suspected of such extremism were demanding that the time had come to 'settle the Yazīdī problem' once and for all. Suffice to say that, to the manifest chagrin of the Mutaṣarrif, a settlement was reached on the basis that the Habābāt should pay a fine of £1,500 for three deaths and cutting the telegraph wires (the others agreeing to help with loans to ensure payment within a short time limit), that the intertribal affrays of which so much had been made should be settled by the normal procedure of arbitration under the *Tribal Criminal and Civil Disputes Regulations*, and certain other secondary stipulations; it was further arranged that the troops would be withdrawn as soon as the first of three instalments of the fine had been paid.

In connexion with this incident there was an interesting development that is worth recording. Whereas the Arab tribes of the Sinjār region had gathered, as I have already mentioned, to 'help the government' in a general attack on the Yazīdīs, we received reports of a certain unrest among the Kurdish tribes of the Shaykhān district, in particular the notoriously truculent Dōskī of Dihōk, and talk of going to the help of their 'Kurdish brethren' in their need. (There was another example of the growing impact of Kurdish nationalist feeling in 1944, when the young Mīr, Taḥsīn, visited Baghdad after his recognition as Sa'īd Beg's successor, and was lionized by a group of intellectuals as the head of a community that had preserved its 'Kurdishness' to an exceptional degree).

The Mutaṣarrif was transferred in October, and for three years Sinjār enjoyed an unaccustomed calm until, in the summer of 1944, it was rudely disturbed by the murder of Khudēdā (Ēd Hamō) at the hands of a rival faction of the Faqīrān (Ēd Jindo), a distressing breach of the Faqīr code. This was followed by reprisals in kind; there was an epidemic of raiding and counter-raiding by the tribal friends of the original parties; and once more Dāwūd, Khalaf and Khiḍr were required to live outside the Mosul *liwā*. The last two at Ramādī were reasonably free and were allowed to visit Baghdad from time to time on medical grounds. This gave me the opportunity to have them to my house several times that winter and to record much interesting information at greater length than would have been possible otherwise.

In the spring they were sent back to Mosul for their various cases to be settled under the *Tribal Regulations*. The Faqīrān murder cases were still pending when I left the country in 1945, but one or two interesting points of Yazīdī tribal law which arose in connection with the mutual raids between the Haskān and the Āldakhī are worth recording.

Blood money was reckoned at £52 for each death; all looted property was to be returned; cash compensation for missing animals was to be from £2 to £9 according to kind and age, and for a good rifle £75 (the curious discrepancy in the value placed on a life and on a rifle appeared to be due to the fact that blood money had long been fixed by tradition whereas for a rifle the amount was the current market rate). When the accounts had been agreed the six mediators (who included old Darwēsh Mijēwar, Dāwūd's son Amar, and a son of Hamō Shērō) were to conduct the two principal chiefs of the parties (Khalaf for the Haskān) to the village where the Qawwāls touring with the Sinjār Peacock-Standard happened to be. The Qawwāls would hand *berats* from Shaykh 'Ādī's to the representatives of each side, who would then exchange the *berats* swearing at the same time that all claims were settled and enmity was buried. The mediators would then in turn conduct the Haskān to an Āldakhī village and the Āldakhī to a Haskān village for a meal, the exchange of meals to constitute the final act in the ratification of the peace.

FAREWELL TO SINJĀR

I paid my last visit to Sinjār in the middle of April (1945), a lovely season.

I was determined to get away, if only for a few hours, from all forms of mechanical transport, and had arranged for mules to be ready at the Aldīn village of Rāshid, just inside the first considerable ravine on the north side of the mountain as one approaches from the east. I had planned my itinerary in consultation with Shaykh Khalaf at Baghdad, but the times he gave proved to be underestimates at every stage. When I reached Rāshid the headman, Shashō, a handsome man in typical Sinjār costume, with ruddy cheeks, a fair moustache, and hair in side-plaits, announced that the midday meal was ready and waiting, and that there was

no time to be lost if I was to reach my destination before dark. With great regret I was obliged to abandon my proposed visit to the shrine of Sharfadīn out in the plain a short way from the mouth of the ravine; but through field-glasses I could see reasonably clearly a walled enclosure of some size with a tall tree showing over the wall, the spire of the principal tomb, a smaller spire to one side, and three other fairly large buildings, all apparently in good repair.

Shashō's house, like every other Yazīdī house I ever had occasion to enter, was spotlessly clean, and he was as good as his word about the meal. The administrator of the shrine, Shaykh Baḥrī, a dignified grey-bearded figure in white robes, joined us in the room but at first refused to eat, begging for the release of Dāwūd and Khalaf. I knew that Khalaf was already on the way and so was able to give him partial satisfaction.

My first objective was the Chilmēra, a chapel dedicated to Sharfadīn, on the highest point of the Jabal (4,780 feet). My guides and companions were to be Shashō himself, Khalaf's brother Barakāt from Guhbal, and two headmen of the Musqora. There was some discussion as to which was the best of several difficult tracks, and we eventually settled for one through Wūsifān. It certainly was very steep in places, and more than once I was fain to dismount rather than trust to the sure-footedness even of a good mule. The climb took just over two hours against Khalaf's estimate of thirty minutes.

The crest at this point is a sheer cliff of bare rock, with a few scrubby oak bushes thrusting themselves out here and there through the fissures, but no tree worthy of the name. The chapel comprised a white-washed inner sanctuary of plastered *pisé* about twelve feet square, a broader ante-chamber of dry walling twenty-four feet by twelve, and, adjoining it an open yard enclosed by low walls of loose stone. The sanctuary contained an altar-tomb and was surmounted, not by the usual fluted spire but a dome that looked more like a scalped halma-man.

