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Mitteilungen des SFB „Differenz und Integration“ 5: Militär und Staatlichkeit

12/ 2003

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Orientwissenschaftliches Zentrum
der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg



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Mitteilungen des SFB „Differenz und Integration“ 5: Militär und Staatlichkeit

Herausgegeben im Auftrag des SFB von Irene Schneider

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Vorwort

Die Beiträge dieses Sammelbandes gingen aus dem Kolloquium „Militär und Staatlichkeit“ hervor, das vom 29.–30. April 2002 im Rahmen des SFB „Differenz und Integration“ in Halle abgehalten wurde. Thema des Kolloquiums war der militärische Aspekt des Zusammenspiels zwischen nomadischen Ethnien und staatlichen Strukturen. Die im Band zusammengetragenen Beiträge setzen sich mit diesem Thema auf historischer ebenso wie zeitgenössischer Ebene und in breiter regionaler Streuung auseinander (Olbrycht: 3. Jh. v. Chr., Iran; Heidemann: 10.–12. Jh., Syrien/ Mesopotamien; Paul: 13.–17. Jh., Zentralasien; Rogg: 14.–15. Jh., Europa; Perry: 14.–20. Jh., Iran; Murphey: 17. Jh. Iran/ Osmanisches Reich; Schneider: 18./ 19. Jh., Iran; Schorkowitz: 18.–20. Jh., Russland; Beck: 19.–21. Jh., Ostafrika) und reflektieren damit die überregionale und zeitübergreifende Relevanz des Themas. Die Partizipation unterschiedlicher wissenschaftlicher Disziplinen wie der Ethnologie, der Orientalistik, der Militärgeschichte, Alten Geschichte und Sprachwissenschaft sicherte nicht nur eine lebhafte und befruchtende Diskussion, sondern spiegelt sich nun auch in den einzelnen Beiträgen durch die Berücksichtigung einer breiten Quellengrundlage, durch unterschiedliche Forschungszugänge und methodische Ansätze, fächerspezifische Konzepte und Forschungsdiskurse.

Nomaden und Sesshafte werden häufig nicht nur als Vertreter verschiedener Wirtschafts- und Lebensformen gesehen, sondern als Repräsentanten konträrer, ja, feindlicher kultureller bzw. politischer Konzepte. Gerade unter dem militärischen Aspekt und mit Blick auf das militärische Potential der Nomaden wird die Beziehung zwischen beiden Lebensformen häufig dichotomisch entweder als „Kooperation“ oder als „Konflikt“ beschrieben. Dabei ist die zugrundeliegende Perspektive meist eine staatliche, je nach dem ob die nomadischen Ethnien, der Stamm oder gar die tribale Konföderation zur Kooperation mit staatlichen Institutionen und Organen bereit sind bzw. gezwungen werden können oder eine Gefahr für denselben darstellen und daher bekämpft werden müssen. Im Fall der Staatenbildung durch nomadische Gruppen tritt im allgemeinen nicht der Transformationsprozess in den Mittelpunkt der Betrachtung, sondern das Resultat, der erfolgreiche Aufbau staatlicher Erzwungsorgane und Institutionen, dessen eventuelle nomadische Komponenten gleichwohl meist nur als Reminiszenz abgetan werden. Die Beiträge im vorliegenden Sammelband versuchen diese implizite Schematisierungen zu

durchbrechen, indem anhand konkreter Beispiele die Qualität nomadisch-staatlichen Zusammenspiels analysiert und minutiös beschrieben wird, zugleich, trotz des Handicaps der fehlenden oder ungenügenden Eigenerzeugnisse aus dem nomadischen Kontext, die Perspektive der Nomaden stärker ins Blickfeld gerückt wird und Transformationsprozesse bei der Genese von Staaten aus nomadischem Kontext Berücksichtigung finden. Ziel dieses interdisziplinären Austausches und Kolloquiums und des daraus resultierenden Bandes war es und ist es, die vielfältigen Aspekte der militärisch geprägten Interaktion in ihrer Bedingtheit und Dynamik darzustellen, ihre konkreten politischen, sozialen und militärischen Auswirkungen auf beide Seiten detailliert und paradigmatisch zu beschreiben und damit eine Neubewertung der Beziehung Staat–Nomaden im militärischen Sektor vorzunehmen.

Dabei ist der militärische Aspekt der nomadisch-sesshaften Interaktion unbestreitbar von besonderer Bedeutung. Die militärische Kompetenz gerade der zentralasiatischen, aber auch vieler anderer nomadischer Ethnien, ihre Mobilität, welche ihnen eine flexible Taktik ermöglicht, sowie ihre Kenntnis und Nutzung des oft nicht staatlich kontrollierten oder kontrollierbaren Terrains hat sie vielfach zu gefragten Kriegern bzw. gefährlichen Feinden des Staates gemacht und führte häufig zu eigenen Staatsgründungen. Gerade in jüngster Zeit hat sich die militärische Kompetenz tribaler Gruppen auch auf internationalem Terrain wieder Aufmerksamkeit verschafft. Zu denken ist hier nicht nur an das sudanesisch-tschadische Grenzgebiet (siehe Beck), sondern auch an die stark durch Stammesgrenzen gekennzeichnete afghanische Gesellschaft, die ihren Weg aus einer tribalen Zerrissenheit in die staatliche Einheit erst finden muss.

Die Forschungsdiskussion zum generellen Verhältnis von Militär und Staatlichkeit ist besonders für den europäischen Kontext weit fortgeschritten. In seinem Artikel „Ei oder Henne?“ – Anmerkungen zum Verhältnis von Militär, Staat und Gesellschaft im frühneuzeitlichen Europa“ gewährt Rogg einen Einblick in diese Debatte und führt vor Augen, wie eng in der frühen Neuzeit mit ihren gravierenden Umwälzungen in der Militärtechnik, Taktik, Infrastruktur und Heeresgröße die sich ändernden Parameter mit den neu entstehenden staatlichen Strukturen verquickt sind, ohne dass hier kausale Prioritäten („Ei oder Henne“) gesetzt werden könnten. Eine komplexere und teurere Kriegsführung bedingte eine zunehmende Verwaltungstätigkeit und Verstaatlichung und setzte diese gleichzeitig voraus. Die dominierende Rolle des Militärs bei der Formung und Ausformung der Staatlichkeit tritt deutlich hervor. Rogg zitiert hier das eingängige Bild vom „Schwungrad an der Staatsmaschine“.

Diese Forschungsdebatte über die zentrale Rolle des Militärs bei der Etablierung der europäischen – modernen – Staaten wurde teilweise auch auf dem Gebiet der außereuropäischen Kulturen, so der Islamwissenschaft und Orientalistik, rezipiert, hat jedoch, wie Paul in seinem Artikel „The State and the Military – a Nomadic Perspective“ betont, bisher die Interaktion zwischen nomadischen und sesshaften Gesellschaften im Orient nicht berücksichtigt. Aus diesem Grund bietet Paul einen Überblick über die Perspektiven der Forschung, zentriert auf die vormodernen staatlichen Gebilde in Zentralasien (13.–17. Jh.), wobei er jedoch betont, dass eine solche zentralasiatische Bestandsaufnahme regional und auch zeitlich (eben vormodern) spezifisch sei und die Resultate nicht ohne weiteres auf die Gesellschaften des Vorderen Orients übertragbar seien. Paul thematisiert die Entstehung von Staaten aus nomadischem Kontext und untersucht unterschiedliche Typen militärischer Gruppen, die tribalen Truppen als „Gesellschaften in Waffen“, in denen – wie in nomadischen Gesellschaften üblich – alle (männlichen) Mitglieder ohne Ausbildung zu militärischen Aktionen einsetzbar sind, und die Kampftruppen (warbands), welche ohne tribale Bindung einer personalen Loyalität folgen. Paul argumentiert, dass aus nomadischem Kontext hervorgegangene Staatlichkeit enger mit den Kampftruppen (warbands) verbunden sei als mit den tribalen Truppen. Dabei legt er sein Augenmerk auf die Transformationsprozesse in diesem Zusammenhang, welche seinem Ergebnis nach nur dann erfolgreich und staatsbegründend waren, wenn sie in der Übernahme sesshafter Modelle endeten, wie z. B. der Schaffung einer professionellen stehenden Armee. Als nomadischen Staat definiert Paul einen Staat, dessen herrschende Schicht durch die nomadische Kultur geprägt ist, und dessen Armee auch teilweise aus Nomaden besteht.

Olbrycht stellt genau dies, nämlich den aus nomadischem Kontext entstandenen Staat, ins Zentrum seiner Analyse und untersucht in seinem Artikel „Parthia and Nomads of Central Asia. Elements of Steppe Origin in the Social and Military Developments of Arsacid Iran“ die Frage, inwieweit ein auf nomadischem Ursprung basierendes Gemeinwesen, das Reich der Arsakiden, nach seiner Etablierung noch die Herkunft aus dem nomadischen Kontext erkennen lässt. Trotz der bemerkenswerten Fähigkeit der Arsakiden zur Adaptation von Elementen aus der iranisch-sesshaften Kultur, und des Aufbaus eines stabilen Staats blieben nicht nur Beziehungen zu den Nomaden in Zentralasien durch Heiraten und Allianzen bestehen, sondern ist auch ein starker nomadisch geprägter Kultureinschlag in der Struktur des Staates zu bemerken. Dieser äußert sich besonders auf dem militärischen Sektor, der jedoch wiederum Auswirkungen auf die gesellschaftliche Hierarchie zeitigte –

ein Ergebnis, welches der überlegenen Reiterei parthisch-nomadischer Herkunft geschuldet ist. In der Gesellschaft blieben die soziale hohen Ränge nur der Reiterei vorbehalten und es bildete sich eine gesellschaftliche Klassenstruktur, welche scharf zwischen der Elite der Reiter und dem Rest der Gesellschaft (Bauern und Städter) unterschied. Militärische, und damit gesellschaftliche Strukturen sind also im parthischen Staat eng miteinander verquickt und noch stark durch nomadisches Erbgut geprägt, wirken aber auch auf das Ethos ebenso wie auf die materielle Ebene, etwa auf die Bekleidungsitten. Gleichzeitig haben nomadische Truppen ebenfalls einen Teil der Armee gestellt. Neben hellenistischen und iranischen Einflüssen auf die parthische Gesellschaft blieben die essentiellen Komponenten der parthischen Gesellschaft mithin nomadisch orientiert.

Einen spezifisch relevanten militärisch geprägten Bezug zur nomadischen Kultur hat das Wortgut, welches Eingang in die Amtssprache der sesshaften Gesellschaften fand. Dies ist Thema von Perry's Artikel „Ethno-Linguistic Markers of the Turco-Mongol Military and Persian Bureaucratic Castes in Pre-modern Iran and India“. Der sprachliche Befund spiegelt die gesellschaftliche Symbiose zwischen einer regierenden Militärelite, ursprünglich besetzt von Pastoralnomaden aus den Innerasiatischen Steppen, und der bürokratischen Verwaltung der urbanen iranischen oder iranisierten indischen Gesellschaft in der persischen Sprache wider. Im nach-mongolischen Iran und Nordindien wurde dieses Muster in ein regelrechtes Kastensystem gegossen, konsolidiert durch genealogische Zuweisungen und vorislamische Traditionen und gekennzeichnet durch ethno-linguistische Referenzen vor allem zu den Türken und den Persern. Es zeigt sich u. a. auch in der Syntax der Onomastik und der Titulatur von Gruppen und Individuen, sowohl im militärischen wie auch im administrativen Bereich. Perry diskutiert die Grundlagen und verfolgt die Entwicklung dieses sozio-linguistischen Subsystems.

Eine besondere militärische Variante der staatlich assoziierten Nomadenverbände bildet das Grenzkriegertum. In seinem Artikel „Das vorläufige Ende der Razzien. Nomadisches Grenzkriegertum und staatliche Ordnung im Sudan“ thematisiert Beck die Rolle nomadischer Grenzkrieger im Sudan als Hilfstruppen der anglo-ägyptischen Truppen 1898, einer modernen, „industriellen“ Armee, gegen das mahdistische Heer. Auf der Grundlage ihrer traditionellen militärischen Taktik der Razzien operierend verstanden sich diese nomadischen Truppen nicht nur als „Hilfstruppen“, sondern als Verbündete, die im Schatten der siegreichen Armee und von ihr aufgerüstet eigene Interessen verfolgten, nämlich die Plünderung des auseinanderfallenden Mahdireiches. Beck betont den Zusammenhang zwischen diesen Razzien, die in den Savannen des

westlichen Sudans endemisch waren, und der staatlichen Organisation im Rücken der Nomaden und zieht eine Entwicklungslinie über den kolonialen Staat, der eine Pazifizierung anstrebte und auf der Grundlage der Institutionalisierung von Konfliktlösungsmechanismen zwischen den Stämmen in der Lage war, die Eskalation gewalttätiger Auseinandersetzungen einzudämmen, bis hin in die heutige Zeit, die durch den Zerfall eben dieser Institutionen wieder ein Aufleben des Grenzkriegertums aus dem 19. Jh.s erlebt. Dabei handelt es sich im sudanesischen-tschadischen Gebiet auch heute um Kriege, in denen staatliche Interessen und lokale Interessen auf komplexe Weise ineinander verbunden sind .

Die „Kultur des Grenzkriegertums“ thematisiert auch **Murphey** in seinem Artikel „The Resumption of Ottoman-Safavid Border Conflict, 1603–1638: Effects of Border Destabilization on the Evolution of State-Tribe Relations“. Die der staatlichen Perspektive geschuldete Dichotomie „kooperativer“ oder „nicht-kooperativer“ Stämme disqualifiziert er als für die Analyse der Beziehung zwischen Nomaden und Staat wenig hilfreich. Statt dessen führt er auf der Grundlage des safawidisch-osmanischen Grenzkonfliktes im 17. Jh. die Mechanismen vor, aufgrund derer die jeweiligen Staaten ihre Stämme für ihre Zwecke zu instrumentalisieren suchten. Während die safawidische Staatsmacht sich bei tribaler Insubordination zu Deportationen von Stammesführern oder ganzer Stämme verleiten ließ, hat die osmanische Zentrale offenbar subtilere und wirkungsvollere Mechanismen zur Instrumentalisierung tribaler Gruppen (deren Kooperation schon aufgrund der Kenntnis des Terrains unverzichtbar war) und Einbindung in die Grenzstruktur entwickeln können, wobei den Stämmen neben den primär militärischen Aufgaben auch sekundäre Aufgaben im diplomatischen, politischen und administrativen Bereich zufielen. Den daraus resultierenden Prestigezuwachs wussten die Stämme geschickt zu nutzen, so dass es ihnen vor allem in Kriegszeiten gelang, verstärkt eigene Interessen ins Spiel zu bringen und erfolgreich durchzusetzen, selbst wenn dieselben nicht im Einklang mit den Interessen der osmanischen Zentrale waren. Allein die Atmosphäre der Konkurrenz zweier „Supermächte“ um die Kooperation und Loyalität der Stämme im Grenzgebiet schuf eine Plattform für die Entfaltung eigenständiger tribaler Interessen.

In ihrem Artikel „Allies or Enemies? – The Military Relations between the Yamūt-Turkmen and the Nascent Qājār State in Late 18th and Early 19th Century Iran“ verknüpft **Schneider** das Phänomen nomadischer Ethnien an der Peripherie des Staates der Qāğären, die selbst auch als eine Art Grenzkrieger fungiert hatten und nun ihre Position nach dem Zerfall des Safawidenreiches ausbauen und staatliche Strukturen errichten konnten, mit der Thematik der

Entstehung eines Staats aus nomadischem Kontext. Der Artikel konzentriert sich auf die Symbiose der Qāğären mit den nomadischen Yamūt-Turkmenen und die Funktion der letzteren im Prozess der Etablierung staatlicher Strukturen. Während die Yamūt zunächst in enger Kooperation mit der später staatstragenden Gruppe der Qāğären Rückzugsgebiete anboten und Truppen zur Verfügung stellten, kurzum als Steigbügelhalter der Dynastie auftraten, erwiesen sie sich ab einem bestimmten Zeitpunkt als integrationsresistent und offenbar völlig desinteressiert an der Eingliederung in die im Entstehen begriffenen Strukturen und Institutionen des Staates und provozierten damit staatliche Strafaktionen größeren Ausmaßes. In der Perspektive für das 19. und beginnenden 20. Jh. erwies sich das für den Staat als verhängnisvoll, da die Turkmenen, begünstigt durch die topographische Situation, bei ihrem Raub- und Beute-Konzept verblieben und der iranische Staat sich als unfähig erwies, sie zur Botmäßigkeit zu zwingen.

Heidemann verknüpft die Thematik der Koexistenz von – etablierten – Staaten mit nomadischen Ethnien über ein Zeitfenster von mehreren Jahrhunderten und beobachtet die Koexistenz nomadischer Ethnien mit dem Staat in seinem Artikel „Arab Nomads and Seljūq Military“. Er stellt die These auf, dass die politische Stärke und politische Organisation tribaler Gruppen als direkte Reflexe der militärischen und ökonomischen Macht der sesshaften Mächte (Staaten) zu werten sei. In Syrien/ Mesopotamien des 10. bis 12. Jh.s unterscheidet er drei Phasen, welche zugleich als Entwicklung einer zunehmenden nomadischen Integration in staatliche Systeme zu lesen ist: Eine erste Phase der tribalen Immigration und Herrschaft in der Region mit der Entwicklung eines „dimorphen“ tribalen Staates, eine Phase der tribalen Konkurrenz mit dem Saljūken um Land und eine dritte Phase, die ein höheres Integrationsniveau der nomadischen Gruppen in den zangidisch-ayyubidischen Staat aufweist, welches sich in der Eintreibung von Steuern und der Ernennung eines Chefs der Beduinen manifestierte.