My companions took off their shoes and stockings (but said that I need take off only my shoes) before leading me along a crazy pavement, polished by thousands of bare feet over the years and less than a yard wide between the north wall and the edge of the cliff, and then round by the east wall, to a wooden door in the protruding part of the antechamber. They had already put

some coins on the threshold to show what was expected; so I added an appropriate contribution, and a Faqīr, no doubt a Shaykh of the Ibrāhīm Khatnī family, called down a blessing. Before we left they collected any pieces of plaster that had fallen from the walls to be made into *berats*, which, in Sinjār, are reckoned to be almost as efficacious as those from Shaykh Ādī's itself.

There was not a cloud in the sky. To the north there was a superb view over a halma-board of fallow and sown merging into the grazing grounds that extend to the Radd, with flat-roofed villages and clumps of black tents like so many pieces in the game, from Guhbal round to the gleaming blue lake of Khātūniyya (called Baḥra by the Yazīdīs), with the Jabals ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz and Kawkab in Syria, behind; far away, beyond the Radd, in Turkey, the outline of the heights of Mardīn and Mīdiāt was just distinguishable in the haze.

The second highest point of the Jabal Sinjār is said to be the Sin-ē Kilūb (*sin*, peak, promontory) about eighteen miles away to the west. A legend (which I first heard when I went up with two colleagues of the Frontier Commission in 1932) relates that this was Noah's first landfall as he drifted northwards in the ark; when ordered to bow to him the Sin refused, so Noah went on another eighty miles to the Chiyā-ē Jūdī.

Another story concerns the tomb of Shaykh Rūmī out in the plain near the Musqora village of Girēzarka, where there is a clump of trees. Having been warned by a saint endowed with thaumaturgical powers that he was destined to die of a scorpion sting, the Shaykh swore on oath never to sleep on the ground but on his horse. On the fortieth night he went to sleep in the saddle as usual, with his lance thrust into the ground and his head resting on the butt. In the middle of the night a scorpion crawled up the lance and stung the hand holding it. Rūmī shouted for help and a thousand trees ran down to him from the mountain. But he expired just as they arrived and each tree took root at the point it had reached.

Mention of the Frontier Commission reminds me of an interesting incident. We were driving along the south side of the mountain when one of the cars became badly bogged up to the axles in a patch of soft mud. Some villagers came to our assistance and as, after considerable exertion, we finally got the car back to terra firma one of the Yazīdīs exclaimed delightedly, 'Indeed

Tāūs-ē Malak came to our help'. For him, clearly, the Peacock-Angel was no Spirit of Evil demanding only to be propitiated.

From the Chilmēra we rode westwards, looking down sometimes to the plains on both sides, sometimes to the north only, but mostly to the south, along the heads of the great clefts that come together below to form the Balad Sinjār gap. At first we passed between terraced and walled vineyards, with numbers of what seemed to have been habitations, now ruinous, built of large, rough pieces of rock, until we came down to a pleasant hollow called Sar-ē Dashtē between two ridges, with an easy track through cornfields where I was able to canter to make up time. The light was already beginning to fail as we reached Kōlkān, the highest of the group of seven villages, Faqīrān above and Āldakhī below, collectively known as Bardahlī, where the extensive terracing bore witness to the skill and industry of the inhabitants. They told me that Kōlkān had previously belonged to the Korkorka, but that owing to a feud with the Āldakhī the people had migrated to Gābāra on the south side. It was quite dark by the time we reached Māmīsē, the administrative headquarters of Sinjār North.

Before starting out the next morning I had, of course, to see the inevitable crowd of petitioners, many of them concerned with the Faqīrān murders and the subsequent Āldakhī-Haskān hostilities to which I have already referred: Khudēdā's eldest brother the patriarchal Darwēsh; Amsha, the mother of three Āldakhī killed in the Haskān raid; the Āldakhī headman of Māmīsē itself complaining that a pro-Haskān faction of his own tribe had cut down a thousand fruit-trees; and others with similar cases. The delay obliged me to abandon yet another project, a visit to a chapel dedicated to Shaykh Shams near the village of Jāfriyya below Sin-ē Kilūb.

Rejoining the cars I drove northwards across the plain, still gay with spring flowers, to Sinūnī (Samōqa), a large village surrounded by extensive cultivation and dependent for water on shallow, hand-dug wells, and then on to a new police post at Tirbika. Here I was particularly gratified to find large numbers of sheep watering at one of several artesian wells which I had persuaded the Geological Department of the Ministry of Irrigation and Agriculture to sink on both sides of the Jabal. The shepherds told me that in this region most of the iron boundary-poles

we had erected with so much labour in 1933 had been removed; the artificial and vexatious official line was evidently being quietly replaced in practice by the Radd, an easily recognizable feature wide enough to enable shepherds of both sides to water their flocks without treading on each other's toes. From Tirbika I turned westwards, parallel with the frontier, to visit another police post and several camps, mostly Samōqa but one of Ṭāy Arabs over from Syria, before turning south again.

Until 1933, to get from north to south of the Jabal, we had always used a reasonably good track round the western end of the Jarība by the prominent mound of Tall al-'Arūs. But the boundary had now been drawn one mile to the east of it and so had forced us to clear a way as best we could through the rocky defile of Bāb-ē Shīlō, between the Jarība and the main massif, where some of the cave-dwelling Chēlkān had their abode.