In seinem Artikel „Weidegebiete und Kriegsdienste. Mongolische Pastoralnomaden im Russischen Reich“ analysiert Schorkowitz die Taktik des russischen Staates zur Eingliederung nomadischer Ethnien. Hier wurden Weidegebiete für die Nomaden zur Verfügung gestellt und als Kompensation Kriegsdienst erwartet und so nachträglich die faktische Anwesenheit nomadischer, mongolischer Verbände im Reich legalisiert. Im 17. Jh. wurde schließlich in einer besonderen historischen Situation auf der Grundlage beiderseitiger Nützlichkeitsabwägungen eine hundert Jahre währende Kooperation zwischen den Kalmücken und dem russischen Reich etabliert. Die Abmachung „Weidegebiete und Kriegsdienste“ wurde noch intensiviert durch das Angebot der russi-

schen Regierung, Steuererlass bei regulärem Wehrdienst plus Untertanen-Eid zu gewähren. Schorkowitz untersucht auch die Konsequenzen dieser militärischen Dienstbarkeit für die nomadische Gesellschaft: Der Zustrom an Profit führte nicht nur zu erhöhter Kriegsbereitschaft – kalmückische Reiter waren gefürchtet bei ihren Feinden und deshalb begehrt bei russischen Militärs – sondern auch zu inneren Unruhen. Da der russische Staat diese Situation auszunutzen versuchte, setzte er die gewonnene Balance in der Abmachung mit den Nomaden aufs Spiel. Das kalmückische Experiment endete daher tragisch und zwei Drittel des Volkes kehrte unter chinesische Oberhoheit zurück. Im weiteren Verlauf wurden nomadische Ethnien entsprechend der Ideologie der Überlegenheit sesshafter Kulturen zur Aufgabe des Nomadisierens gezwungen, ein Prozess, der auch in sowjetischer Zeit – ebenfalls unter ideologischer Begründung – fortgesetzt wurde.

Die Mechanismen zur Integration nomadischer Elemente variierten ebenso wie die Stärke der staatlichen Einbindung und die Form derselben und hatten in den einzelnen historischen Kontexten verschiedene Auswirkungen: Während das Konzept „Weidegebiete und Kriegsdienste“ offenbar solange funktionierte und eine reibungslose Zusammenarbeit zwischen den Nomaden und dem Staat gewährleistete, wie sich beide Seiten an die vereinbarte Balance hielten, war dem Grenzkriegertum eine höhere Tendenz zur militärischen und politischen Unabhängigkeit des Nomadentums inhärent, eine Tendenz, der aus staatlicher Perspektive nur durch geschicktes Agieren, wie am Beispiel des Osmanischen Reiches und der englischen Kolonialmacht im Sudan erkennbar, zu begegnen war. Im nomadisch-staatlichen militärischen Zusammenspiel lässt sich eine Dynamik erkennen, deren Ausrichtung allerdings offen ist. Sollte es jedoch zu einer tragfähigen Staatsbildung aus nomadischem Kontext kommen, so ist eine gesellschaftliche Orientierung an den militärischen Werten des Nomadentums bis hinein in die gesellschaftliche Hierarchie durchaus zu beobachten. Auch die linguistische Analyse zeigt ein zähes Weiterleben sprachlicher nomadischer Traditionen vor allem im militärischen Bereich. Der enge Zusammenhang von Militär und Staatlichkeit ist evident. Eine durchgängige Orientierung der nomadischen Ethnien hin auf eine Eingliederung in „gesicherte“ staatliche Verhältnisse ist nicht zu beobachten. Nomadische Ethnien konnten sich trotz anfänglicher Kooperation vom Staat wieder abwenden. Aus der nomadischen Perspektive scheint die Anziehungskraft staatlicher Gebilde durchaus als eingeschränkt beurteilt worden zu sein. Dies äußerte sich in einem Streben nach Unabhängigkeit von staatlichen Strukturen bzw. dem Ausnutzen staatlicher Ressourcen soweit dies dem Stamm diene, ohne die entsprechende Gegenleistung unbedingt zu erbringen, in Taktiken also, die auf die Dauer dem Staat

militärisch und ökonomisch sogar Schaden zufügen konnten. Dies mag im vormodernen Kontext, in dem Staaten eher auf die Herrschaftsform des *indirect rule* angewiesen waren, eher möglich gewesen sein – allerdings zeigen die genannten auf die Gegenwart projizierten historischen Konflikte hier neue Formen einer solchen nomadischen oder tribalen Insubordination. Die vor-gefassten Stereotypen vom Staat als der Unterwerfung erzwingenden Instanz und den nomadischen Ethnien als in Abhängigkeit von staatlicher Taktik agierenden politischen Einheiten ist kaum in der Lage, die differenzierten Machtverhältnisse zwischen Staat und Stamm zu beschreiben. Vielmehr hat neben der Gründung bzw. Übernahme von Staaten durch nomadische Ethnien vor allem in vormodernen Zeit – vielleicht aber auch wieder heute in einigen Gebieten des Mittleren Ostens – auch die explizit antistaatliche, politische und soziale Nischen nutzende Unabhängigkeit der Nomaden, ermöglicht durch ihre militärische Kompetenz, eine große Rolle gespielt.

September 2003

Irene Schneider

„Ei oder Henne?“ – Anmerkungen zum Verhältnis von Militär, Staat und Gesellschaft im frühneuzeitlichen Europa

Matthias Rogg, Potsdam

Unbestritten stehen bewaffnete Macht und Gemeinwesen in der gesamten europäischen Geschichte in einer wechselseitigen Abhängigkeit.¹ Dieser „*unauf- lösliche Zusammenhang von Militär und Staat*“² läßt sich in der Umbruchphase zwischen dem Spätmittelalter und der Frühen Neuzeit wie durch ein Brennglas beobachten. Während die Breite der Wirkungsfelder relativ unstrittig ist, ringt die Forschung bei der Suche nach den zeitlichen Einschnitten und der Frage von Ursache und Wirkung, „*The approach of chicken-and-egg*“.³

Das europäische Wehrwesen des Früh- und Hochmittelalters zeichnete sich durch relativ gleichförmige Strukturen aus.⁴ Die zunehmende Spezialisierung hochprofessioneller Panzerreiter und die Entwicklung des Lehnswesens standen dabei in einem direkten Wechselverhältnis.⁵ Zu Recht spricht man in dieser Epoche von einer „Militär- und Grundaristokratie“.⁶ Vereinfacht ausgedrückt gab der Lehensherr dem freien Lehensmann Land zum Nießbrauch und durfte

¹ Nicht zu Unrecht lange argwöhnisch beobachtet, ist die moderne Militärgeschichte in Deutschland heute endgültig vom Vorwurf der applikatorischen Geschichtsauffassung freigesprochen. Die Öffnung für politische, soziale, ökonomische, kulturelle und mentalitätsgeschichtliche Fragestellungen und die Verknüpfung dieser Faktoren hat entscheidend zur Akzeptanz in der Geschichtswissenschaft beigetragen. Vgl. den programmatischen Aufriß von: Kroener, „Wer den Frieden will, erkenne den Krieg“; Kühne/ Ziemann (Hg.), *Was ist Militärgeschichte*; Kröner/ Präve (Hg.), *Militär und Gesellschaft*.

² Krippendorf, *Staat und Krieg*, 10.

³ Tallett, *War and Society*, 198.

⁴ Zu den Besonderheiten des europäischen Wehrwesens im Früh- und Hochmittelalter vgl. Ohler, *Krieg und Frieden*, passim; für die Strukturen des mittelalterlichen Militärwesens immer noch grundlegend: Jähns, *Geschichte des Kriegswesens*, 569ff.

⁵ *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, V, 1807ff; *Handwörterbuch zur Rechtsgeschichte*, II, 1694ff.

⁶ Le Goff, *Das Hochmittelalter*, 62ff.

dafür mit seiner Gefolgschaft in Kriegszeiten rechnen.⁷ Personenrechtliche Bindungen und ein gegenseitiges Treueverhältnis bildeten für beide Parteien eine abstrakte aber gleichwohl feste Klammer.⁸ Während die sogenannten *ministerialen* (= Dienstmannen) schon in der Namensgebung ihre ideelle Abhängigkeit dokumentierten, nahm ihre wirtschaftliche und damit teilweise auch politische Selbständigkeit im Verlauf des Mittelalters immer weiter zu. Das Selbstbewusstsein, einer ökonomischen und gesellschaftlichen Elite anzugehören, verdeutlichte sich im Anspruch und der Fähigkeit, als alleiniger Träger der bewaffneten Macht aufzutreten. Außer den lehensrechtlich gebundenen Vasallen stützte sich das Heeresaufgebot in erheblichem Maße auch auf Soldritter.⁹ Neben den *milites* (= Rittern) nahm die Bedeutung dieser *militares* (= Kriegsknechte) im Verlauf des Spätmittelalters stetig zu.¹⁰ Wichtig ist in diesem Zusammenhang die Feststellung, daß seit dem Hochmittelalter außer der Verleihung von Grundbesitz auch die Soldzahlung eine wichtige zweite Säule im Wehrgefüge bildete. Der Panzerreiter des Mittelalters läßt sich mit einem modernen „High-tech-Waffensystem“ vergleichen: kostspielig in der Anschaffung, extrem teuer im Unterhalt und nur von bestens trainierten Spezialisten optimal zur Wirkung zu bringen. Im 12. Jahrhundert kostete allein ein gutes Kriegspferd etwa 5 Mark Silber und entsprach damit dem Wert einer vollen Bauernhufe.¹¹ Hinzu kamen Gefolgsleute und Ersatzpferde, deren Verpflegung und die enorm teuren Waffen.

Das tugendhafte Leitbild vom *miles christianus*,¹² dem edlen christlichen Ritter, bildete schließlich das ethische Fundament dieses komplizierten Systems aus sozialen, wirtschaftlichen, politischen, religiösen und eben nicht zuletzt militärischen Einflüssen.¹³ Gerade der Faktor des ritterlichen Ethos spielte im Selbstwertgefühl der mittelalterlichen Militärelite eine entscheidende Rolle – ein wichtiger Faktor, wenn wir das Selbstverständnis von militärischen Führungsschichten bis in die Moderne betrachten.¹⁴ Mediävisten sprechen nicht zu Unrecht von einer Krise des Spätmittelalters in Europa, wenngleich Umfang

⁷ Komprimierte Darstellungen bei: Kroener, *Militärsgeschichte des Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit*, Wohlfeil, *Ritter – Söldnerführer – Offizier*.

⁸ Zumindest bis ins 10. Jahrhundert wogen die persönlichen Bindungen stärker als die sachlichen, vgl. Fichtenau, *Lebensordnungen des 10. Jahrhunderts*, 214.

⁹ Wohlfeil, *Ritter – Söldnerführer – Offizier*, 52ff.

¹⁰ Baumann, *Landsknechte*, 18.

¹¹ Rösener, *Rittertum und Krieg im Stauferreich*, 48.

¹² Wang, *Miles Christianus*, passim.

¹³ Keen, *Rittertum*, 247ff.

¹⁴ Wohlfeil, *Ritter – Söldnerführer – Offizier*, 49, 65.

und Bedeutung sehr unterschiedlich interpretiert werden.¹⁵ Unstrittig ist der ökonomische Niedergang durch kurz aufeinanderfolgende Epidemien (v. a. die Pest) und Hungersnöte. Auch der Bevölkerungsrückgang in Mittel- und Westeuropa von knapp 80 Millionen um 1340 auf höchstens 50 Millionen um 1400 steht außer Zweifel.¹⁶ Die mangelnde Festigkeit der staatlichen Ordnung und die zunehmenden sozialen Spannungen verdichteten sich in den zahlreichen Bauernaufständen¹⁷ und den Wucherungen des Raubritter-¹⁸ und Fehdewesens.¹⁹ Die Erschütterungen des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts trafen natürlich auch die adeligen Grundbesitzer. Da die Preise für agrarische Produkte drastisch fielen, mußte der ländliche Adel immer weiter sinkende Einnahmen hinnehmen. Die Kosten für herrschaftliche Repräsentation und Waffendienst nahmen aber nicht ab. Im Gegenteil: Die Schere zwischen Einkünften und Ausgaben ging stetig auseinander.²⁰ Die vasallisch gebundenen Lehensritter sahen sich nicht nur einem zunehmenden ökonomischen Druck konfrontiert, sondern mussten sich auch der steigenden Machtansprüche der aufsteigenden Territorialstaaten erwehren. Besonders deutlich wird dieser Prozess im stark zergliederten Süden und Südwesten des Deutschen Reiches. Hier hatten es die kleinen Adelsfamilien im Verlauf des Mittelalters immer schwerer, ihre Positionen gegenüber den prosperierenden Reichsstädten und den expandierenden Landesfürsten zu behaupten.

Wenn man bedenkt, wie sehr im Mittelalter Verfassung, Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft und Glauben verwoben waren, dann darf es nicht wundern, dass die mannigfachen Veränderungen des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts auch vor dem Kriegswesen nicht Halt machten.²¹ Für den strukturellen Wandel des Militärwesens am Ausgang des Spätmittelalters ist seit nunmehr fast 50 Jahren der Begriff *Military Revolution* in der Forschung eingeführt.²² Der Terminus ist ohne Zweifel eingängig und überzeugend mit Leben zu füllen. Gleichwohl

¹⁵ Vor der Konstruktion einer „Generalkrise“ warnt z. B. Bookmann, *Stauferzeit und spätes Mittelalter*, 242ff.

¹⁶ Romano/ Terenti, *Grundlagen der modernen Welt*, 14f.

¹⁷ Beispielhaft sei hier auf die Jaquerie 1358 und den Bauernaufstand in England 1381 verwiesen, vgl.: Blicke, *Unruhen in der ständischen Gesellschaft*; Bierbrauer, *Bäuerliche Revolten im Alten Reich*.

¹⁸ Raubritter, in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, VII, 474ff.

¹⁹ Fehde, in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, IV, 331ff; Rösener, *Spätmittelalterliches Raubritterwesens*; Vogel, *Fehderecht und Fehdepraxis*.

²⁰ Wohlfeil, *Adel und Neues Heerwesen*, 205ff; Wiesflecker, *Kaiser Maximilian I.*, V, 45ff.

²¹ Wohlfeil, *Heerwesen im Übergang*, 129–149.

²² Roberts, *Military Revolution*; Parker, *Militärische Revolution*; Black, *A Military Revolution?*; Bérenger, *La Révolution militaire*; Downing, *The Military Revolution*; Luh, *Ancient Warfare and the Military Revolution*; eine vorzügliche Übersicht mit der wichtigsten Literatur bei: Nowosadtko, *Krieg, Gewalt und Ordnung*, 213–221.

sollte aber nicht verhehlt werden, daß sich hinter der *revolutionären* Veränderung in Wahrheit doch wohl eher eine *evolutionäre* Entwicklung des Militärwesens verbirgt.²³ Allgemein versteht man unter *Revolution* ja eine abrupte Umwälzung, den totalen Bruch mit dem Überkommenen.²⁴ Die *Military Revolution* vollzog sich hingegen über mehrere Jahrhunderte. Da selbst die Anfangs- und Endpunkte der einzelnen Bereiche regional sehr unterschiedlich sind und sich ein Zeitfenster von der Mitte des 15. bis zum Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts öffnet, fällt es schwer, von Revolution zu sprechen.²⁵ Hinzu kommt, dass im Laufe der Entwicklung manch ein Gedanke oder gar eine Struktur erhalten blieb, modifiziert oder optimiert wurde. Unbestritten bleibt die Tatsache, dass sich etwas änderte: umfassend, tiefgreifend und nachhaltig. Vier Wirkungsfelder lassen sich aufzählen, bei denen die Veränderungen im Militärwesen zwischen Spätmittelalter und Frühmoderne am stärksten griffen.

Erstens ist hier die *Militärtechnik* zu nennen.²⁶ Die wirkungsvollste Waffe gegen Reiterangriffe boten Distanzwaffen. Mit der Einführung des Langbogens, der Armbrust und dem fast 5 m messenden Langspieß hatten es die gepanzerten Reiterheere immer schwerer, ihre dynamische Wucht zu entfalten. Die katastrophalen Niederlagen der Burgunder bei Morgarten (1315),²⁷ der Habsburger bei Sempach (1386)²⁸, des französischen Reiterheers bei Azincourt (1415)²⁹ sowie der burgundischen Truppen bei Murten und Nancy (1476/ 77)³⁰ verdeutlichen exemplarisch, dass wir es hier mit einem gesamteuropäischen Phänomen zu tun haben, das sich über mehrere Generationen entwickelte.³¹ Ein weiterer wichtiger Punkt war die Einführung immer besserer Feuerwaffen. Obwohl es noch an Durchschlagskraft und Treffgenauigkeit mangelte, hatte die Benutzung von Handfeuerwaffen einen entscheidenden Vorteil: Sie waren im Unterschied zum Langbogen relativ leicht zu bedienen und damit auch für „nonprofessionals“ geeignet. Die jahrelange Ausbildung, unabdingbare Voraussetzung für einen englischen Bogenschützen, war für einen Arkebusier des

²³ Ähnlich äußert sich: Reinhard, *Geschichte der Staatsgewalt*, 334.