Not far from the southern exit, close to the Qīrān village of Majnūniyya stands a building known as the Maqām of Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Gīlānī. This, and not the mausoleum in Baghdad, the Yazīdīs believe, is the true burial place of this celebrated saint. His too, they say, was a miraculous birth, but this time there was no ordinary father. His mother was a daughter of Shaykh Junayd (the mystic of Baghdad who died in A.D. 910). A stone wall having collapsed and crushed Ḥusayn al-Ḥallāj, a pupil of her father's, the girl drank from a stream into which his blood had trickled and thereupon conceived.

On a previous occasion I had found Qīrān and Faqīrān at Al-Badī' wells twenty miles out, but this time we traced Shaykh Khiḍr to Tall Ḥajar at eleven miles. The ground around any camp soon becomes fouled with animal droppings, and he had considerately moved only that morning to a delightful new site of sweet, clean, green grass. His tent was a large one of seven poles, divided exactly in half at the middle pole by a curtain of rough home-woven materials. We sat with the flaps up on both sides to let through the breeze until sunset, when the north side was let down. Shaykh Ṣufūq, paramount Shaykh of the Shammar Bedouin, who was camped not many miles away and had evidently heard of my movements, arrived unexpectedly to call, and I promised to be his guest on the morrow at Hatra.

My bed had been spread up against the central curtain, and, when the time came to turn in, the rest of the party, which almost

filled the public half of the tent, lay down more or less where they were. At three o'clock I was wakened by the thud, thud, thud of the skin churning-sack being swung to and fro on its stand by the Shaykh's ladies doing their daily stint of butter making on the other side of the curtain; by four all the sheep, ponies and donkeys (one of which had slept inside the tent all night) had been driven out to graze, and by five, half an hour before sunrise, the tent too was empty.

As a parting present Shaykh Khiḍr insisted on giving me a coffee-pot and six cups of typical Arab shape cunningly contrived out of a soft kind of stone by a craftsman of the Chēlkan caves, and I promised to do my best to get him an artesian well dug at a place which he named.

Eleven miles south-east of Tall al-Ḥajar I met the last Yazīdīs on my route, hatchet-faced, wild-looking Mandikān, at the wells of Al-Ba'āj, twenty miles from their village of Tall Qaṣab; and only a short way beyond I came upon the most northerly camps of Shammar.

THE KERMIS OF ḤĀJĪ MUḤAMMAD

I had intended to push on the next day, Wednesday, 18 April N.S., the first day of the Yazīdī New-Year festival, direct from Hatra to Shaykhān, so as to spend several hours on the Thursday at Shaykh Ādī's with Bābā Chāwūsh, who was reputed to be the best-informed authority on everything to do with his people, before going to Ba'shīqa for the Kermis. But once again my plans were frustrated by the calls of urgent official business which kept me in Mosul the whole day, so that I was able to do little more the following morning than to exchange politenesses with him (I had brought him an enlarged and framed photograph of himself taken at the Autumn Festival) and with the Lady Abbess. It was still wintry at this altitude of about 3,500 feet and, in contrast to the luxuriant foliage of October, the trees looked very bare. But little bunches of red ranunculus attached to the lintels and jambs of several doorways indicated that spring was on the way.

At Ba'shīqa I lodged with the Christian schoolmaster. Many prominent Yazīdīs were already there and lost no time in calling: Mayān Khātūn, Khayrī Beg, old Darwēsh Mijēwar affairé and

important as usual, Shaykh Khalaf just back from exile and accompanied by a lively and very attractive little son who was evidently the apple of his eye, Khudēdā's brother Saydō looking like a martyr in pain, and others.

The Yazīdī schoolmaster from Bāzān, a Shaykh Ḥusayn of the Assin family, constituted himself my cicerone. We strolled round the village together, and he pointed out various places of historical or legendary interest: the small tomb with the typical fluted spire of Shāhid son of Jarr and several similar tombs of other saintly personages of whom I had not heard elsewhere such as Shaykh Muḥammad of Khūrāsān, Sitt Ḥabība and Sitt Khadīja; the large fane of Malak Mīrān who was born of a virgin mother, Hūriyya, during the Shāhid dispensation (according to an inscription over the entrance the building had been devastated by 'Umar Wahbī Pasha and restored in A.H. 1335, A.D. 1916–17, by my companion's father); an olive in an enclosure sacred to Faqīra 'Alī; another olive tree sacred to Sitt Nafīsa of Khūrāsān, the fruit of which cures insomnia; and in the stream below Malak Mīrān an oleander where a sufferer from 'wind', that is rheumatic pains, would obtain relief by bringing down from the fane a handful of earth, making a mud pie, and rubbing it on his stomach before tearing a tassel from his head-cloth and tying it to the shrub. Other places celebrated for miraculous cures of bodily ills are a spring in a grotto between Ba'shīqa and Bāzān, the tomb of Ways al-Qanayrī at Qaṣr Rāst on the high ground to the north (headache and sore eyes), and the tomb of Ōbakr (fever).

As we passed the cemetery we could hear the plaintive sound of pipes and drums coming from a little funeral party on the far side. It was a tune, he said, called *mehter*, originally composed for Yazīd al-Bātinī (to be distinguished from the Caliph Yazīd) and ordinarily played as a serenade on the morning after the consummation of a marriage but also over the grave of a young man dying in the flower of youth.

The tomb, within and in front of which the principal activities, sacred and profane, take place, is known to the outside world as Shaykh Muḥammad's (that is, I understood, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyya); but according to one Yazīdī informant they were really honouring Shaykh Assin, and according to another they were celebrating the anniversary of the occasion when the original Heptad of seven Shaykh-Angels visited Ba'shīqa from Lālish.

On the Friday hundreds of country folk from all the villages round about, Christians, Shabaks, orthodox Muslims alike, the women and girls decked in their holiday best, were accustomed to flock in to join the Yazīdīs in the day's merry-making. In recent years the Kermis had become a kind of tourist attraction, and the Mutaṣarrif would have a large marquee pitched in a favourable position for viewing the public proceedings, with tables, chairs and refreshments, to which he would invite the Consuls and other prominent persons, Iraqi and foreign, and there was a certain amount of regimentation by well-meaning police.

The Yazīdīs had been busy all night with their mysteries in the sanctuary; but when I and my companions walked across after breakfast these were over, and large contingents of villagers were already arriving from every direction, many with pipers and drummers, who detached themselves from their groups to greet us and to be suitably rewarded. We entered by a large forecourt about fifteen yards square and surrounded by cloisters. Placing the appropriate donation on the threshold we went into the inner sanctuary, where numerous offerings of lengths of red and green silk covered the altar-tomb near the far-side wall.

It was not yet time for the dancing to begin, so we went out to a field not very far away to watch the horse-racing—not an organized meeting but a succession of impromptu challenges with two, three, or at most four riders.

By the time we got back a vast crowd had assembled. The forecourt and the roofs of the shrine and the cloisters were thronged, and I longed for a colour-cinematograph to record the riot of colour. I thought the Shabak girls, with their tanned, coppery skins, which gave them a wild, gipsy-like appearance, were the most resplendent. It would take a professional fashion-reporter to do justice to the elaborate costumes, and the best I could do was to note about one of them: 'gown of blue and silver over a full-length skirt of red and purple, cream "shawl" embroidered with silver, turban of intertwined black and coloured silk squares, silver coins around turban, round coiled gold ornament over the ears, large silver plaques hanging from shoulder over upper arm, heavy bangles'; and there were, in addition to those I have mentioned, more layers of garments which it is beyond my vocabulary to name. The Christians came next in

brilliance; but the Yazīdīs, with their paler skins and delicate features, the colours of their zouave-jackets set off by the large proportion of white in the costumes of most of them, presented a picture of airy grace that I found far more attractive than the more flamboyant charms of the others. A few veiled figures all in black from Mosul looked strangely incongruous in this uninhibited company.

The dancing opened with the solemn *Govend* in the forecourt by Yazīdī men only. When that was finished there was a general move to the broad open arena in front of the shrine, where orthodox Muslim Kurds, Shabaks, Yazīdīs and Christians, men and women, joined hands to form great circles and foot it, as if nothing would ever tire them, to the music of equally tireless pipers and drummers.

I took advantage of the presence of a leading Shabak to try to add to what I knew already about his people. He said that their religion was identical with that of the Bābāwīs and that the saint whose teaching they followed was Pīr Zakar, whose tomb, as I have already mentioned, is at Balad Sinjār; 'Shabak' was not really descriptive of their religion but was in fact Shāh Beg, the name of a former chieftain of the district, known after him as Shāh Beg Khāna, or Shabakkhāna, on the east bank of the Tigris south-east of Mosul. He gave me a list (see Appendix III), which he said was incomplete, of seventeen Shabak villages, all situated between the Mosul-Ba'shīqa road on the north and Nimrūd on the south, and thought that they contained about 1,000 houses in all, with a population of 5,000 souls.

By the time I had finished these inquiries the Mutaṣarrif and his guests had left, and the merry-makers with the farthest to go were already drifting away. I stayed to watch some more dancing in an open space by my lodging until nearly sunset, when I said good-bye to my host and returned to Mosul, dropping my Shabak friend on the way at his village of Abū Jarwān.

APPENDIXES

THE TRIBES WITH THEIR AFFILIATIONS

Tribe	*Shaykh*	*Pīr*
	1. Sinjār: Khuwērkī	
Āldakhī	Farkhadīn (Mand)	Ḥasan Mamān
?	Shams	(Hasnālkā)
Chalkān	Assin (Mūs)	
Chēlkān	Ōbakr	
?	Farkhadīn	
?	Bābik	
Halayqī	Shams (Āmadīn)	
?	Ōbakr	
Haskān	Sajādīn	
Sharqān	Farkha	
Jafriyān	Shams	
Korkorka	Assin	
Azōyan	Ōbakr	
?	Mūs	
Mandikān	Farkhadīn (Mand)	
?	Ōbakr	
Qīrān	Farkhadīn (Mand)	Ḥasan Mamān
Zayndīna	Farkha	(Hasnālkā)
Habōchūk	Sajādīn	
Samōqa	Farkhadīn (Mand)	
Bilkān	Sajādīn	
Ḥasan Ghānim	Ōbakr	
Korkorka	Assin	

Tribe	*Shaykh*	*Pīr*
	2. Sinjār: Juwāna	
Bakrān	Assin	
Namirkō	Sajādīn	
Habābāt	Assin	Hājāli
Mahirkān	Assin	Ḥasan Mamān
Qāsimōk	Sajādīn	
Māl-ā Khāliti	Assin	Ḥasan Mamān
Ēd Bakē	Mand	
	3. Sinjār: Others	
Faqirān		
Dīnādi (Ed Hamō)	Farkadīn (Mand)	
Sharqī (Ēd Jindō)	Ōbakr	
Sharqī (Ed Zērō)	Shams (Bābik)	
Qīchkān	Shams	
	4. Silēfānī and Zumār	
Hōwērī	Farkhadīn (Mand)	
Māsakī		P. Jarwān (Qadbelbān)
Rashkān	Sajādīn	
Ēd Hasnān	Ōbakr	
	5. Shaykhān	
Balasinī	Sajādīn	
Bāsidkī		
Birīmanī		
Dumilī	Nāsirdīn	P. Jarwān (Ḥ. Muḥammad)