²⁴ *Brockhaus Enzyklopädie*, 18, 316f.

²⁵ Zahlreiche Autoren identifizieren die Zeit um 1500 als eine der wichtigsten Epochen-schwellen in der modernen Militärgeschichte, vgl. Kurze, „Krieg und Frieden im mittelalterlichen Denken“, in: Duchhardt, *Zwischenstaatliche Friedenswahrung*, 4.

²⁶ Zu den Ursprüngen der militärtechnischen Revolution im Spätmittelalter vgl.: Black, *European Warfare*, 5ff; Robers, *Military Revolution*, 55–93.

²⁷ Schaufelberger, *Morgarten und Marignano*.

²⁸ Liebenau, *Schlacht bei Sempach*.

²⁹ Keegan, *Die Schlacht*, 89–134.

³⁰ Himmelsbach, *Murten*, 1476.

³¹ Zum gesamten Prozess vgl.: de Vries, *Infantry Warfare*.

16. Jahrhunderts nicht mehr nötig.³² Dieser Aspekt sollte im Laufe der Entwicklung noch eine wichtige Rolle spielen. Einen besonderen Innovationschub erfuhr das Artilleriewesen, das bei Belagerungen und in der Feldschlacht im Verlauf des 15. Jahrhunderts immer wichtiger wurde.³³ Mit den technischen Möglichkeiten explodierten allerdings auch die Kosten der Waffensysteme.³⁴

Der zweite zentrale Punkt der Veränderungen resultierte in erheblichem Maße aus den technischen Neuerungen und betrifft die *Taktik*. Mit dem Zurückdrängen der gepanzerten Schlachtenkavallerie gewannen geschlossene Infanterieverbände eine immer stärkere Bedeutung.³⁵ Viele Adelige mussten im Verlauf des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts wortwörtlich von ihrem „hohen Ross“ herabsteigen, wenn sie der Pflicht oder der Notwendigkeit des Kriegsdienstes nachkommen wollten.³⁶ Diese Tatsache hatte nachhaltige Auswirkungen auf das innere Gefüge der Kriegshaufen.

Ein dritter entscheidender Aspekt betrifft die Veränderung der militärischen *Infrastruktur*.³⁷ Die immer komplexer werdende Versorgung der frühneuzeitlichen Heere erforderte die Beschaffung und Verarbeitung von entsprechenden Rohstoffen. Beispielhaft kann man hier auf das Montanwesen verweisen, die Metallverarbeitung und schließlich die Bedeutung der Salpetergewinnung für die Produktion von Schießpulver.³⁸ Rohstoffarme Territorien mussten für ihre Waffenbeschaffung einen erheblichen Aufwand treiben, um Halbfertigprodukte oder gar komplette Waffensätze einzuführen. Städte wie Brescia in Oberitalien, Suhl (Feuerwaffen) und Solingen (Hieb- und Stichwaffen) oder die Reichsstädte Nürnberg, Augsburg und Innsbruck gewannen so eine überregionale strategische Bedeutung.³⁹ Protoindustrielle Fertigungsstätten und nicht zuletzt das entsprechende Know-how spielten für langfristige militärische Planungen also eine immer wichtigere Rolle. Kostentreibend wirkten auch die Investitionen für ein leistungsfähiges Wegenetz, Hafenanlagen, Getreidemagazine⁴⁰ und nicht zu vergessen die Versorgungseinrichtungen für Kriegsinvalide

³² Vgl. Bennet, *English archery*, passim.

³³ De Vries, *Gunpowder weaponry in Western Europe*, 285ff; Schmidtchen, *Bombarden*, passim; Schmidtchen, *Kriegswesen im Spätmittelalter*, Parker, *Militärische Revolution*, 37ff; Tallett, *War and Society*, 44ff.

³⁴ Hale, *War and Society*, 232ff.

³⁵ De Vries, *Infantry Warfare*, passim.

³⁶ Vgl. Rogg, „Ein Kriegsordnung neu gemacht“, 363ff.

³⁷ Parker, *Militärische Revolution*, 68ff; beispielhaft dargestellt in Parkers differenzierter Untersuchung *Army of the Flanders*.

³⁸ Schmidtchen, *Metalle und Macht*, 266ff.

³⁹ Hale, *War and Society*, 209ff.

⁴⁰ Kroener, *Les Routes et les Etapes*.

und deren Angehörige.⁴¹ Spätestens seit dem 16. Jahrhundert gewann die Anlage von Arsenalen für die Artillerie und der Bau von Festungen für die Kriegführung immer mehr an Bedeutung.⁴² Befestigte Plätze wurden immer wichtiger, um die Kräfte des Gegners zu binden und seine Operationen zu verlangsamen und für eigene Feldzüge als Basis zu dienen.⁴³ Nicht zuletzt durch diese Großprojekte drehte die Kostenschraube unaufhaltsam nach oben.⁴⁴

Als vierter und letzter Punkt ist auf das rasante Anwachsen der *Heeresgrößen* zu verweisen.⁴⁵ Seit dem Hochmittelalter wuchsen die Heere ständig an und brachten es nicht selten auf 10.000 bis 20.000 Mann.⁴⁶ Als der englische König Heinrich VIII. 1544 im Norden Frankreichs eine Armee zusammenzog, zählte die Truppe mit über 40.000 Mann gut zwei Drittel der gesamten Einwohnerschaft von London.⁴⁷ Der Zusammenhang ist offensichtlich: Je mehr die kompakten Ritterheere im Verlauf des Spätmittelalters zurückgedrängt wurden, um so stärker wuchs das Heer der Fußtruppen an. Für den Erfolg einer Kampagne war mithin die Mobilisierung von kriegstüchtigen Männern von zentraler Bedeutung.⁴⁸

⁴¹ Beispielhaft das große Militärwaisenhaus, vgl.: Kroener, „Bellona und Caritas“.

⁴² Braudel, *Sozialgeschichte des 15.–18. Jahrhunderts. Der Alltag*, 420ff; Tallett, *War and Society*, 32ff; Hale, *War and Society*, 232ff. Zu den gewaltigen Anstrengungen im Festungsbau und Artilleriewesen vgl. Adams/ Pepper, *Firearms and Fortifications*.

⁴³ Tallett, *War and Society*, 44ff.

⁴⁴ Reinhard, *Geschichte der Staatsgewalt*, 348f.

⁴⁵ Tallett, *War and Society*, 4ff, 55f; Hale, *War and Society*, 62ff; Corvisier, *Armée et Société*, 57ff.

⁴⁶ Ohler, *Krieg und Frieden*, 157.

⁴⁷ Tallett, *War and Society*, 54.

⁴⁸ Zu den Stärkeangaben vgl. Hale, *War and Society*, 62–63; Tallett, *War and Society*, 6.

Jahr	Feldzug	Stärke
1494 ⁴⁹	Invasion Karls VIII. in Italien	18.000
1544	Invasion Heinrichs VIII. in Frankreich	40.000
1572	Spanische Truppen in den Niederlanden	61.000
1632	Schwedische Truppen im Deutschen Reich	125.000
1708	Alliierte im spanischen Erbfolgekrieg (Oudenarde-Feldzug)	150.000
	Franzosen, Bayern, Spanier im spanischen Erbfolgekrieg (Oudenarde-Feldzug)	160.000

Zwangsläufig explodierten auch die Truppenstärken bei den Schlachten. Während sich bei Bicocca 1522 noch knapp 40.000 Kaiserliche und Franzosen schlugen, waren es bei Breitenfeld 1632 schon über 70.000 Kaiserliche und Schweden. Im Spanischen Erbfolgekrieg standen bei Malplaquet 1709 schließlich allein 76.000 Franzosen und Bayern knapp 105.000 Soldaten der alliierten Truppen gegenüber.⁵⁰ Natürlich läßt sich mit Blick auf diese Beispiele einwenden, daß sich die Anzahl der Variablen erheblich änderte – schließlich wiederholte sich der gleiche Feldzug am gleichen Ort in ähnlicher Konstellation nur selten. Alle bisherigen Forschungen belegen allerdings, daß die Truppenstärke zwischen dem 15. und 18. Jahrhundert in Europa deutlich anstieg.⁵¹ Der Rüstungswettkampf blieb natürlich nicht allein auf den Landkrieg beschränkt.⁵² Die merkantile Handels- und Kolonialpolitik Englands und Hollands gab den Anstoß für immer größere und immer besser ausgerüstete Flotten. Während die britischen Marineausgaben zwischen 1585 und 1604 noch 1,5 Millionen Pfund betrugen, explodierte der Finanzbedarf zwischen 1689 und 1697 auf 19 Millionen Pfund. Im gleichen Zeitraum verfünffachte sich der Preis für ein Linienschiff.⁵³ Ähnliche Vergleiche könnte man für die Entwicklung des Festungs- und Artilleriewesens anstellen. Zusammenfassend lässt sich

⁴⁹ Trotz der unbestrittenen regionalen Unterschiede wird in der Forschung von einigen Autoren das Jahr 1494/ 95 als Wendemarke erkannt (verdichtete Staatlichkeit und damit zunehmende Monopolisierung der Gewalt, Durchsetzung des allgemeinen Fehdeverbots, Anfänge eines Aufbaus ständiger Heereseinheiten, Durchsetzen kriegs- und waffentechnischer Neuerungen), vgl. Kurze, *Krieg und Frieden im mittelalterlichen Denken*, 4; Tallett, *War and Society*, passim; Corvisier, *Armées et sociétés*, passim.

⁵⁰ Truppenstärken nach: Tallett, *War and Society*, 5.

⁵¹ Zur Entwicklung der Truppenstärke im 18. Jahrhundert und der besonderen Situation in Frankreich vgl. Kroener, „Schwungrad an der Staatsmaschine?“, 5ff.

⁵² Zur maritimen Entwicklung vgl. komprimiert Parker, *Militärische Revolution*, 106ff.

⁵³ Reinhard, *Geschichte der Staatsgewalt*, 350f.

feststellen, daß sich das Kriegsbild und die Anforderungen an die kriegführenden Parteien im frühmodernen Europa grundlegend geändert hatten. Aber wie reagierte der frühneuzeitliche Staat auf diese technischen, taktischen, logistischen und personellen Veränderungen? Vor allem ist zu fragen: Wie konnten die Mittel für diese aufwendige Form der Kriegführung aufgebracht werden?

Zu Beginn des 16. Jahrhunderts dominierten bei der Heeresaufbringung eindeutig die privatwirtschaftlichen Strukturen.⁵⁴ Von wenigen Ausnahmen abgesehen hatten weder Könige noch Territorialfürsten oder Reichsstädte die finanziellen Mittel, eine größere Truppe ständig auf dem Fuß zu halten.⁵⁵ Krieg war ein Saisongeschäft, bei dem man bei Bedarf Truppen für einen zeitlich begrenzten Feldzug anwarb und nach Beendigung der Kampagne wieder entließ.⁵⁶ Diese Regelung entsprach auch den Gewohnheiten der Kriegführung in Europa, denn im Spätherbst ließen die Witterungsbedingungen Feldzüge kaum noch zu. Wenn die Truppe nicht abgemustert werden sollte, dann zog man in die Winterquartiere. Vor diesem Hintergrund erklärt sich auch, warum nur wenige frühneuzeitliche Schlachten in Europa im Winter geschlagen wurden.⁵⁷ Zu Beginn des neuen „Kriegs“-jahres begann das Spiel von vorne, die Werber rührten ihre in Deutschland zum Sprichwort gewordenen „Werbetrommel“ und füllten ihre Fähnlein, Haufen, Kompanien oder Regimenter wieder für eine befristete Zeit auf.

Aus finanziellen und organisatorischen Gründen war der kriegführende Landesherr also bei der Aufstellungen seiner Verbände auf die Hilfe Dritter angewiesen. In der Regel boten sich dafür Angehörige des Adels an, die mit eigenen Mitteln (und nicht selten auf eigenes Risiko) Truppen anwarben und quasi als privatwirtschaftliche Militärunternehmer agierten:⁵⁸ namentlich seien hier die italienischen Condottiere des 15. Jahrhunderts genannt,⁵⁹ für das 16. Jahr-

⁵⁴ Papke, *Von der Miliz zum Stehenden Heer*, 114ff.

⁵⁵ Zu den Ausnahmen gehören die Garden und Haustruppen, die für den unmittelbaren Schutz und zu Repräsentationszwecken nötig waren sowie professionelle Spezialisten für die Militärtechnik (Artillerie, Festungen, Flotte).

⁵⁶ Zur sozialen Problematik der abgemusterten und damit „arbeitslos“ gewordenen Knechte vgl. Burschel, *Söldner in Nordwestdeutschland*, 273ff; Spicker-Beck, *Mordbrenner*, 77ff.

⁵⁷ Zu den Ausnahmen vgl. Lammers, *Die Schlacht bei Hemmingstedt* (1500).

⁵⁸ Zu diesem Aspekt ausführlich: Redlich, *The Military Enterpriser and his Work Force*; komprimiert: Reinhard, *Geschichte der Staatsgewalt*, 346–348; Tallett, *War and Society*, 69; zur vertraglichen Grundlage der sogenannten „Artickelsbriefe“ vgl. Möller, *Regiment der Landsknechte*, 31ff. Zu Recht hat Jörg Hillmann darauf hingewiesen, dass der Begriff des „Kriegsunternehmers“ nicht diejenigen Kriegsherren umfasst, die vom Kaiser bestallt wurden, vgl. Hillmann, „Landsknechte und Söldner“, 135 Anm.16.

⁵⁹ Trease, *Die Condottieri*.

hundert der Schwabe Schärtlin von Burtenbach⁶⁰ und der Schweizer Ulrich von Sax-Hohensax⁶¹ und für das 17. Jahrhundert Albrecht von Wallenstein.⁶² Die Aussicht, dass Ruhm und Standeserhöhung nach erfolgreicher Beendigung eines Unternehmens winken mochten⁶³ und nicht zuletzt der wirtschaftliche Aspekt der Beute mag oft Beweggrund genug gewesen sein.⁶⁴ Wagnis und Chance hielten sich in einer Militärkampagne bis weit in die Zeit des Dreißigjährigen Krieges offenbar die Waage. Vergleichbar dem Landesherrn, der mit dem Militärunternehmer einen Vertrag schloss, war auch der Söldner mit dem Militärunternehmer rechtlich verbunden.⁶⁵ Dieses freie Söldnerwesen der Landsknechte und Reisläufer (so nannte man die eidgenössischen Kriegersleute des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts) war indes nur schwer zu kontrollieren.⁶⁶ Befreit man die frühneuzeitlichen Söldner vom romantischen und ideologischen Ballast des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts,⁶⁷ dann entwickelt sich vor unseren Augen ein militärisches System mit eigenen Rechts- und Verhaltensnormen, das nur schwer zu kontrollieren war und zudem außerhalb obrigkeitlicher Ordnungsvorstellung lag. Schlaglichtartig sei hier nur auf das sogenannte „Schult-heißenrecht“⁶⁸ und die Wahl der niedrigen Befehlsämter verwiesen,⁶⁹ die Befreiung von Bekleidungsvorschriften⁷⁰ und schließlich das scheinbar unreglementierte Lagerleben, mit einem Klima latenter Gewalt,⁷¹ ungezügelter Sexualität⁷² und Gottlosigkeit.⁷³

Neben dieser diffusen, dunklen Seite der militärischen Gesellschaft ist uns aber auch ein klares, helles Bild überliefert. Die landesfürstliche Propaganda versuchte auf vielerlei Arten, die Kriegersleute für die eigenen Zwecke ein-

⁶⁰ Christmann, *Schärtlin von Burtenbach und Burkhard Sticke*; eine Sonderrolle spielt Georg von Frundsberg, vgl.: Baumann, *Georg von Frundsberg*.

⁶¹ Bänziger, *Ulrich VII. von Hohensax*.

⁶² Dieser Zusammenhang in Wallensteins Biographie wird meisterhaft erzählt von Golo Mann, *Wallenstein*, 189ff.

⁶³ Zu sozialem Aufstieg des Militärs vgl. Rogg, „Ein Kriegsordnung neu gemacht“, 371ff.

⁶⁴ Redlich, *Looting and Booty*.

⁶⁵ Möller, *Regiment der Landsknechte*, 31ff.; Zu den sozialen Folgen der rechtlichen Bindung vgl. Burschel, *Söldner in Nordwestdeutschland*, 129ff.

⁶⁶ Zur Begrifflichkeit von Landsknechten und Reisläufem vgl. Rogg, *Landsknechte und Reisläufer*, 8, 155ff.

⁶⁷ Zu diesem wichtigen, gleichwohl von der Forschung bislang nur am Rande betrachteten Aspekt vgl. Baumann, *Landsknechte*, 215ff.

⁶⁸ Möller, *Regiment der Landsknechte*, 189ff.

⁶⁹ Möller, *Regiment der Landsknechte*, 95ff.

⁷⁰ Rogg, „Zerhauen und Zerschnitten“, 113ff.

⁷¹ Rath, *Repräsentation von Gewalt*, 7ff.

⁷² Rogg, „Wohl auff mit mir du schoenes Weib“, 51ff.