Tribe	*Shaykh*	*Pīr*
Hakārī	Assin	P. Jarwān (Ḥ. Muḥammad)
'Alī	Shams	
Wūsif	Mand	
Harāqī	Shams	P. Āfāt
Khāltī	Obakr	P. Jarwān (Īsībiyā)
Khatārī	Farkhadīn (Mand, Farkha)	
Māmūsī	Ismā'īl	
Misūsānī	Farkhadīn (Mand)	
Pēdayī	Shams	P. Āfāt (M. Rashān)
Qā'idī	Obakr	
?	Shams	
Qirnayī	Shams	P. Āfāt (M. Rashān)
Rūbanishtī	Farkhadīn (Mand)	
Tirk	Obakr	P. Jarwān (Īsībiyā)

Note 1. I have no specific record of the Pīrs of many tribes, but many of the blanks could probably be filled correctly by reference to the correspondence of Pīrs to Shaykhs mentioned on pp. 34–5.
Note 2. Most tribes are subdivided into sections and subsections. Only those subdivisions are shown (inset under the main entry) which came to my notice as being non-conformist in their affiliations.

APPENDIX II

YAZĪDĪ VILLAGES WITH ESTIMATED POPULATION

(*A*) SINJĀR AND MINOR GROUPS

Tribe	*Village*	*Souls*
	1. Sinjār North	
Samōqa	Bāra and Jifar	1050
	Bīr Shīrīn	480
	Kor-ē Samōqa	250
	Kēlamanda	200
Jāfriyān	Jāfriyān	350
Halayqī	Halayqī	350
Āldakhī	Khānasor	20
	Qandalī	200
	Karsī	350
	Shāmika	150
	Māmīsē	350
Faqīrān	Simēhēstir	100
	Bardahlī	400
	Kōlkān	150
	Milik	50
Haskān	Sinūnī	1200
	Guhbal	125
	Kulakān	40
Musqora	Tēraf	725
	Ādīka	250
	Quwēsa	300
	Girēzarka	125
	Nakhsē Awaj	125

	Tribe		*Village*	*Souls*
Māl-ā khāliti	Aldīn		Aldīna	325
			Gundak (Rāshid)	50
			Pītūnī	200
			Bārik	100
	Ēd Ḥasan		Gundēgalī	125
	Ēd Ḥusayn		Nugrē	125
	Māl-ā Bakē		Wūsifan	350
	Qīchkān		Nakhsē	125
			Pishtkērī	100
	Bakrān		Bakrān	400
			Shorkān	125
	Mahirkān		Zērwān	350
			Bārāna	350
			Bākhalēf	100
			Total souls	10,165

2. Sinjār South

Qīrān		Jarība	125
		Sikēniyya	1200
		Majnūniyya	675
Faqīrān		Jaddāla	1150
		Ishkaftgalī	175
Chalkān		Zarāvkī	125
Chēlkān	Caves	Narinjōk	275
		Halayqī Qīrānī	
		Qara Maghāra	
		Galī Farēja	275
		Gali Khiḍr Mūs	
		Galī Pōlād	

Tribe	*Village*	*Souls*
Korkorkā	Gābāra	450 *also* Chēlkān
	Rambūsī (West)	175
Habābāt	(Balad Sinjār)	375
	Qasarkī	875
	Qizilkand	575
	Rambūsī (East)	180
	Kunruvī	200
	Kānībābā	75
	Shaqō	100
	Tapa Ḥusayniyya	300
	Sharōk	125
	Musta'jal	150
	Kharbat Achma	50
	Nuṣayriyya	100
	Kānīsarak	450
	Dakēkī	200
Mandikān	Ḥātimiyya	300
	Tall Qaṣab	450
	'Ayn Faṭḥī	125
	Mandikān	400
	Dalukān	500
	Khān	475
Mahirkān	Zubdakān	175
	Kirētāq-ē Zhērī	100
	Kirētāq-ē Zhōrī	275
	Tall Wūsifka	275
	Mahirkān	200
	Bājasī	175
	Namēlī	125
	Karōmī	30
	Total souls	12,185

3. Silēfānī and Zumār

Hōwērī	Bājidē	175
	Bājidē Qandāla	250

Tribe	*Village*	*Souls*
Hōwērī	Gorēnī	175
	Tent dwellers	600
Māsakī	Īnchkasō	175
	Dērabūn	175
Rashkān	Kānīshīrīn	300
	Tent dwellers	300
	Total souls	2150

(*B*) SHAYKHĀN GROUP

Village	*Souls*	*Tribes*
		4. Dihōk
Māmshavān	175	Rūbanishtī
Chambarakāt	175	Rūbanishtī
Qasrēzdīn	250	Rūbanishtī
Gudba	100	Rūbanishtī
Khānik	375	Rūbanishtī
Qabāgh	120	Rūbanishtī
Rūbēbī	120	Misusānī
Kabartū	175	Birīmanī
Girēpānī	300	Dumilī, Birīmanī
Kharshānī	180	Dumilī
Rikāwa	125	Khāltī, Birīmanī
Kalabadrī	125	Qā'idī, Khāltī
Shārī	300	Qā'idī
Shaykh Khiḍrī	300	Qā'idī
Sīnī	600	Qā'idī
Total souls	3420	
		5. Alqōsh
Dākā Māzin	25	Qā'idī
Dākā Pichūk	160	Birīmanī
Karāna	100	Dumilī
Musharfī	90	Khāltī, Dumilī, *also* Muslims
Khirbat Ṣāliḥ	240	Khāltī