⁷³ Rogg, „Gottlose Kriegersleute?“

zuspannen. Besonders deutlich wird dies in der Bildpropaganda.⁷⁴ Im sogenannten Triumphzug Kaiser Maximilians I. von 1516/ 1518 zum Beispiel, einer repräsentativen Graphikfolge, an der die bedeutendsten Künstler der deutschen Renaissance beteiligt waren, sind es Landsknechte, die den Motor der Staatsmaschinerie wortwörtlich und sinnbildlich am Laufen halten, indem sie schieben, ziehen und in die Speichen greifen [Abb. 1]. Zahlreiche andere Belege ließen sich anführen, in denen der disziplinierte Landsknecht unter dem Banner des Kriegsherrn und als Ausdruck der landesherrlichen oder kaiserlichen Autorität marschierte.⁷⁵ Im populären Liedgut oder in der Bildpublizistik gegen die Türken mutierte der rohe Kriegsgeselle sogar zum „frommen, ritterlichen Landsknecht“, dem das christliche Abendland seine Rettung verdankte.⁷⁶ Die Spuren dieses ambivalenten Umgangs mit Soldaten lassen sich teilweise bis ins 18. Jahrhundert verfolgen, wo neben der „nichtsnutzigen, kujonierten Kanaille“ der Soldat im bunten Uniformrock die Ordnung und den Herrschaftsanspruch des Königs dokumentierte.⁷⁷ Das Militär als Mittel staatlicher Repräsentation ist ein unbestrittener, wenngleich von der Frühneuzeitforschung bislang nur cursorisch beleuchteter Aspekt.

Wenn man versucht, die unterschiedlichen dünnen Fäden der Entwicklung vom Spätmittelalter zur Frühen Neuzeit zu einem dicken Strang zu verknüpfen, dann lässt sich vereinfacht Folgendes feststellen: Die Kriegführung wurde immer komplexer und nicht zuletzt dadurch auch immer teurer. Immer größere Heere, immer bessere Artillerie und immer stärkere Festungen führten zu einer Rüstungsspirale, die vom frühneuzeitlichen Staat die Mobilisierung aller Kraftreserven verlangte.⁷⁸ Die Bereitstellung ausreichender finanzieller Mittel stand in diesem Prozeß naturgemäß im Vordergrund. „Man kann“, so der Historiker Peter Moraw, „den engen Zusammenhang von Krieg und Geld kaum genug betonen.“⁷⁹ Mit den traditionellen Verwaltungs- und Finanzstrukturen der feudalen Gemeinwesen waren diese Aufgaben allerdings nicht mehr zu bewältigen.⁸⁰ Alle europäischen Territorialstaaten und Königshäuser verfügten nur über eine begrenzte Hausmacht, und diese reichte in der Regel für um-

⁷⁴ Ausführlich dazu: Rogg, *Landsknechte und Reisläufer*, 165ff.; zu Kaiser Maximilians Triumphzug, Appelbaum, *The Triumph of Maximilian*.

⁷⁵ Moxey, *Peasants, Warriors and Wives*, 67ff; Schauerte, *Ehrenpforte für Kaiser Maximilian*.

⁷⁶ Moxey, *Peasants, Warriors and Wives*, 72ff; Rogg, „Gottlose Kriegsleute?“.

⁷⁷ Kroener, „Schwungrad an der Staatsmaschine?“ 18ff; Nowosadtko, „Ordnungselement oder Störfaktor“, passim.

⁷⁸ Reinhard, *Geschichte der Staatsgewalt*, 343f; Moraw, „Staat und Krieg im deutschen Spätmittelalter“, 85.

⁷⁹ Moraw, „Staat und Krieg im deutschen Spätmittelalter“, 95; Zum „merkantilen Charakter“ des Kriegswesens vgl. auch Papke, *Von der Miliz zum stehenden Heer*, 115.

⁸⁰ Ormond, „The Feudal Structure and the Beginnings of State Finance“, 53–79.

fassende Kriegsanstrengungen nicht aus. Für jede größere militärische Aktion war der Landesherr auf die Unterstützung seiner nachgeordneten Territorien angewiesen, nicht nur materiell, sondern vor allem finanziell. Man kann dieses System vielleicht mit einem modernen Nachtragshaushalt vergleichen, bei dem die Regierung der Unterstützung des Parlaments bedarf. Häufig versprechen solche Verfahren nur dann erfolgreich zu sein, wenn man bereit ist, Kompromisse einzugehen – vor allem mit der Opposition. In der Frühen Neuzeit verhielt es sich ähnlich.⁸¹ Das Recht der Steuerbewilligung war seit jeher ein Privileg der Stände.⁸² Vor allem dann, wenn der außenpolitische und damit der militärische Druck wuchs, wurden die *Etats Généraux* in Frankreich, der Reichstag im Deutschen Reich oder die Landstände in den Territorien zusammengerufen.⁸³ Gerade im Reich lässt sich für das späte 15. und frühe 16. Jahrhundert ein direkter Zusammenhang zwischen militärischer Notwendigkeit, Fiskalisierung, Herrschaftsverdichtung und letztlich zunehmender Verstaatlichung erkennen.⁸⁴ Exemplarisch zeigen dies der 1495 auf dem Reichstag zu Worms bewilligte „Gemeine Pfennig“⁸⁵ sowie der sogenannte „Römermonat“ – beides wichtige Elemente für die Finanzierung der Türkenabwehr.⁸⁶ Ein effektiveres Steuersystem erforderte zugleich eine tüchtige Verwaltung. Um das Steueraufkommen berechnen und einfordern zu können, war (sinnbildlich gesprochen) ein Heer von Finanzbeamten notwendig, die ihrerseits aus der Staatskasse bezahlt werden mussten.⁸⁷ Die Überwachung und Distribution erforderte wiederum einen Apparat, so dass die Bürokratisierung langsam, aber deutlich zunahm.⁸⁸ Im Grunde fungierte das Militär als „gigantische Geldumverteilungsmaschine“. ⁸⁹ Fiskalisierung (durch Perfektionierung des Steuerapparates), Funktionalisierung (durch Aufbau einer Funktionselite in der Verwaltung) und Verrechtlichung (durch ein immer engmaschigeres Verwaltungsrecht) markierten die Eckpunkte in diesem System. Manche Historiker gehen sogar weiter und vertreten die Auffassung, der Ausbau der modernen fürstlich-

⁸¹ Vgl. Moraw, „Staat und Krieg im deutschen Spätmittelalter“, 100.

⁸² *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, VIII, 44ff; *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, VI, 196ff.

⁸³ Komprimiert mit anschaulichen Beispielen: Tallett, *War and Society*, 194ff.

⁸⁴ Allgemein zu diesem Prozess: Press, *Kriege und Krisen*, 110ff.

⁸⁵ Schmidt, *Der Gemeine Pfennig von 1495*; Zur außenpolitischen Bedeutung des Reichstags zu Worms auch im Hinblick auf die Türkenabwehr vgl.: Hollegger, *Grundlinien der Außenpolitik Maximilians I.*, 43ff.

⁸⁶ Steglich, *Reichstürkenhilfe*, 7ff.

⁸⁷ Press, *Kriege und Krisen*, 119ff.

⁸⁸ Tallett, *War and Society*, 198ff.

⁸⁹ Prüve, „Sozialdisziplinierung und Militarisierung“, 68.

staatlichen Verwaltung sei „primär von den Bedürfnissen des Militärs geprägt“. ⁹⁰

Es bleibt die spannende Frage, ob das Militär nun als Katalysator staatlicher Entwicklung vereinnahmt werden darf oder der Aufstieg des Staates als Beschleuniger für die zunehmende Bedeutung des Faktors Militär anzusehen ist. Das alte Problem, ob der Ursprung bei der „Henne“ oder beim „Ei“ zu suchen ist, beantwortet man am besten mit einem klaren „sowohl als auch“. Die Evidenz dieser Wechselbeziehung wird deutlich, wenn man einen Blick in die innere Struktur der Heeresorganisation wirft. Der steigende Finanz- und Organisationsbedarf der Armeen förderte die Entwicklung von Funktionseliten, den sogenannten Ämtern. ⁹¹ Die Führer eines Regiments, ja selbst einer Kompanie, benötigten Spezialisten, um die vielfältigen Aufgaben der An- und Abmusterungen, der Finanzverwaltung und Versorgung zu bewältigen. ⁹² Die sogenannten „Musterschreiber“, „Pfennigmeister“ oder „Schultheißen“ mußten über Schreibkenntnisse und Verwaltungserfahrung verfügen [Abb. 2]. Neuere Forschungen belegen, daß ein wechselseitiges Erklimmen der zivilen und militärischen Karriereleiter durchaus möglich war - ein Prozess, bei dem der Faktor Bildung eine nicht unerhebliche Rolle spielte. ⁹³ So konnte zivile Verwaltungserfahrung in der militärischen Führung mit Gewinn eingebracht werden und umgekehrt den Weg für den weiteren zivilen Aufstieg bahnen. Beispiele für dieses „Job-hopping“ gibt es genug.

Krieg und Militär schufen auch unmittelbare und vor allem dauerhafte Grundlagen staatlicher Herrschaftsverdichtung. Beispielhaft könnte man hier auf das habsburgische Landesdefensionswerk von 1575 verweisen. ⁹⁴ Im gemeinsamen Kampf gegen das Osmanische Reich war die innerterritoriale Verteidigungsgemeinschaft von Landesherrschaft, Ständen, städtischer und ländlicher Bevölkerung auf ein intensives Steuer-, Finanz- und Wirtschaftswesen angewiesen. Ursprünglich aus der Not geboren und bewilligt, blieb das einmal etablierte System nach Abwenden der Türkengefahr bestehen. Um dieses Ziel zu erreichen, musste ein Konflikt allerdings nicht Generationen dauern, wie in Krain, Steiermark oder Kärnten, dem sogenannten „Hofzaun“ des Reiches. Das Beispiel Bayerns unter dem Herzog und späteren Kurfürsten Maximilian I. zeigt, daß auch innerhalb einer Herrschaft bleibende Machtstrukturen etabliert

⁹⁰ Prüve, „Vom Schmuddelkind zur anerkannten Subdisziplin“, 601; vgl. dazu ausführlich: Winnige, „Von der Kontribution zur Akzise“, passim.

⁹¹ Rogg, „Ein Kriegsordnung neu gemacht“, 371ff; Möller, *Regiment der Landsknechte*, 114ff; Baumann, *Landsknechte*, 97ff.

⁹² Vgl. das übersichtliche Organigramm bei: Hillmann, „Landsknechte und Söldner“, 125.

⁹³ Rogg, „Ein Kriegsordnung neu gemacht“, 379ff.

⁹⁴ Schilling, *Höfe und Allianzen*, 324ff.

werden konnten. Mit Berufung auf das Notstandsrecht bürdete Maximilian seinem Land zu Beginn des Dreißigjährigen Krieges hohe Steuern auf. Er baute dafür den landesherrlichen Verwaltungsapparat aus, konfiszierte 1633 die Kirchenschätze und ein Jahr später auch noch die Landschaftskassen, um seine militärischen Unternehmungen finanzieren zu können.⁹⁵ Während der Landtag zwischen 1579 und 1612 (also in einem Zeitraum von 33 Jahren) immerhin sechsmal tagte, wurde er in dem genau doppelt so großen Zeitraum zwischen 1612 und 1669 nicht ein einziges Mal zusammengerufen.⁹⁶ Auch der ursprünglich gemischt zusammengesetzte *Kriegsrat* wurde mit Beginn des Krieges in eine rein landesherrliche Behörde umgewandelt.⁹⁷ Diese war besetzt mit Adeligen oder Beamten, die der Kurfürst ernannte, und stand damit letztlich unter seiner Kontrolle.

Diese Beispiele zeigen anschaulich den integralen Zusammenhang zwischen Militär und Staat in der Frühen Neuzeit. Ohne Zweifel beförderte der Krieg den Gang der Herrschaftsverdichtung und im Grunde, wie der Augsburger Historiker Johannes Burkhardt treffend für den Dreißigjährigen Krieg feststellte, den „Staatswerdungsprozess“.⁹⁸ Die eingangs gestellte Frage von „Henne“ oder „Ei“ muß offen bleiben. Vor knapp einhundert Jahren hat Otto Hinze eine andere Metapher in die Diskussion gebracht und das Militär als „Schwungrad an der Staatsmaschine“ bezeichnet.⁹⁹ Der integrale, verstärkende und in gewisser Weise sich selbst beschleunigende Charakter kommt damit sehr anschaulich zum Ausdruck. Der bereits erwähnte Triumphzug Kaiser Maximilians I. bringt diesen Zusammenhang auch visuell auf den Punkt, denn einer der Landsknechte treibt den Motor im Machtgetriebe der Habsburger Politik sogar durch ein Schwungrad an [Abb. 3]. Charles Tilly, ein Altmeister moderner Militärgeschichtsforschung, hat es programmatisch formuliert „War made the state and the state made war.“¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ Zu Kriegsfinanzierung in Bayern vgl. instruktiv: Damboer, *Söldnerkapitalismus in Bayern*.

⁹⁶ Schilling, *Aufbruch und Krise*, 322f u. 437.

⁹⁷ Damboer, *Krise des Söldner-Kapitalismus*, 8ff.

⁹⁸ Burkhardt, *Der Dreißigjährige Krieg*, 29ff; zur Diskussion (und Kritik) an dieser Einschätzung vgl. Id.: „Das größte Friedenswerk der Neuzeit“, 593f.

⁹⁹ Hinze, „Geist und System“, 23.

¹⁰⁰ Tilly, *National States*, 42.

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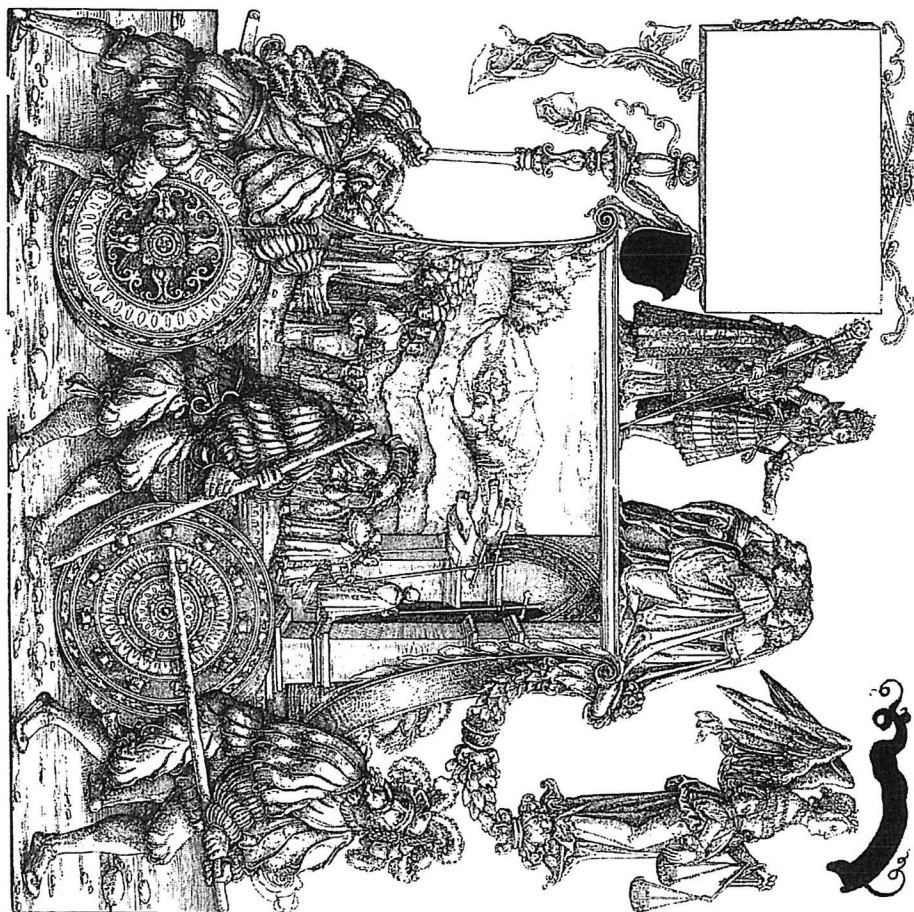


Abb. 1 Appelbaum, *The Triumph of Maximilian*, 99/97.

Feldschreiber.

Ich bin im Felde pächhalter worden
 Dis ist mein Amte in disem orden
 So das senlein wirt auffgericht
 Vnd ee die mustering geschicht
 Lyß ich den artickel prieff der gemein
 Darnach setz man die Lempfer ein
 Die los muß ich in vntersheyden
 Auff einer trummel mit der freyden
 Auch muß auff schreyben ich die rot
 Der Rotmeyster zu oßers stet.



Erhard Schön (um 1535)

Abb. 2 Geisberg: *The German Single-Leaf Woodcut* III, 1157.

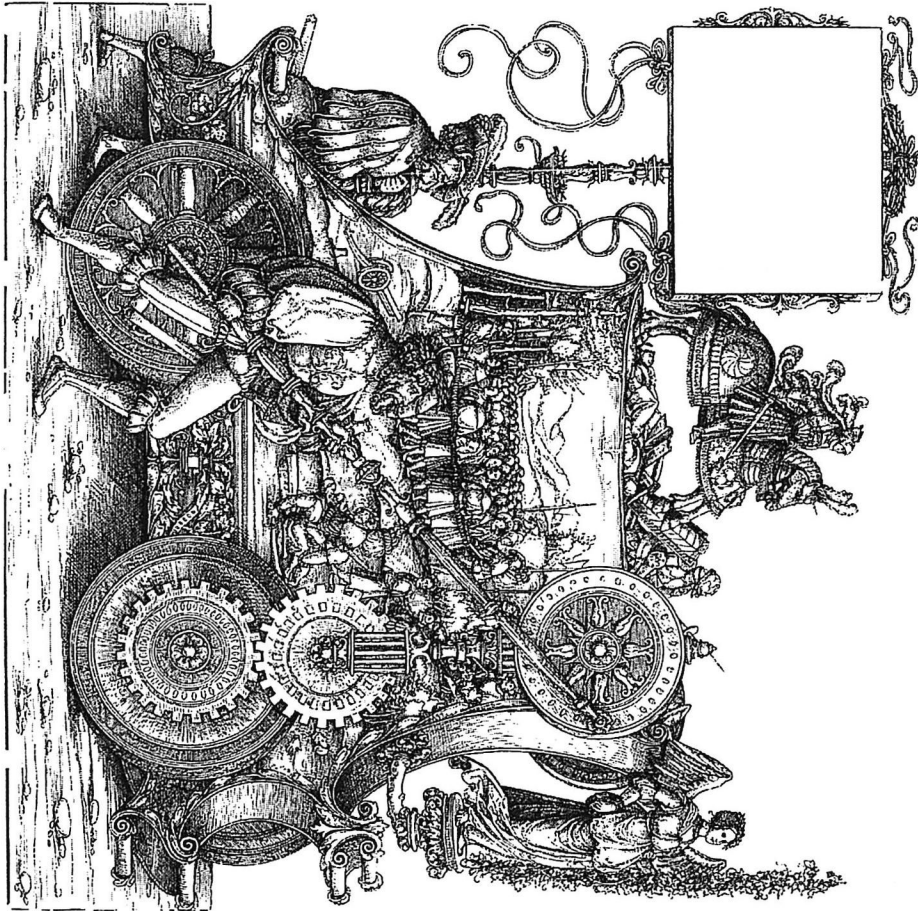


Abb. 3 Appelbaum, *The Triumph of Maximilian*, 98/96.

The State and the Military – a Nomadic Perspective

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Statehood is one of the problems which immediately come to mind when the interaction of pastoralists and sedentary societies is the issue. Interaction, interdependency and mutual adaptations, acculturations and so on between nomads and settled people are indeed at the center of our common research program, and it is thus only natural that one of the seminars to be held in the framework of this program should deal with statehood.¹

I must of necessity start with a series of qualifications. The object of this paper is to present some of the perspectives of research; it would be overly ambitious to propose a state-of-the-art paper. The focus of the paper is on Central Asia², the Middle East coming in now and then. But since the Middle East presents an altogether different picture, even the questions asked from a Central Asian perspective may not hold any value for the Middle East. Even if the paper draws on debates in social anthropology, it is historical in outlook and does not aim at interfering with the ongoing debate surrounding issues of tribe and state in anthropology. However, the paper does not proceed chronologically, and neither are different cases discussed one after the other; on the contrary, it tries to show some of the ways in which nomadic states and nomadic armies worked.

There is another restriction: I am dealing chiefly with the Mongol and post-Mongol periods, 13th through 17th centuries. Thus, the period when modern

¹ This paper is a very much revised version of my contribution to the seminar „Statehood and the Military“, held under the auspices of the *Sonderforschungsbereich* „Differenz und Integration“ in Halle, April 29–30, 2002. I want to thank all those who generously accepted to discuss earlier drafts with me: Anke von Kügelgen (Bern), Michael Kemper (Bochum), and the participants in more than one *Sonderforschungsbereich* meeting: Ulrike Berndt, Kurt Franz, Wolfgang Holzwarth, Doris Mir Ghaffari, Oliver Schmitt, Irene Schneider. Special thanks to Anatoly Khazanov whose kindness and expertise have encouraged me to once more rework the paper. Needless to say, all mistakes and inaccuracies are mine.

² In this paper, I use a (very) broad definition of Central Asia, which includes much of the arid zones of the Eurasian continent.

states (using firearms and standing armies) definitely got the upper hand in their dealings with steppe and desert is not part of my considerations. This occurred at different moments in different regions, but the process was well under way in the 18th century at latest. On the other hand, even if some examples are taken from ancient and early medieval times, these periods are not within the scope of this paper.

The central question is whether nomadic states and armies are an extension of the primary forms of social organization in most nomadic contexts, that is, of tribalism. But before the implications of the questions can be shown and before it can be fleshed out, two preliminary notes seem advisable. The first is on concepts and definitions, the second on general ecological and economic preconditions for statehood. It will be noted that larger definitions are preferred throughout; one of the reasons is that both the Great Steppe and the “mixed region” are considered, and this broader perspective should not be hampered by too rigid definitions.

Since it seems that nomadic statehood in all but very exceptional cases emerges in close interaction with settled economic structures, one of the central questions to be studied is the relationship of extraction and redistribution of resources. While the extraction mechanisms can only be hinted at in this paper, it will be argued that on the expenditure side, the forms of redistribution are instrumental in shaping nomadic statehood.

The next step in the analysis concerns the military structures in a stricter sense. In both ecological areas, the Great Steppe and the “mixed zone”, two fundamental forms seem to be extant. Whereas the tribal host is a result of the diffusion of military skills within society (soldiering not having emerged yet as a specialized occupation within the division of labor), the warband is a typically non-tribal fighting force. The paper then argues that nomadic statehood is more closely linked to the warband type of military organization than with the tribal host.

Concepts

Statehood among pastoralist nomads has been an issue for a long time. Most publications dealing with the topic offer a definition of the central concepts, the state, the tribe (as the most obvious form of social organization not tied to the state) and pastoralist nomadism, before the authors get into the subject matter. I am quite convinced that most of the definitions given are useful in their

context. In my view, the interaction between sedentary states and their pastoralist counterparts, whether states, empires or chiefdoms, is best analyzed if we assume that statehood should perhaps be seen as a process, it does not come into being in a kind of qualitative leap (or parthenogenesis), but evolves slowly, and of course there are degrees within its evolution. Thus, it does not come as a surprise that some specialists propose two definitions of the state, a minimalist and an extended one. In the minimalist definition, states are “social organizations capable of exerting a *considerable degree of power* [...] over *large numbers of people*, and *for sustained periods*”.³ Even in this minimalist understanding, states are “distinguished from chiefdoms by their ability to prevent fission along tribal lines”.⁴ This implies a degree of inequality (in the distribution of power) not present in chiefdoms. Other definitions stress the principle of territory, which characterizes all states as distinct from other forms of social organization; power is often personal, whereas statehood always belongs to the realm of territoriality.⁵ The extended definitions add more features, such as “large surpluses controlled by the state, a clearly marked-out territory, urbanization, a complex division of labour” and so on, ending up with the often quoted state monopoly of legitimate means of coercion (Weber).⁶ Lewis rightly argues that extended definitions tend to mix up the problem; he proposes to return to the core issue, that is, to “the presence and/ or absence of regularized *rule*”.⁷ That there have to be degrees seems quite commonsensical, but was stressed also by specialists.⁸ Finer, therefore, also bases his monumental study on a twofold definition of the state.⁹

³ Christian, “State Formation”, 53, (emphasis in the original); other authors including Khazanov, *Nomads and the outside world* and Barfield, *Perilous Frontier*.

⁴ *Ibid.*, see also the debate: Cohen, “Evolution, Fission, and the Early State”. Cohen argues that statehood begins where there is an organism that is capable of preventing fission or the splitting up of a great unit into smaller ones which are similar in most respects to the bigger one (though not in size, of course).

⁵ Istorija Kazakhstana, 100–101.

⁶ Weber’s well-known postulate that a state should be able not only to claim, but also to enforce its monopoly of the legitimate use of violence in a given territory is evidently a maximalist one, seldom if ever met with in pre-modern societies, and it has to be disregarded for the purposes of this study. Tapper’s definition of statehood also has proved very influential: „The *state*, finally, is a territorially-bounded polity [...] with a centralized government and a monopoly of legitimate force, usually including within its bounds different social classes and ethnic/ cultural groups“ (Tapper, “Introduction”, 10).

⁷ Lewis, “Warfare”, 209, emphasis in the original.

⁸ Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States*, 131, and Bradburd, “Influence”.

⁹ Finer, *History*, 2–3; Finer gives a set of five characteristics, the first three are general, the other two apply only to modern states (and even there, only partly). These are: „1. They [states] are territorially defined populations each recognizing a common paramount organ of government. 2. This organ is served by specialized personnel; a civil service, to carry out

Tribes, then, are frequently seen as the opposite of the state. Where there is no state, there are tribes; where there are tribes, there is no state – to put it extremely. Tribes are groups which use a kinship-based vocabulary to organize their social relations; they are not necessarily based on real or fictitious kinship, and especially in the Iranian context, examples abound where neither is the case – people belonging to a tribal group are quite conscious that they are not related by ties of blood, and they do not bother to “create” such ties.¹⁰ Thus, there seems to be no innate dichotomy between tribes and the state.

Modes of organization along kinship lines include the “segmentary lineage organization” which is often seen as a determining factor in “tribal” politics. Closer kin stand together against more remote relations, and all stand together against outsiders.¹¹ Recently, it has been proposed to regard the segmentary lineage as a discursive mode of kinship rules with no real links to political behavior.¹²

The question is whether the social organization of Central Asian (and for that matter, Middle Eastern and North African) nomads is in any meaningful way the basis for their political organization, or, whether nomadic states extant in these areas can be said to be more or less the extension of the social organization attributed to the nomads who made up the (military) manpower of

decisions and a military service to back these by force where necessary and to protect the association from similarly constituted associations. 3. The state so characterized is recognized by other similarly constituted states as independent in its action on its territorially defined – and hence confined – population, that is, on its subjects. This recognition constitutes what we would today call its ‘sovereignty’.” [...] „4. Ideally at least, but to a large extent in practice also, the population of the state forms a community of feeling – a *Gemeinschaft* based on self-consciousness of a common nationality. 5. Ideally at least, and again to a large extent in practice, the population forms a community in the sense that its members mutually participate in distributing and sharing duties and benefits.“ Finer, for all his elaboration, decides to leave „tribes“ alone; it seems that for him, „tribes“ are the non-state entity *par excellence*.

¹⁰ In this, I follow Tapper’s definition (Tapper, “Introduction”, 10–11), and see the discussion in Tapper, *Frontier nomads*, 10–18. Even if the situation is somewhat different in Transoxiana and beyond, many of the points Tapper makes seem to be relevant outside Iran also. In his discussion of „the tribe and the state“, Tapper stresses that tribes and states are perhaps best seen as ideal types in the Weberian fashion, and he states that neither can exist in its pure forms. – Rowton, “Enclosed Nomadism” also points to the irrelevance of biological kinship in the process of forming tribes.

¹¹ Lindholm, *Islamic Middle East*, 57. Lindholm states that this model is typical of the Middle East (and thus for Arab tribalism), but not for Turkic peoples. The only example from the Iranian and Turkic world he adduces is the Ottoman Empire, and the corresponding chapter is therefore named „The Ottoman exception“ (120–6) where the Mongol roots of the early Ottomans are left aside (see Lindner, “How Mongol?”).

¹² Baştuğ (“Segmentary lineage system” and “Tribe, Confederation and State”), and Kuper (*Invention*).

these states. More closely to military history, it has to be asked in this context whether, or to which extent, the military organization of nomads is an extension of their social organization, and to put it more bluntly, to which extent nomadic armies are “tribal” in the sense that groups defining themselves as kin (or using kinship-based vocabulary to structure their social relations) form the military units as well.

What, then, is a nomadic state? It certainly is not a state whose population is made up more or less entirely of nomads; this would be too narrow. Neither could it be a state where nomads live in great numbers. In this paper, a “nomadic state” is a state ruled by people (this includes the ruling family as well as military and civilian elites) with a clear nomadic tradition in their culture (which includes a nomadic lifestyle), and an army made up mostly of such people. Thus, it is clear that mixed systems must be expected. For the purposes of this paper, though, a state based on an economy which includes agriculture, crafts, trade and so on as well as mobile pastoralism will still fall within the “nomadic state” as long as its rulers and at least a significant part of the ruling elite (in most cases, the military part) continue to adhere to a nomadic lifestyle.¹³ This definition is entirely pragmatic and does not aim at solving the immense conceptual problems inherent in the combination of the two terms “nomadic” and “state”. I am well aware that many will find the definition much too broad, but I find it easier to work from a concept which includes at least part of the “mixed” cases.

To continue with definitions: In the context of this paper, people are called “nomadic” who, in a given period of time, rely at least for a significant part on mobile stockbreeding for their livelihood (with seasonal movements between, as a rule, summer and winter pastures), and interact (sometimes very closely) with settled people; the definition thus includes all kinds of semi- and other not fully nomadic people.¹⁴ A “nomadic army”, last but not least, is an army made up of nomads; only in some cases is the nomadic army itself nomadizing (that

¹³ The importance of mixed economies can hardly be overstated. See Noonan for a well-argued case study (Khazars), and multiple examples in Kychanov.

¹⁴ In the Central Asian as well as the Iranian contexts, mixed forms of gaining a living are so frequent that narrower definitions make the concept (nomad) hard to handle indeed. Another difficulty lies in the fact that it can be very difficult to decide whether a group named in a written source was in any way (let alone the full way) nomadic. This is the case in at least Turki and Persian, see Holzwarth (“Nomaden und Sesshafte”) and Paul (“Nomaden”). The focus is on mobile pastoralism, excluding other forms of mobile economics and lifestyles. – It will be noted that the choice of broader, inclusive definition continues here.

is, taking the womenfolk with it as well as the flocks).¹⁵ This qualification has to be made since for short raids or in cases where speed was decisive, the armies could not be “nomadizing” when on campaign.

Nomads and warriors

Since nomadic pastoralists are generally credited with overwhelming military skills, particularly in Central Asia, and since they indeed seem to have had an advantage over settled states and their armies for quite a long time in the very long history of their interaction, it is not surprising that the military aspect is thought to be central.¹⁶ Moreover, there is an ongoing debate about the place and function of the military in the formation of European states, a debate which has spilled over into the field of Middle Eastern and Central Asian studies during the last decade or so; but for the *problématique* of nomad-sedentary interaction and their military dealings the question has not yet been posed in a sufficiently systematic fashion.¹⁷

It should perhaps be stressed from the start that nomadic pastoralists are not at all alike. This also applies to their military skills. First of all, not all animals herded make acceptable mounts. You cannot ride sheep and goats, and even though you can ride oxen, there is no point in doing so for military purposes. Small livestock and cattle breeders thus can be expected to behave very differently from horse and camel breeders in military matters.¹⁸ Thus, a first

¹⁵ „Temür’s was a nomad army, accompanied by the wives and children of its soldiers and requiring large quantities of food. To provision it he had to renew his stock by taking animals from the nomads he encountered along the way.“ (Manz, *Rise and rule*, 101–2).

¹⁶ An overview of European as well as Chinese sources stating the superiority of the Central Asian warrior: Sinor, “Inner Asian Warriors”.

¹⁷ Finer’s and Tilly’s propositions on the role of the military in the formation and history of states have proved very influential in European history, but they are also beginning to have an impact on Middle Eastern historians. Fahmy, *Pasha’s Men* and Murphey, *Ottoman Warfare* are good examples. Further contributions include Paul, *State and Military*. Haldon, “Pre-industrial States” also gives some clues. The most important contribution to military history in the nomadic Central Asian context still is Sinor, “Inner Asian Warriors”. Hildinger’s monograph must be disregarded because of its many omissions, mistakes and flaws even in basic matters. The recently published volume in *Handbuch der Orientalistik* (di Cosmo, *Warfare*) offers a good historical survey of the pre-Mongol period (Golden, “War and Warfare”) and a number of case studies, but no theoretical framework. On the whole, historians of military questions in the Central Asian context have been more interested in weaponry and tactics than in the impact of military organization on statehood.

¹⁸ In a way, this corresponds with the distinction between „excluded“ nomads who only rarely come to the sedentary world (whose animals are mainly camels) and „enclosed“ nomads

starting point should be that whoever does not have sufficient numbers of either horses or camels does not count as a military factor (in the regions under study).¹⁹ Hence, ecological problems come to the fore: Regions where horse (or camel) breeding is not possible on a large scale make less probable centers of nomadic states.²⁰ Moreover, ecological factors also determine how many animals, and therefore people, can live in a given area (in the steppe more grass is available, and above all, there is more and better water than in the desert). Where a sedentary region borders on desert and there is next to no transitional climatic zone, that is, no savannah or steppe, the state based on this sedentary region is likely to prevail over its nomadic neighbors for most of its history (the paradigmatic example here being Egypt). Mountainous areas with perennial streams or other surface sources also provide good ecological conditions for stockbreeding. Population density certainly has an influence on the state formation potential a given region holds.