Village	*Souls*	*Tribes*
Jēkān	175	Khāltī
Bābīra	375	Balasinī
Terpasipī	180	Khatārī, Birīmanī
Khatāra Māzin	1100	Khatārī
Dōghātī	700	Khatārī, Qā'idī
Sirēskī	500	Khatārī, Bāsidkī
Khōshābī	250	Qirnayī
Nifērī	130	Qirnayī
Dāshkutān	85	Khāltī, Misusānī
Shaykhē	200	Khatārī, Khāltī, Hōwērī
Bēbān	625	Haraqī, Qā'idī, Khatārī
Karsāv	90	Haraqī
Bōzān	350	Haraqī
Khorazān	190	Haraqī
Tōftiyān	60	Haraqī, Khāltī
Gābāra	125	Māsakī
Piyōz-ē Zhōrī	175	Khāltī, Māsakī
Piyōz-ē Zhērī	175	Khāltī, Hakārī
Nisērī	60	Haraqī, Khāltī
Jarrāḥiyya	300	Hakārī, Khatārī
	6460	

6. ʿAyn Sifnī

Shaykh Ādī	30	
Bāʿidhra	775	Hakārī, Khatārī, Khāltī
Ēsiyān	500	Hakārī, Khatārī
Bēristik	450	Hakārī, Pēdayī
Kandālī	180	Dumilī, Haraqī, Tirk
ʿAyn Sifnī	2100	Tirk, Māmūsī, Khatārī, Hakārī
Girkhālis	90	Khatārī
Bāqasra	170	Birīmanī, Khāltī
Jarwāna	90	Dumilī
Mūsakān	200	Dumilī
Muqubla	325	Dumilī
Maḥmūdān	210	Dumilī, Tirk
Mahid	350	Dumilī, Tirk, Māmūsī
Māmrashān	200	Dumilī, Hakārī
	5670	

Village	*Souls*	*Tribes*
		7. Ḥamdāniyya
Bāzān	1800	Hakārī, Haraqī, Khāltī, Māmūsī, Dumilī
Ba'shqīa	1200	Ḥaraqī, Khatārī, Hakārī, Dumilī
	3000	

SUMMARY

District	*Souls*
Sinjār	22,350
Silēfānī and Zumār	2150
Shaykhān	18,550
	43,050

APPENDIX III

SHABAK VILLAGES (SHABAKKHĀNA)

Darāwīsh	Abū Jarwān	Qara Tapa
Gōragharībān	Tōpzāwa	Bāzwāya
Gōgjalī	Tayrāwa	Bāzgirtān
Bāshbitān	Mināra Shabak	'Alīrash
Qara Tapa 'Arab	Kirētākh	Salāmiyya
Bisātlī Māzin	Bisātlī Pichūk	

APPENDIX IV

A NOTE ON THE KURDISH VERSION OF THE SACRED BOOKS

The discovery of a Kurdish version of the two Sacred Books was first announced by Father Anastase Marie, the Carmelite of Mosul, in an article contributed to *Anthropos* vol. VI/1, 1911, and entitled 'La découverte récente de deux livres sacrés des Yézidis'. The text of both was published again, side by side with the corresponding Arabic version together with German translations of each and a critical commentary, by Dr Maxmilian Bittner in *Denkschriften der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (vol. LV) under the title 'Die heiligen Bücher der Jeziden oder Teufelsanbeter' in 1913.

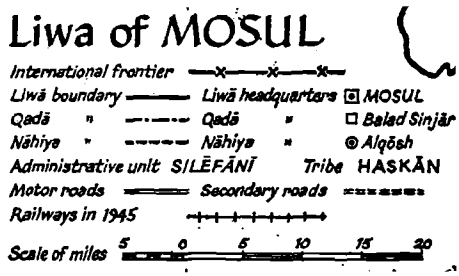
The Kurdish version, of which Father Anastase says he obtained a copy from an (unnamed) Shaykh of Sinjār in instalments spread over two years (apparently 1904–6), was written in curious characters which proved to be a simple letter-for-letter transposition cypher. There are signs corresponding with each of the letters of the Arabic alphabet (with the Persian additions) including the letters usually transliterated *th, dh,* ṣ, ḍ, ṭ, ẓ, which have no place in Kurdish at all but which were used until recently for Arabic loan words. Apart from those corresponding with *alif*, *wāw* and *yā* there are no symbols to represent the vowel sounds in which Kurdish is particularly rich.