Thus, ecological conditions in regions predominantly used for stockbreeding differ widely, and it stands to reason that some of the ecological factors at work are also important in determining the potential for state formation in a given setting. The Central Asian imperial tradition of great nomadic states is based in present-day Mongolia, where agriculture can be practiced only marginally; moreover, the steppe regions are separated from China proper (south of the Great Wall) by the Gobi desert. Farther west, the landscape known as Eastern Turkistan (Hsinking) is made up of small oases surrounded by inhospitable stretches of semi-desert, but high mountains are not far. The great steppes of what is now Kazakhstan plus the Western Eurasian steppes²¹ offer better

who have to spend a significant part of the year within the sedentary zone. See Rowton, "Enclosed Nomadism". This is, however, a Middle Eastern model. In Central Asia, the part of horses in the herds kept by nomads in the Great Steppe and in the mixed area alike seems to change the picture. Tapper mentions „encapsulated“ nomads (Tapper, "Introduction", 51), but this refers to a certain kind of state politics.

¹⁹ Hill, "The role of the camel and the horse"; Kennedy, *Armies* for camels and horses in the early Islamic armies.

²⁰ The main question in this context is the availability of water; whereas sheep do not have to be watered every day, horses do (Togan). Horses need better water than either sheep or camels (they are more sensitive to salty water, and they tolerate salinity only to a degree comparable to humans). But since horses can move faster than sheep, they can do with more distant sources of water. In Kazakhstan, the percentage of horses in the flocks varied according to the availability of water, going up to 25–35% in the northern steppe and forest-steppe regions on the one hand and in the mountainous areas in the south-east on the other hand, whereas in the south-western regions of the country, their percentage dropped accordingly. The average percentage of horses seems to have been around 13% or one million head (*Istoriia Kazakhstana*, 86–88).

²¹ Golden, "War and Warfare" for a definition of the geographical areas.

conditions for stockbreeding, above all along their northern rim where the ratio of horses in the flocks increases, but most of Kazakhstan is plain with only limited potential for horses. However, this did not prevent Kazakhs from keeping as many horses as possible; cultural preferences can be decisive, and no mechanical link from natural conditions to society can be established.

To the south-west of a line running roughly from Khwarazm to the Syr Darya²² an area of mixed economic activities begins²³ with oases surrounded by smaller or larger stretches of steppe or desert, but high mountains often close at hand; this zone continues into modern Afghanistan and Iran and even Anatolia. The mixed ecological nature of this large region is also stressed by its linguistic make-up: Iranian and Turkic languages are to be found in close contact, and bilingualism is frequent even today.²⁴ This region has a great tradition in irrigated agriculture as well as in stockbreeding. The consequences of these ecological features will be discussed below; evidently, in the mixed zone, many people practice mixed economies (mostly combining agriculture and mobile pastoralism), and for many more, close interaction between pastoralists and agriculturalists is the rule.

One of the few things on which most scholars in the field seem to agree is that there is no spontaneous evolution of statehood among pastoralist nomads in neither Central Asia nor the Middle East nor North Africa. Peter Golden states: "There are no examples of the *spontaneous* generation of a state in the steppe"²⁵. The reason is that the sources of surplus production in the steppe are not sufficient for statehood to emerge, at least not in its more elaborate forms. Even those writers who think that nomads can attain economic autarky do not suggest a spontaneous process of state formation on the steppe.²⁶ At any rate, it

²² This geographical borderline is well known, for a description see Bregel, "Turko-Mongol Influences". See also Khazanov, "Nomads and oases".

²³ This „mixed zone“ is not quite what Rowton implies with his concept of „enclosed nomadism“, the main difference being the potential for horse breeding in this „mixed zone“.

²⁴ For a history of the ongoing Turkification of this region, see Bregel, "Turko-Mongol Influences" and Khazanov, "Nomads and oases".

²⁵ Quoted in Christian, "State Formation", 70, footnote 62; in the same vein: even Krader, "Origin"; above all Barfield, *Perilous Frontier*, 7 with examples from African and SW Asian cases. The references could easily be multiplied.

²⁶ *Istorija Kazakhstana*, 84: „The most important particular feature [of nomadic stockbreeding] [...] is that it attains an autarkic level of evolution within a framework of small (by number of livestock) economic unities and the private-familial ownership of herded animals“ (translation mine, JP; „autarkic“ is *samodostatochnyi i samoobespechivaiushchii*). Kychanov also stresses the internal elements in the development of statehood amongst nomads. – In much of recent Russian scholarship, the traces of evolutionist models of the Soviet type still are very visible.

seems that state structures among pastoralists are designed mainly to organize their exchange relationships with the sedentary world, peaceful or otherwise, and that they are shaped in turn by these exchange relationships.²⁷ This is evident from the forms of political organization adopted by Iranian tribes – or forced on them by the central government: they regularly show a higher degree of elaboration towards the outside than they do towards the inside.²⁸ In this vein, tribal leaders function in a way as “mediators between the central state and the ordinary tribesmen”²⁹, and thus, it is altogether possible that tribal leadership was created to serve the needs of the state.³⁰

It is a truism that exchange between nomadic pastoralists and sedentary economies is more important for the nomads than it is for the settled people.³¹ There seem to be at least two levels of exchange, however: one for the ordinary nomads who want access to cereals, products of handicraft needed for the camps (it is well known that camping implements are often produced not by the nomads, but by specialists working for a nomadic market), textiles and so forth; in sum, they need access to frontier markets where they can buy or barter these products for money or for such products as they can offer. On the other hand, rich nomads – the steppe aristocracies, as they are sometimes called – want luxury and prestige goods, but also weapons and armor. These cannot be acquired through frontier markets alone, but getting them presupposes contacts

²⁷ Very clearly stated by Khazanov: “In so far as a nomadic state emerges only if it has specific relations with the outside world and for certain kinds of such relations, it cannot exist for any prolonged period just because of the internal development of the nomadic societies. To exist and maintain stability over a prolonged period a nomadic state must incorporate within itself a part of this outside world in the form of its sedentary population or, either directly or indirectly, it must subjugate that sedentary population.” (Khazanov, *Nomads and the Outside World*, 296). Even if Khazanov is far from explicitly advocating a conquest paradigm, it is quite obvious that most of his examples for nomadic state formation come from scenarios of conquest. Common to most patterns of interaction is their asymmetry. – The discussion inside Soviet (and today, Russian) scholarship is summarized by Markov (“Social Structure”, with many references to earlier writings); Markov’s article also is indicative of the very particular forms of debate that characterize this scholarship whose main feature still is its isolationism. Markov’s position is summarized in *Istoriia Kazakhstana*, but ignored by Kradin, “Kochevye”. For an extended version of Markov’s position, see Markov, *Kochevniki*.

²⁸ The higher degrees of organization are often activated only in dealings with the state.

²⁹ Caton, “Anthropological Theories”, 99.

³⁰ Tapper repeatedly made this point: „It would appear that the major tribes and confederacies in Iran were chiefdoms created or fostered by governments, rulers and chiefs themselves [...]“ Tapper, *Frontier nomads*, 16.

³¹ This also seems to hold for mixed economies. Noonan shows that a mixed economy could serve as a basis for a state, which was deeply rooted in nomadic traditions. Thus, his study reinforces the emphasis on interaction models.

with the sedentary state. This is particularly true in the case of China, where the government jealously watched over its monopoly on such commodities.

Since the focus of this paper is on the state and the military, weapons are a central issue. It must be kept in mind that most arms were produced not on the steppe, but in settled contexts.³² There is evidence that soldiers had to bring their own weapons, but of course they did not have to produce them – there were regular markets for this.³³ Therefore it is no wonder that the exportation of iron (in all forms) and weaponry was strictly prohibited by Chinese law.³⁴ Whenever a newcomer in the steppe was trying to build up power, he had to get control of at least one settled center where weapons were produced. In some cases, it is reported that blacksmiths and other craftsmen were made to work day and night in order to deliver what the nomad chief needed.³⁵ It can be surmised that, along with the need for goods to distribute, it was the need for weapons that made nomadic states viable only if they either included sedentary regions or else had sufficiently sustained access to their resources. Thus, supply problems should have occurred much more frequently in the great steppe than in the mixed zone.

Redistribution (expenditure)

Redistribution of wealth, and particularly of prestige objects, is one of the central strategies for creating lasting bonds between ruler and retinue.³⁶ This

³² But metallurgy (even itinerant metallurgy) was not unknown: The Kōk Türks are said to have been blacksmiths (doubtlessly producing weaponry and armor), but they were slaves. Golden, “War and Warfare”, 149ff., states that in the pre-Chingisid western steppe regions, armored cavalry was no exception, and that these items were produced in settled regions.

³³ Biran, “Mighty wall”, 65–66, with an enumeration of weapon bazaars functioning in Turkestan in the Mongol period.

³⁴ Jagchid/ Symons, *Peace, War, and Trade*, but the authors also make it clear that these prohibitions were most honored in the breach. Smuggling, and first of all smuggling of iron and weapons, was very widespread indeed (182–185).

³⁵ Biran, “Battle of Herat”, 183. Slave labor was widely employed in the production of weaponry (Golden, “Terminology”) as well as in other fields including agriculture.

³⁶ This is made quite clear in the Qutadgu bilig, where distribution of wealth to the ruler’s retinue is one of his foremost duties. There are some Mongol cases as well: recall the well-known story of Hülāgū and the last Abbasid caliph. Other stories show Mongol rulers giving away the treasures which had been accumulated in the state coffers. A return to the „old Mongol“ style in Ilkhanid Iran was marked by Arpa Ke’ūn when he distributed all the wealth he could find in the state coffers to his troops, Aubin, “*Quriltai*”, 179 – The caliph Mu’āwiya, in a different context but with similar rules underlying the stories, is praised for

has recently been forcefully stated and exemplified by Togan who defines redistribution as one of the main processes going on between a ruler and his retinue, the retinue including kinsmen.³⁷ Redistribution as a basic feature of royal behavior is contrasted to accumulation, which is seen as the principle on which the administration of sedentary states is founded. Only rarely does a transition from the redistributive mode to the accumulative mode of government take place, and I'd like to take this, when it occurs, as indicative of the transition of a nomadic state to a sedentary one.

It stands to reason that many of the administrative forms present in states founded by nomads are determined by the ways in which this redistribution takes place. There seem to be three basic forms in which such wealth can be distributed: direct redistribution of booty, allocation of territories or the revenues thereof, with varying degrees of central control and accounting, and salaries paid to the army from a central treasury. Forms of statehood depend in a certain way on the degree of control central government or rulers could retain over redistribution processes.

Booty

The basic form seems to be the distribution of booty between the leader of a warband and his followers. Most of the spoils in fact went to the warriors, the leader enjoying little more than a right to a first pick.³⁸ In more regularized contexts, redistribution can take on various forms, the most primordial are

his quality of *hilm* meaning basically his policy of balance between various tribal leaders; this of course included forms of redistribution of wealth.

³⁷ Togan, *Flexibility and Limitation*, 146–148, and see index s. v. „redistribution“ and „ülüş“.

³⁸ Timur was known to distribute all the proceeds of pillaging in a number of cases, Aubin (‘‘Comment Tamerlan prenait les villes’’, in particular p. 108 with the example of Aleppo). The Turco-Mongol concept of *ölgä* (‘‘booty’’) is central for the understanding of Central Asian politics. The difference between pillaging and ransom money is that in the latter case, the position of the military leader is enhanced because he is the active subject of redistribution. – The ‘‘first pick’’ regulation is mentioned for the Khazar leaders, Golden, ‘‘War and Warfare’’, 142. – Another example is recounted by Akhmedov, *Gosudarstvo*, 50: When the Uzbek leader Abū l-Khair conquered Urgench in 1430, he let all the military leaders, those close to the khan and also the ordinary warriors enter the treasure house (of the defeated Timurid governor) in pairs and let them take away from there as much as they could carry. This is a programmatic story – it shows how a steppe ruler ought to act, even if we may have doubts about what really happened.

gifts, banquets and generally speaking largesse³⁹. Therefore, in every “tribal” situation, one of the prime qualities required in a leader is hospitality: he should be able to feed and entertain large numbers of followers. Distribution of booty in most cases is the only form to pay the army, and thus the leader, pretender or ruler cannot afford to hold back more of it than is essential for his personal needs (defined rather narrowly).

Allocation

There are several more complex modes of redistribution; they differ in the degree of control the ruler retains over the goods he is handing over to his followers. One of these modes is more closely related to the concept of booty because it involves an act of partition. It has been stated many a time that in the Turco-Mongolian mind, conquest made the conquered territories the booty of the ruling clan (which, however, was under the obligation to use the newly acquired means to feed the warriors). Often, when territory – or the revenue thereof – was partitioned out, the ruler lost control over the revenue, at least in the long run. Examples are the “appanage system”⁴⁰, which is a result of redistribution of territory. In fact, the partitioning of territory or of income from agriculture seems to have been one of the standard forms of redistribution, whether or not linked to the obligation to perform military service; these forms have been taken for “feudal” by some authors.⁴¹ But the redistribution of booty after conquest need not take the form of allocation; the ruler (or the central government) may either try to build up a central redistribution mechanism, which is responsible of taking in all the revenue and handing it out to who can make a legal claim on it⁴², or there may be some form of accounting for the

³⁹ Tarmashirin Khan, one of the rulers in the *ulus* Chaghatai, was overthrown partly because he did not arrange the regular banquets, Biran, “Chaghataids and Islam”.

⁴⁰ Dickson, “Uzbek Dynastic Theory”, Woods, *Aqqoyunlu*, McChesney, *Waqf*. Both kinsmen and followers of the ruler or chief or pretender are given appanages, Manz, *Rise and rule*. The much-debated problem of *iqṭāʿ* can only be evoked here (Cahen, “Evolution”; and in CHIR); it has recently been discussed in a broader framework of reference by Jurrado, *Hidma*. The allocation of districts (or of the revenue thereof) to members of the ruling family or leading military figures is only one form of organizing the relationship between ruler and retinue. See also Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership*.

⁴¹ This is the case with most of Soviet scholarship. I am not going to dwell upon the „feudalism“ paradigm in Middle Eastern history here.

⁴² In the aftermath of the Mongol conquest, direct allocation of territory was achieved only in the second or even third generation (Jackson, “From *Ulūs* to Khanate”).

allocated revenues (reckoned in their tax value).⁴³ But more often than not, the military leaders (members of the ruling family) can enjoy the fruits of the allocated district(s) without any bureaucratic impediments; this of course is one of the inbuilt lines of fission in nomadic states. Armies fielded in such cases tend to be coalitions even if there is a general command.⁴⁴

Salaries

Other forms permit the ruler to keep very close control of the distribution process, and this control in some cases comes close to a monopoly: Besides the partitioning of conquered territory (which evidently presupposes conquest to have taken place and thus accounts only for one scenario of getting wealth into the system), there is the distribution of subsidies or other proceeds of extortionist policies. This can lead to downright salaries the nomadic ruler could offer his retainers; in this case, no conquest needs to have taken place. Other forms of extraction can also yield important amounts of wealth for redistribution.⁴⁵

Salaried armies are an exception on the steppe. The Qarakhitay rulers had one, and for that reason, they did not give appanages to their army leaders, and neither did they allow their soldiers to plunder. The size of this salaried army is given in a range between 80 to 100.000 men, an enormous number. Even in this case, however, equipment and mounts seem to have been provided by the warriors themselves. There is no information about the salaries paid, but it is evident that these put considerable strain on the Qarakhitay administration.⁴⁶

Taxes taken in by the central administration (the ruler, for that matter) are distributed among the warriors. An example for this is provided by the Khazars. Gardizī writes: “Every year, the Khazars take in something from the wealth of the Muslims, according to everybody’s fortune [...] The Shād

⁴³ This seems to be what the Great Seljuqs (and Nizām al-mulk) were after.

⁴⁴ A striking example is the siege of Herat by the Uzbeks in the late 16th century (McChesney, “Conquest”).

⁴⁵ This point is made forcefully by Barfield who stresses that the Mongol conquest of China in fact was a unique case and by no means typical of steppe policies towards China. Even if this may have to be qualified, the argument is thought-provoking, and it is quite obvious that downright conquest sometimes was not a good affair, and that nomadic leaders were quite conscious of that.

⁴⁶ Biran, “Mighty wall”, 54, 55, 63–4. It has to remain open whether these salaries were paid on a regular basis.

[Khazar title] takes the taxes [*kharāj*] himself and distributes them among the army". This can be taken to mean "salaries", but it also shows how salaries originate out of booty.⁴⁷ In fact, raids are mentioned immediately after this form of salary. The Khazars, it should be remembered, ruled over a country with a mixed economy.

Salaries also can stem from subsidies paid to nomadic rulers by neighboring sedentary states, whether or not they are linked to defined services to be performed by the recipients; in every case, the debtors imply that they be spared raids or even, that the nomadic rulers, together with their retinues, fight other nomads.

Extraction mechanisms

One of the main goals of a chief or ruler (including would-be rulers) thus should be to gain and maintain access to prestige goods such as silk,⁴⁸ precious metals, choice weapons and horse furniture, jewelry, titles and even manuscript books, but also other, less spectacular goods needed for consumption on a daily basis: rice and other cereals, metal goods, garments, utensils and the like, in short, everything that cannot be produced on the steppe. Methods to acquire them vary from trade⁴⁹ to raids and downright conquest. The situation, thus, could be called an extortionist market strategy. In another set of circumstances, rulers can obtain these goods by offering services; military or otherwise. The terms of trade as well as the price for services are matters of political negotiation, in this, the military might of both parts, the sedentary state or empire, and the nomadic warriors, are decisive factors in defining the bargaining power of either side.⁵⁰ In all of these scenarios, surplus from the sedentary world is being transferred not to the nomads in general, but to a small group (ultimately one person) who holds power in the steppe and uses this surplus in order to further build up power; the leading group or man thus gets enough wealth to start the redistribution process essential for state

⁴⁷ Gardizi/ Ḥabībī, *Zain al-ahbār*, 272; Göckenjan/ Zimonyi, *Ġayhānī-Tradition*, 167, 54; Golden, "War and Warfare", 143.