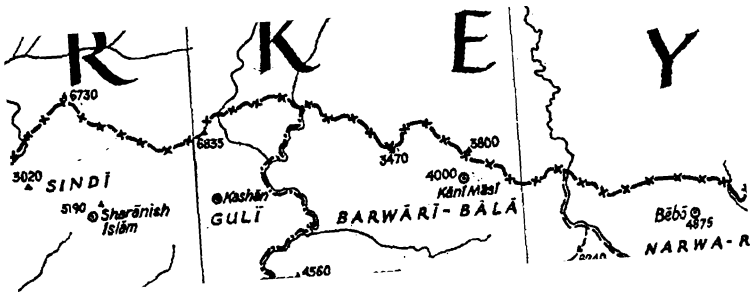
The syntax of the Kurdish as decyphered by Bittner is pure present-day Sulaymānī, the dialect which has become standard literary Kurdish in Iraq, and not Mukrī with some Sulaymānī nuances as supposed by Bittner (who was able to compare his text with the copious Mukrī material of Oskar Mann's *Die Mundart der Mukri-Kurden*, 1906–9, but had no similar treasury of Sulaymānī Kurdish at his disposal), still less Yazīdī Kurdish or Anastase's 'ancient Kurdish no longer spoken'. A few minor points of vocabulary might be taken as pointing to Arbīl as the place of origin rather than Sulaymānī town itself, e.g. the use of *gutin* rather than *wutin*, to say; of *xuda* rather than *xuwa*, God; of *shembe* rather than *shemû* for the days of the week; of the present tense particle *de-* rather than *e-* (but *e-* does occur here and there); and of the post-position *-da* rather than *-a* after consonants.

If Mingana was right in attributing the paternity of the Arabic to Shammas Eremia of ʿAnkāwa near Arbīl, the possibility thus suggests itself that the same hand was responsible for the Kurdish also. I agree with Bittner that the Arabic must have been written first, and that the Kurdish is not the original as assumed by Father Anastase.

The Russian Consul referred to at the beginning of my manuscript was presumably J. S. Kartsew. But Mullā Ḥaydar was the informant from whom the French Vice-Consul, A. Siouffi, obtained most of the information which he published in the *Journal Asiatique* of 1882 and 1887; and Kartsew himself, as quoted by A. Durr ('Einiges über die Jeziden' in *Anthropos*, XII-XIII, 1917–18, pp. 558 sqq.), recorded that a Muslim named Shammas Eremia produced for him a copy (Arabic) of the 'Jilwa', claiming that, when he accompanied Badger on his visit to the Yazīdīs, he had succeeded in making Shaykh Naṣr drunk, persuading him to show him the books, and then copying them while the Shaykh was lying in a drunken sleep.

Even if the alleged texts, Arabic and Kurdish, are forgeries, they, as well as the commentaries that accompany the Arabic, evidently include matter that must have been obtained from Yazīdī informants, and are therefore not without interest.


Liwa of MOSUL
International frontier
Liwā boundary
Liwā headquarters
MOSUL
Qadā " "
Qadā " "
Balad Sinjār
Nāhiya " "
Nāhiya " "
Alqōsh
Administrative unit SILĒFĀNĪ
Tribe HASKĀN
Motor roads
Secondary roads
Railways in 1945
Scale of miles
5 0 5 10 15 20


K E Y
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6835
3470
3800
4000
Kānī Māsī
3020
SINDĪ
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Sherānish Islām
Kashān
GULĪ
BARWĀRĪ-BĀLĀ
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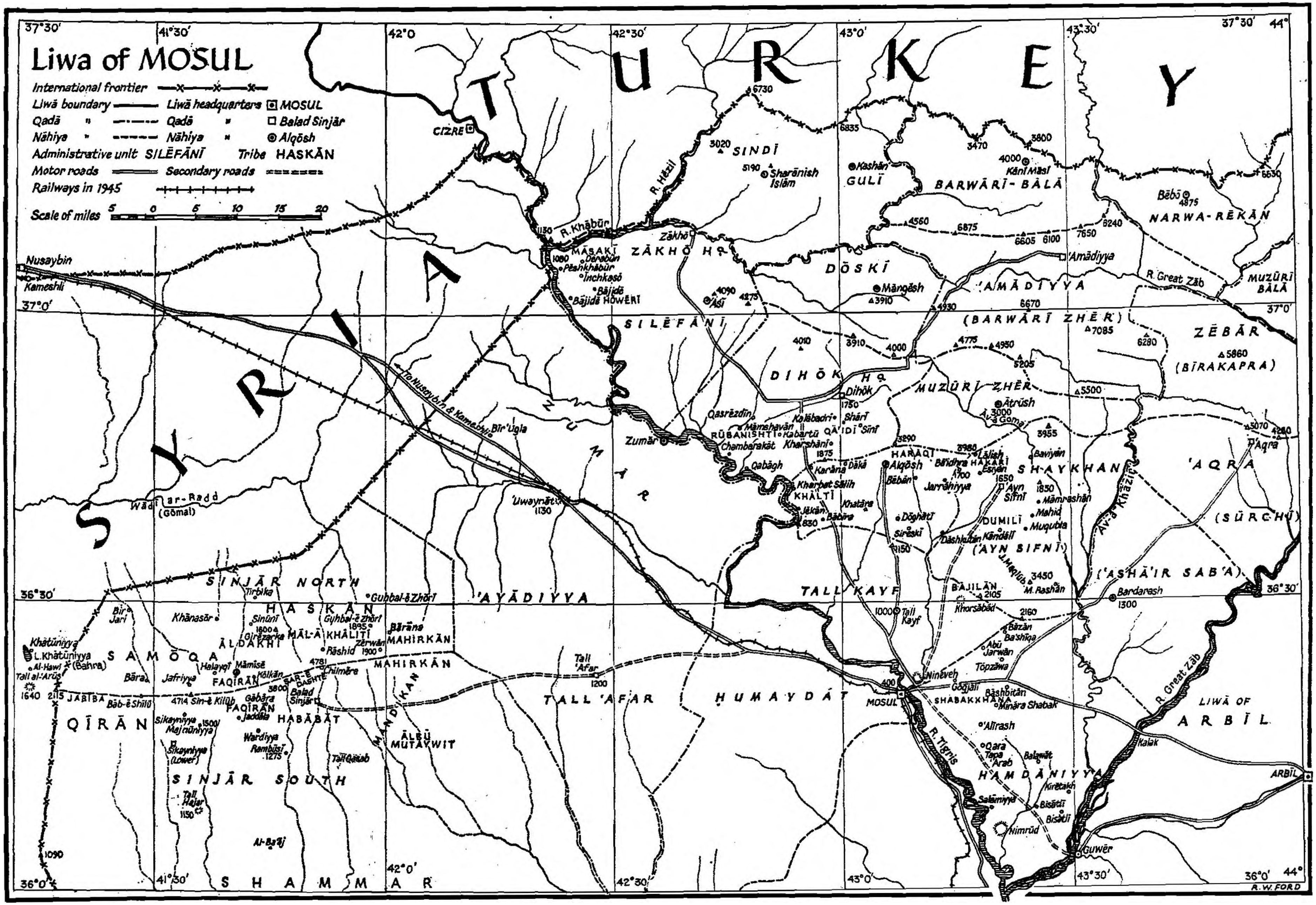
Bēbō
4875
NARWA-R