⁴⁸ Allsen, *Commodity and exchange*.

⁴⁹ Trade may be on unequal terms, and under the conditions of state monopolies on exportation and importation it generally is; the terms of trade are a more or less direct expression of the power relations between the two trading „partners“. A good example is the Chinese horse trade during the Tang period, see Beckwith, "Impact".

⁵⁰ Barfield argues against Khazanov in *Perilous Frontier*, 7.

formation, and of course, to keep it going. Unlike conquest, extortionist market strategies do not have to be short lived, but can last for generations, if not for centuries (as Barfield has shown), and they do not have to transform the nomadic society to the point that it has to give up nomadism.

At any rate, military power is required to gain and maintain access to prestige and common goods, even in the case of trade. Sedentary states were not always prepared to allow trade with the outlying nomads, and even if the Chinese reluctance concerning trade may be more of a Confucian ideological figure, this figure nevertheless may well have been an obstacle to the development of commercial links.⁵¹ Because of this very particular situation, China may have been exceptional in its emphasis on frontier markets, the opening of which was a continuous issue between China and the northern nomads, leading to conflict to a degree unknown in other regions.⁵² However, trade is not the focus of this paper even if it most probably is the “normal” form by which pastoralists extracted surplus from sedentary societies.

It is not altogether clear whether nomads paid taxes to nomad rulers. No Kazakh ever seems to have paid any taxes to a Kazakh overlord; they clearly preferred departing from such a khan to submitting. In the mixed zone, however, taxation of nomads was much more frequent. For Iran after the Safavid period, there is good reason to think that nomads were taxed, but it does not seem that the Qajars themselves were. In the Shibanid khanate, nomads seem to have been taxed as well; but it is not clear how they were related to the conquering groups.⁵³

⁵¹ Beckwith, “Impact” on the horse trade. Jagchid/ Symons, *Peace, War, and Trade* however make it clear that ideology was a very real and powerful factor in the way China defined its policy towards the Northern barbarians (and all other barbarians, including the British).

⁵² Jagchid/ Symons, *Peace, War, and Trade* time and again underline that military confrontation between the nomads from the Northern steppe and the Chinese empire ensued whenever China closed these markets. For other regions, I only have the example of Shibani Khan denying his Qazaq enemies trading opportunities along the Syr Darya (see below); Khazanov, *Nomads and the outside world*, 207; Abuseitova, *Kazakhstan*, 82. The source for this is the *Mihmān-nāma-yi Bukhārā* (Khunji). As for Iranian states or Russia, no examples have come to my attention. It should be kept in mind that commercial restrictions would be very hard to implement in the mixed ecological zone, where there is no real frontier that could be compared to the Mongol-Chinese one. In the case of the Qazaqs, such restrictions were an option because the Qazaqs would have difficulties in replacing the cities along the Syr Darya with any other trading points. Such a situation is hardly imaginable farther into the mixed zone.

⁵³ Paul, “Documents”.

Warband and tribal host

It can be argued that the formation of states, the overthrow of existing dynasties or rulers and the establishment of new ones is no direct outgrowth of “tribalism”⁵⁴: both on the great steppe, distant from sedentary regions, and in the mixed zones there seem to be at least two ingredients to this, both required for a successful outcome. Both are military structures: the warband⁵⁵ and the tribal host; in some cases an intermediate structure appears, the “inner” army as distinct from the “outer” one.

The tribal host is a society in arms; for a number of reasons, pastoral nomads in Eurasia (and particularly horse-breeders) can serve as warriors with practically no additional training. Fighting and soldiering, at this stage, is no profession within the social division of labor. Most nomads, thus, serve as light cavalry, but it has to be noted once again that heavy cavalry (armored, sometimes including horse armor) was by no means exceptional.

The warband is devoid of any territorial attachments, it is an exclusively personally defined group. Tribal attachments can be shown to have existed in some cases, but not always. The leader and his retainers try to get access to any wealth and positions, it is altogether unimportant where this may be.

Bonds created between leaders of warbands and their retainers are often stronger than bonds of kinship, real or fictitious, to the extent that they have been approached to slavery.⁵⁶ In other instances, they can be clad in kinship terms (brotherhood).⁵⁷ They are essentially mutual obligations, services and

⁵⁴ Barfield's tribal confederacies are in fact non-tribal entities using tribal structures as components; in other contexts the components themselves can be tribal or non-tribal as with the *aymaqs*; Barfield, *Perilous Frontier*, 27. – Markov (“Social Structure”) very closely links nomadism to tribalism; he dismisses political ambitions („empires“) as short outbursts due to some extraordinary reasons, and he distinguishes a „communal-nomadic“ from a „military-nomadic“ mode. In this, he systematically underemphasizes the duration and importance of states founded by nomads.

⁵⁵ Military structures of the warband type seem much less frequent in the Middle East.

⁵⁶ Nizām al-mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma*, 143: „One obedient slave is better than three hundred sons * for they wish for their father's death, whereas he wishes for his master's glory“. The whole problem of military slavery in the history of the Islamic Near East is ultimately linked to the fact that created bonds of loyalty (between rulers and retainers, i.e. their „slaves“) were deemed to be more reliable than bonds of kinship. That many rulers were cruelly mistaken in this respect is quite another question. The Iranian conception of slavery did not preclude slave soldiering; in the pre-Islamic Turkic world, however, retainers in the warband could not be slaves. See Golden, “Terminology” for a detailed debate on Turkic terminology of slavery.

⁵⁷ Several types of artificial brotherhood are known, most prominently the Mongol *anda*, „sworn brother“.

loyalty are bartered against gifts or a part in the expected spoils, from booty to high offices in the conquest state yet to be formed.⁵⁸ Bonds of personal loyalty thus can antedate the remuneration: People think that a given man will probably come out as a great military leader, and thus they support him in his early stages even if their lot is hardship and dangerous campaigning; the rewards come later.⁵⁹ The band of personal retainers in what is called *qazaqliq* in Central Asian Turki indeed functions and is intended as a nucleus of the later conquest state.⁶⁰ This relationship between ruler or pretender and retainer can take on contractual forms sanctioned by oaths; it is indeed one of the most important instruments for building power.⁶¹ The best example for a conceptual presentation of this relationship is the “Qutadgu Bilig” where it is made very clear that the leadership of the Qarakhanid army was not “tribal”, and that on the other hand, the army was not a slave army, but that “les domestiques formant la garde royale et la ,gent du serail‘ des Ilig étaient recrutés parmi les hommes libres se ,commendant‘ de leur plein gré au service du Roi”.⁶²

Some leaders of warbands met only with qualified success, and some of them were what we would call robbers; examples for such “rebels” or “robbers” are very frequent indeed. This shows that founding a warband was a generally accepted line to military success, and that many more engaged in it

⁵⁸ The groundbreaking study still is Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership*.

⁵⁹ Beatrice Manz has given a brilliant (and detailed) study of the transformation of a warband to an army of conquest; Timur rewarded his early retainers whom he made the pillars of his state alongside with his sons (Manz, *Rise and rule*). Timur’s army, thus, is one of the best-studied examples for an essentially non-tribal army formed by nomads. The armies of the Timurid successor states have received far less attention (and in fact are seriously understudied).

⁶⁰ *Qazaqliq* has been studied by Wolfgang Holzwarth, “Nomaden und Sesshafte”.

⁶¹ Beckwith, “Aspects”, has shown that one of the roots for the guard corps in the service of the Abbasid caliphs lies not in Eastern Iran so much as in the Central Asian worlds. He argues that people called *chākar* are sworn retainers of a given leader, loyal to them including ritual forms of suicide. He links this institution – as indeed seems appropriate – to the German *comitatus*. The Mongol equivalent would be *nöker* (too well known to require references). Scholars from the former Soviet Union, looking for general terms to characterize the relationships between leaders and retainers in the Kazakh context, have turned to the vocabulary of patronage and clientelism (Erofeeva, *Khan Abulkhair*, 48). This offers the advantage of greater flexibility.

⁶² Grignaschi, “Monarchie karakhanide”, 587, with quotations from the original. The Qutadgu Bilig does not discuss slave soldiers. Grignaschi also uses the German *comitatus* as a point of reference. He continues saying that in fact this personal subservience of freeborn nobles to the khan was typical not only for the Qarakhanid army, but also for the civil service. The leaders of the army brought their own warbands to the royal service, and they are admonished in the same terms to be generous (that is, to distribute and redistribute whatever wealth accrued to them).

than the great heroes such as Chingis Khan and Timur who were emulated to an extent which still has to be elucidated.⁶³

In situations where the warband is not the starting point, the ambitious man starting a politico-military career nevertheless does not base his first steps on his closest kin (as should be expected in the segmentary model). He can use factional strife in order to promote his own interest⁶⁴ or he can call in outsiders⁶⁵.

Even in the least “political” contexts, where statehood is fragile and not always present, leaders in the steppe tend to have personal followings made up from both pauperized nomads and sons of noble families. These followings serve as personal bodyguard but also can be used as a kind of task force, they are always available since they do not depart the leader’s person.⁶⁶

The warband and the “inner army”

In the Mongol context, examples for both warband and “inner army” abound. To quote only one: Qaidu’s endeavor to rebuild power for the Ögedeid line was based on troops raised “from every quarter”, and his army later on was modeled on the decimal system.⁶⁷ The extended bodyguard established by Chingis Khan (the *keshig*) also is a case in point.⁶⁸

⁶³ Limited success: Biran, “Mighty wall”, 58–9), Paul, *Herrscher, Gemeinwesen, Vermittler*, 127–8.

⁶⁴ Tapper, “Introduction”, 49: „When a strong leader seeks to control a whole region, he usually gains support first from one bloc alone and forms it into a coalition or confederacy to overcome the other“. A clan united behind a talented leader and working for domination in a given faction seems to be the sole „tribal“ scenario; but for the second step, overcoming the other factions, help from outside seems essential.

⁶⁵ Numerous examples for this in Woods, *Aqqoyunlu*, e.g., 43. See also Manz, *Rise and rule*, who again and again elaborates on this point.

⁶⁶ They are called *tolengut* in Kazakh, Kushkumbaev, *Voennoe delo*, and *Istorija Kazakhstana*; they can be discerned in almost every case. Tapper states that they tend to come from pauperized nomads. Other personal retainers, maybe more respectable, come from good families, but their lot oscillates between retainer and hostage.

⁶⁷ Biran, *Qaidu*, 81. Biran thinks that there is something pejorative about this (natural enough in the source’s perspective). *Qazaqliq* can certainly be a topos, something a young ambitious man of convenient background has to go through in order to make a career. Thus, there would be nothing despicable about having an army „from every quarter“.

⁶⁸ Extensive presentation of the structure and history of this guard troop in Kychanov, (185–196). Kychanov states that *keshig* troops in Yüan China were paid only after 1281 (*ibid.*, 196), and it is well known that the obligation to perform military service in regions where

There are numerous examples for the warband serving as nucleus for the army of a nomadic state in the mixed zone and based on a mixed economy. Sometimes the warband seems to have evolved into what some authors suspect of being a standing army. Besides the Qarakhanids (where the main evidence comes from the Qutadgu Bilig and therefore concerns representation rather than the facts behind it), there is the Khazar army as described by Golden. There evidently was an elite force which Golden links to the German *comitatus*⁶⁹; this force is said to have counted either 4000 or 40000 warriors – an impressive number even for the lower one. Moreover, a guard corps is mentioned.⁷⁰

The Khwārazmshāh's army evidently was composed of an "inner" or "sultanic" army and an "outer" one; a case could be made for the "inner" army being the personal army of the sultan, and the outer army the tribal host.⁷¹ The two parts of the army did not act alike during the Mongol invasion; on the contrary, it seems that the Khwārazmian army was divided in its attitude, and that attitudes depended on whether a given detachment belonged to the "inner" or the "outer" army. Buniyatov states that at least part of the "inner army" was made up from slave soldiers (*ghulāms*), an institution the Khwārazmshāhs evidently had taken over from their erstwhile Seljuq overlords.⁷²

Timur's army has been analyzed in detail. Manz has described the process by which Timur set about to transform a tribal host into a more disciplined army. He created a new elite which he put in control of all the important positions he could distribute after his rise to power in 1370, and the larger part of this new ruling group came from his personal following, "serving him from his youthful days of brigandage".⁷³ The essentially non-tribal character of

pastoral nomadism was not or only marginally possible led to massive pauperization of Mongol warriors in China.

⁶⁹ This force is called *bōri* in Turkic, taking up the word for „wolf“ (the totem animal of the Turks). In Arabic sources, the equally Turkic *ṭarkhān* is to be found as well as *ḥāshīya* (retinue) (Golden, "War and Warfare", 142–144).

⁷⁰ Golden ("War and Warfare", 142–144). This guard corps is called *al-ursīya*, the fighters are of Khwārazmian origin, and Golden calls it „the standing army (*jund*) of the King“. – I am not convinced that *jund* has to be rendered by „standing army“. Göckenjan/ Zimonyi, *Ġayhānī-Tradition*, 54) have „Lāris□ya“ and translate neutrally: „Er [the Khazar military ruler] zieht an der Spitze von zehntausend Reitern ins Feld, mit solchen, denen er einen festen Sold gezahlt hat, und denen, die er unter den Reichen ausgehoben hat“.

⁷¹ Paul, "Invasion mongole", 39, notes 6 and 9.

⁷² Buniyatov, *Gosudarstvo*, 92. Buniyatov's analysis of the Khwārazmian army clearly is an attempt at showing how „civilized“ they were, the tribal aspect is systematically being played down. – Slaves were apparently not employed as soldiers in a Turkic context, Golden, "Terminology".

⁷³ Manz, *Rise and rule*, 74–5.

Timur's army again implied that Timur was unable to integrate conquered tribes into his army. Timur's own tribe, the Barlas, was reduced to a position of only medium influence after Timur's conquest got under way.

Perhaps it is possible to link the "inner" army, at least in some cases, to the personal following of the ruler, those warriors present in the *ordu*. As is well known, some Ilkhāns were really – not only symbolically – nomadizing together with the *ordu*, and the military following present in the summer camps often was quite impressive.⁷⁴ The ruler's following also can be called by a term like *mawkib-i humāyūn* ("the highest following"), and this also seems to denote the "inner army".⁷⁵ In another source, "the inner ones" are mentioned as an elite fighting force.⁷⁶

The "inner army" is not a tribal structure. It is more like an extended warband. All tribal groups will wish (or be required) to have their representatives in it. Its leadership is at the ruler's orders. It thus is closer to a standing army than any other group present in the sources. Since in some cases, the sources convey the impression that the "inner army" marks the transition towards "sedentary" types, case studies should be rewarding.

Conquest

"Conquest" is used as a generic term for both "real" conquest: a sedentary area is taken over by a nomadic army and administered by a structure centered on the nomadic ruler, whether or not he chooses to reside in the sedentary zone, and for situations where conquest is a threat, but not really undertaken, as well as raiding pursued in a systematic fashion. For the differences do not seem crucial as far as the military format is concerned. The strength of the nomads in either case, whether the aim was extortion (raiding in order to come to a peace treaty which was to put the nomads at an advantage over the sedentary state, e.g., China, regarding terms of trade or subsidies or both) or downright conquest was their mobility and thus their capacity to concentrate their army at any given spot so as to outnumber the defenders.⁷⁷ China was conquered from

⁷⁴ Melville, "Itineraries", on Öljeitü.

⁷⁵ Faḍlullāh b. Rūzbihān Khunjī, *Mihmān-nāma*. Thanks to Ulrike Berndt for detailed information on this subject.

⁷⁶ *Siban Han Divani*, 127. Thanks to Wolfgang Holzwarth for this reference.

⁷⁷ One of the most important questions with regard to the Mongol conquest indeed is how this not very numerous people could succeed in its conquests. But apart from the Mongols, it

the northern steppe only once: by the Mongols.⁷⁸ In the case of Mavarannahr and Iran, conquest occurred much more frequently than it did in China: Mavarannahr was conquered (in Islamic times) by the Qarakhanids (around 1000 C.E.) who chose to come into the region, then by the Qarakhitay (from 1141 C.E. to the Mongol invasion) who stayed outside, by the Mongols (beginning with 1217–8) and by others still, less prominent; the last conquest of (at least parts of) the mixed region was the Uzbek one at the beginning of the 16th century C.E.⁷⁹

The army needed for the conquest of sedentary regions can be analyzed according to Tilly's triangle: loyalty, efficiency and cost.⁸⁰ At the first stage, the candidate for a career in conquest or raiding typically relies on a personal retinue, the first objective often being to gain control over the tribal host and to eliminate its traditional hereditary leaders. This often is the most difficult part of the story.⁸¹ As mentioned above, both Chingis Khan and Timur have started like that⁸² and in the later Timurid period, conflicts between pretenders in the succession crises, which regularly developed after the death of a ruler took on the form of conflicting personal retinues.⁸³ Loyalty is high and highly personal, efficiency is according to purpose: raids can be carried out easily with such a

has to be asked how the northern steppe region (present-day Mongolia) where the population probably never exceeded one million, could be a military match for China. Chinese armies of course were much greater than the nomadic ones in absolute numbers; the advantage of the nomads was that they could decide when and where to strike. This numerical superiority can be achieved only due to the much higher mobilization ratio („society in arms“) which also implies well diffused fighting skills within the society, and the higher mobility of the army coming from outside.