Liwa of MOSUL
International frontier
Liwā boundary
Liwā headquarters MOSUL
Qadā
Qadā Balad Sinjār
Nāhiya
Nāhiya Alqōsh
Administrative unit SILĒFĀNĪ
Tribe HASKĀN
Motor roads
Secondary roads
Railways in 1945
Scale of miles 5 0 5 10 15 20
TURKEY
SYRIA
CIZRE
Nusaybin
Kameshli
R. Khābūr
R. Hēzil
SINDĪ
Sharānish Islām
Kashān
GULĪ
BARWĀRĪ-BĀLĀ
Kānī Māsī
Bēbō
NARWA-RĒKĀN
MĀSAKĪ
ZĀKHŌ HQ
Zākhō
Dērabūn
Pēshkhābūr
Inchkasō
Bājidā
Bājidā HOWĒRĪ
Āsī
DŌSKĪ
Māngēsh
'Amādiyya
'AMĀDIYYA
R. Great Zāb
MUZŪRĪ BĀLĀ
(BARWĀRĪ ZHĒR)
ZĒBĀR
(BĪRAKAPRA)
SILĒFĀNĪ
DIHŌK HQ
Dihōk
MUZŪRĪ ZHĒR
Ātrūsh
Āv-ā Gōmal
Qasrēzdīn
Māmshavān
Kalābadrī
RŪBANISHTĪ
Kabartū
QĀ'IDĪ
Sīnī
Shārī
Chambarakāt
Kharshānī
Zumār
ZUMĀR
Bir 'Ugla
Qabāgh
Karāna
Dākā
HARAQĪ
Alqōsh
Bāndhra
HAKARĪ
Lālish
Baviyān
SHAYKHĀN
'AQRA
'Aqra
Āv-ā Khāzir
Kharbat Sālih
KHĀLTĪ
Bābān
Jarrāhiyya
'Ayn Sifnī
Māmrashān
Mahīd
Muqubla
Khatāra
Dōghātī
Sirēskī
DUMILĪ
Kāndālī
Dāshkutān
('AYN SIFNĪ)
(SŪRCHĪ)
('ASHĀ'IR SAB'A)
Bardarash
Jākān
Bābīra
To Nusaybin & Kameshli
'Uwaynāt
Wādī ar-Radd
(Gōmal)
SINJĀR NORTH
Tirbīka
Gubbal-ē Zhōrī
'AYĀDIYYA
TALL KAYF
Tall Kayf
BAJILĀN
Khorsābād
M. Rashān
Bir Jari
Khānasōr
HASKĀN
Sinūnī
Girēzarka
MĀL-Ā KHĀLITĪ
Gyhbal-ē Zhōrī
Bārāne
MAHIRKĀN
ĀL DAKHĪ
Zērwān
Rāshid
Khātūniyya
L. Khātūniyya (Bahra)
Al-Hawl
Tall al-'Arūs
SAMŌQA
Halayqī
Māmīsē
Bāra
Jafriyya
FAQIRĀN
Kōlkān
SAR-Ē DASHTĒ
Chilmēre
MAHIRKĀN
MANDIKĀN
Tall 'Afar
JABĪBA
Bāb-ē Shilū
Sin-ē Killō
Gabāra
Balad Sinjār
FAQIRĀN
Jaddāla
TALL 'AFAR
HUMAYDĀT
MOSUL
Nineveh
Gōgjalī
Bāshbītān
Mināra Shabak
SHABAKKHĀNA
Bāzān
Ba'shīqa
Abū Jarwān
Tōpzāwa
QĪRĀN
Sikayniyya
Majnūniyya
HABĀBĀT
Wardiyya
Rambūsī
ĀLBŪ MUTAYWIT
Tall Qaīab
Sikayniyya (Lower)
SINJĀR SOUTH
Tall Hajar
Al-Ba'āj
R. Tigris
'Alīrash
Qara Tapa Arab
Balawāt
HAMDĀNIYYA
Salāmiyya
Nimrūd
Kirētakh
Bīsātlī
Bīsādlī
Guwēr
LIWĀ OF ARBĪL
Kalak
R. Great Zāb
ARBĪL
SHAMMAR
37°30'
41°30'
42°0'
42°30'
43°0'
43°30'
44°
37°0'
36°30'
36°0'
R. W. FORD