⁷⁸ This is one of the main results of Barfield's study.

⁷⁹ The Qazaqs never succeeded in taking over significant parts of Mavarannahr for sustained periods of time; they had to make do with some places along the Syr Darya and occasionally Tashkent and parts of the Ferghana valley. – Ancient nomads are outside the scope of this paper, otherwise, more conquests would have had to be enumerated.

⁸⁰ Tilly's theory is very briefly summarized: Almost anybody will try to have the most efficient – depending on the purpose – and most loyal army he can afford. The idea initially seems to go back to Finer (in Tilly, *Formation*) who also has developed his position in extent (*History*). See above for examples in non-European settings. – In contrast to what I first intended, this paper is not a test of Tilly's paradigm in the nomadic context. For this, individual cases would have to be selected.

⁸¹ Khazanov, *Nomads and the outside world*, 235, with reference to the Secret History; see also Manz, *Rise and rule*, for Timur. Beckwith, „Aspects“ gives a general appraisal of personal retinues as the initial core of military careers in the steppe.

⁸² Other examples include Mao-tun, the founder of the Hsiung-nu Empire, Barfield, *Perilous Frontier*, 33; the story of how he got his retainers to help him kill his fathers is frequently quoted; and Ilirish, the founder of the second Turk Qaganate (Barfield, *Perilous Frontier*, 147) and elsewhere.

⁸³ This seems to be the high tide of *qazaqliq*. Muḥammad Shibānī Khan also started his career in this way, see Kiliç, „Change“.

group; cost is low; the method used for the upkeep of the group is raiding, failure in raiding leads to failure of the undertaking either by military defeat or by defection of the no longer loyal retainers. Retainers at this stage are loyal because they expect their labors to be greatly rewarded in the future. Loyalty thus is not unconditional, it is linked to success.

Once first decisive battles have been won, the whole process becomes self-sustaining, and followers flock to the charismatic leader in large numbers.⁸⁴ Sometimes, thus, this enables him to replace the tribal leaders with his own men. Anyhow, he now can take control of the tribal host. Thus, it is not surprising that sometime strong regimes crumbled in a matter of a couple of years or even months in the face of a new candidate.⁸⁵ The erstwhile warband now begins to function as a leading group in the tribal host. Even in more tribally defined contexts, the confederate tribes can be made to pay for the warband (or the inner army).⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Göckenjan/ Zimonyi, *Ġayhānī-Tradition*, 120–1, note 127, comments on a passage in Gardizi (on the Qırqız): „Meisterhaft schildert G[ardizi] an dieser Stelle die Entstehung und den Aufstieg eines Nomadenreiches, wie er sich Schritt für Schritt entwickelt: Aufstieg des künftigen Herrschers (Khagan), Anschluss einzelner Gefolgsleute, Erweiterung der Gefolgschaft durch Aufnahme und Versorgung fremder Elemente, Bündnisse mit anderen Fürsten, siegreiche Raubzüge (Beute, Gefangene, Lösegeld), die den Gefolgsleuten Anteil am Gewinn sichern, Schaffung eines Identitätsbewusstseins durch Annahme eines Stammesnamens, Zusammenschluss heterogener Elemente und deren politische Einigung.“ In foundation legends as retold in the sources quoted by Göckenjan (among others, the Orkhon inscriptions, the Secret History of the Mongols and the legends reported by the Arab geographers), it is indeed striking to see that in most cases, the „tribal“ group in question is not traced to a common (even legendary) ancestor, but only its founder is (in some cases), whereas the group itself is explicitly stated to be of mixed origin. One of the Orkhon inscriptions (Köl Tegin, east, line 12–14) reads: „Dadurch, daß der Himmel ihnen Stärke gab, waren die Soldaten meines Vaters, des Kāgans, wie Wölfe, und seine Feinde waren wie Schafe. Nachdem sie gehört hatten, daß Eltäriš marschierte, kamen die, die in den Städten lebten, in die Berge, und die in den Bergen lebten, kamen herunter; so kamen sie zusammen und zählten 70. Nachdem er (Eltäriš) Eroberungszüge hierhin und dorthin unternommen hatte, sammelte er seine Leute. Sie alle zusammen zählten 700. Als sie 700 zählten, organisierte und befahligte (mein Vater, der Kāgan) das Volk, das die türkischen Einrichtungen, die den Gesetzen meiner Vorfahren entsprachen, aufgegeben hatte“ (quoted from Scharlipp, *Frühe Türken*, 31). There is no hint that the followers of the future *qaghan* are in any way related, by kin or otherwise. This is quite typical of legendary narratives relating the foundation of a nomadic empire.

⁸⁵ As an example, the Turkmen dynasties in 15th-century Iran could be adduced. The rapidity in which former Qara Qoyunlu tribes switched their allegiance to the Aq Qoyunlu is remarkable; and some of these groups are found, one generation or two later, in yet another army of conquest, the Safavid one.

⁸⁶ Woods, *Aqqoyunlu*, 12. This goes back to a complaint presented to Shah Ismāʿil by a military (tribal) leader who „had been required to support additional contingents of imperial retinue (*nukar*, *mulazim*) from his own uncertain financial resources“.

Conquest almost inevitably is the outcome of the successful formation of a supra-tribal structure.⁸⁷ Big armies are needed; light cavalry is superior to infantry and armored cavalry only when very clearly superior numerically.⁸⁸ It should be noted, too, that nomad warriors to some degree also carried armor, and the bow was far from being their only weapon, even if it certainly was their main one.⁸⁹ It goes without saying that not only don't the warriors get any pay, but they have to bring their equipment as well.⁹⁰ Cost, therefore, is extremely low for the ruler and his retinue; the warriors of the tribal host come for honor and for booty.

Anyway, since at this stage the nomad army is a society in arms, the mobilization ratio in nomadic societies is much higher than it can be in agricultural contexts.⁹¹ Loyalty is mixed: the personal retinue is another issue

⁸⁷ Christian's Level 6 (Christian, "State Formation", 58) the highest level of political and social organization conceivable in a pastoralist context. There is one caveat about Christian's diagram, however: Confederacies seem to proceed out of „lower“ levels of organization quite naturally, and this is not the case – they are, more often than not, brought into existence by factors external to the tribal world.

⁸⁸ Tactics and weaponry have been studied by Denis Sinor, "Inner Asian Warriors", ecological issues are well served by John M. Smith ("Mongol Society", „Mongol Nomadism" and "Nomads"). There seems to be an ecological borderline which pastoral armies cannot cross as long as they stay pastoral, that is, as long as the army is moving along together with its supply in horses, sheep and so on. This borderline is defined by the availability of pasture and water. See also Aubin, "Réseau". Water (for the animals) seems to be the most important logistic issue in nomadic warfare, more important even than pasture. There is a debate (involving Amitai, "Whither the Ilkhanid Army?", and Smith ("Mongol Nomadism" and "Nomads") in the first place, but also Morgan, "Mongol Armies") surrounding the military implications of Ain Jalut. Smith's point is that whatever the military outcome of that battle, the Mongols could not possibly have stayed on in Syria in force since they would not have been able to tide their horses over the summer. It has to be recalled, however, that in other regions, the Mongols fought very successfully far outside their primordial ecological habitat. – Other nomadic armies have been assessed at similar sizes, e.g., Collins, "Military organization" thinks that the Crimean Tatars really could have put to the field armies in the vicinity of 80 000 men.

⁸⁹ Barfield, *Perilous Frontier* for East Asia, Biran, "Mighty wall", 66, for the Qarakhitay, Collins, "Military organization" for the Crimean Tatars, Golden, "War and Warfare", 149ff. for the pre-Chingisid Pontic steppes; illustrations (miniatures in manuscripts) often show armored and heavily armed cavalymen who, by the same token, also did not use the steppe „pony“ favored by light cavalry and often described in literature. – I cannot tell whether the „inner“ army tended to be better equipped (more like heavy cavalry).

⁹⁰ This could cause hardship for some of them who were too poor to bring the necessary string of horses (up to five) as well as the weapons. Reports of how such an army was mobilized in Collins, "Military organization", Manz, *Rise and rule*, and Kushkumbaev, *Voennoe delo*.

⁹¹ Agriculture begins to suffer as soon as more than a rather limited percentage of men is drafted (this percentage differs but does not exceed one in ten), whereas in nomadic societies, the ratio can rise up to one in four or even more. Later reports affirm that „all“

than the army at large. The tribal host is organized according to two contradictory principles, one of them tribal, the other non-tribal in principle, though not always in practice, the decimal system. Sometimes, when the decimal system is applied, it serves as a screen for the tribal form, and sometimes, bigger tribes fight together (in tens, hundreds, and thousands, to be sure) whereas other tribes are lumped together.⁹² In the long run, new “tribes” may emerge out of the hundreds and thousands of the non-tribal army.⁹³

Tribalism is one of the main obstacles in forming an army of conquest. One of the instruments to overcome tribalism is religious charisma. The Safavids in their early stages are a particular case. The loyalty of the Qizilbash warriors included forms of submission unknown in Turkmen tribal contexts⁹⁴, and clearly the religious component was instrumental in keeping the Safavid state alive during those periods in the 16th century when it was reft by tribal conflicts. Charisma certainly also had its share in the Mongol case – the successful leader is indeed endowed with a heavenly mission⁹⁵. Efficiency is high (pastoral armies more often than not have achieved great victories over sedentary empires), cost still is low: The warriors provide their mounts and weapons and still, they do not get paid.⁹⁶

When the imperial stage is reached, it gets much harder to draw a general picture. The leader now takes control of the extraction mechanisms which were working in the conquered sedentary zone(s). This does not necessarily imply that the leader of the nomadic army becomes the actual ruler of the sedentary region if this means that he gets involved with administration. Perhaps we should make a difference between overlord and actual ruler at this point. Several nomadic leaders have preferred to stay in the steppe.⁹⁷ The extracted

able-bodied men are supposed to follow the call to arms (Collins for the Crimean Tatars, Kushkumbaev for the Kazakhs), but this certainly carries a note of ideology. *Levée en masse* armies recruited from peasants are no viable alternative at this point because the peasants lack military training.

⁹² Collins, Manz.

⁹³ Manz, Aubin („Ethnogénèse“, „Khanat“, *Emirs*).

⁹⁴ Including being beaten with a stick (and agreeing to the punishment, seeing it as a form of purification), Morton, „*Chub-i tariq* and *qizilbash* ritual“.

⁹⁵ Many examples for this. The heavenly charisma, *qut* in Turkic and *ugur* in Mongolian, is the main quality in the leader's person enabling him to gain victory over his enemies. The Iranian concept of *farr* or *khwarra* is related. On charisma as a precondition for rule, see Kychanov. – Charisma has to be treated very differently in a Middle Eastern context. Thanks to Kurt Franz for this observation.

⁹⁶ Morgan, “Mongol Armies” and others about the Mongol armies; and see above on salaries.

⁹⁷ Golden Horde related to Russia (Ostrowski, *Muscovy*), Qarakhitay related to Transoxiana (Biran, “Mighty wall”), pre-Mongol steppe warriors with respect to China (Barfield, *Perilous Frontier*), diverse Turkic groups with respect to Byzantium (Golden, “War and

wealth could then be redistributed to the retainers and army in various forms (see above).

In the times of Chingis Khan, the Mongols did not create new states in the sedentary regions apart from the Mongol empire run jointly by the Chingisid family (whose center was in none of the conquered territories but in Mongolia with its capital of Qaraqorum); the conquered sedentary territories (Northern China, Transoxiana, parts of Iran) were exploited jointly by the ruling clan⁹⁸ who used this wealth in the traditional manner (for retainers); I have mentioned some of the forms above (consumption, appanages, salaries). Thus, the Mongol empire in its first stages can be said to have stayed indeed outside the sedentary world.⁹⁹

Other conquerors entered the conquered territories and finally took control (more or less directly) of the administration. But even here, they more or less consistently tried to keep a distance from the sedentary populations.¹⁰⁰ This was in some cases even consciously decided by nomadic rulers.¹⁰¹ One reason

Warfare"). – This idea was first systematically formulated by Kradin, "Kochevye", but is present already in Khazanov, *Nomads and the outside world*. – The Orkhon inscriptions warn against coming too close to China (as in Scharlipp, *Frühe Türken*, 33) and they explicitly state that „Wenn du im Lande des Ötükän bleibst und Karawanen von hier aussendest, wirst du keine Schwierigkeiten haben (türkisches Volk!). Wenn du in den Ötükän-Bergen bleibst, wirst du ewig leben und die Stämme beherrschen“ (Köl Tegin south, line 8; quoted from Scharlipp, *Frühe Türken*, 35). The admonition stresses the sacred character of the Ötükän mountains, to be sure, but no less does it stress the dangers of entering China.

⁹⁸ Smith, Morgan, Jackson and many others.

⁹⁹ Barfield stresses that Qubilai was the first Mongol ruler to adopt a Chinese dynastic name – a very different behavior from other nomadic conquerors of China (mostly of Manchurian stock) who claimed to be Chinese emperors as soon as possible. For the general history of the Mongol empire and its changing attitudes toward the sedentary world, see Allsen, *Mongol Imperialism*, and Jackson, "From *Ulūs* to Khanate".

¹⁰⁰ Cases in point are the early Arabs, the Qarakhanids, the Seljuqs, the Mongols in Iran under Hülägü, the Chaghadaids in Transoxiana after 1330 and so on. Even in cases where the warriors were de-pastoralized rather quickly, they were kept together (in the garrison cities *amṣār*); the Arabs were de-pastoralized to a very large extent, but not really de-tribalized; thus, the early Islamic army stopped being a pastoralist army very early; it has to be added that it was only partly pastoralist from the start. This has been analyzed in detail by Kennedy, *Armies* and others. – It is a moot point whether the erstwhile nomadic army stops being nomadic from the moment when its members stop living as pastoralists, that is, that they do not attend their flocks in the seasonal grazing cycle any longer. I think it is too rigid not to presuppose a certain continuity in behavior and value orientation. Central Asian armies tend to become de-tribalized, but not de-nomadized (in the Arab-early Muslim case, it was the other way round).

¹⁰¹ One example are the Orkhon inscriptions quoted note 97, another one are the Mongols in the *ulus* Chaghatay who, during a *quriltay* held in 1269, decided that they would henceforth stay in the steppes and mountains (Biran, "Battle", 183, Stroeva, "Bor'ba", 208).

for this was that they had learnt that economically, they would be better off if they exploited the sedentary economy in this fashion, but another one seems to have been that they wanted to keep their cultural distinctness.¹⁰²

Only in rare cases was the wealth extracted from the conquered society used to build up a professional salaried army on pre-existing models, and the attempts at doing so were short lived; the only examples that come to my mind are the Seljuqs under the aegis of Nizām al-mulk and the Safavids under ‘Abbās. In both cases, considerations of loyalty led the decision making group to try a model based on personal (as distinct from tribal or, in the Safavid case, religious) loyalty, in both cases, some sort of slave soldiery was proposed as a solution.¹⁰³ In both cases was the slave army organized to provide a counterpoise to the tribal host. For the Khwārazmshāh’s slave army, no detailed study is available. At any rate, the servile status of the inner army seems to be a sure sign of a – at least stylistic – sedentarization. The Ottoman case (fascinating though it is) is beyond the scope of this paper.

Acculturation and synthesis

Thus far, the story is well known. What is considered much less frequently is the question of what becomes of the army of conquest after success. Whereas military skills and duties were well diffused throughout society in the pre-conquest situation, this is not necessarily so after so much wealth gets into the system. Whenever the conquerors decide to enter the sedentary world (for good), they are confronted with the political and administrative heritage of the states they had destroyed. Even if they may choose to reject this heritage, some of it almost certainly resurfaces. This process has been extensively studied in the case of the early Islamic state and its armies.¹⁰⁴ In the Central Asian and Turco-Iranian context, acculturation also took place, albeit probably at a slower pace than had been assumed in earlier scholarship; the result at least in places was some kind of synthesis. The case of Ilkhanid Iran has lately been the

¹⁰² This can be sensed in the Orkhon inscriptions, but also in the deeply rooted suspicion of China in Mongol and Turkic sources.

¹⁰³ Another example would of course be the slave ‘Abbāsid slave army, but the Middle Eastern context cannot be dealt with here. Suffice it to say that the creation of a mamluk-style army has often been the answer to questions of efficiency and loyalty. This concerns not only tribal armies, but also gentry-led peasant armies. The issue of the salaried professional standing army will be taken up below.

¹⁰⁴ Kennedy, *Armies* and many others.

subject of some reflection, with the result that acculturation comes to be seen as a two-sided affair; the Iranian elites adapted themselves to Mongol ways at least as much as vice versa, and it seems likely that Mongols actively took part in the classical "Iranian" field of administration.¹⁰⁵ It stands to reason that during the 14th century at latest, a close symbiosis between Mongol *amirs* and Iranian administrators had developed, and that changes from one group to the other were not infrequent.¹⁰⁶

Beginning with the Seljuqs, a Turco-Iranian cultural pattern emerged which was at least as distant from the earlier Irano-Islamic one as it was from the previous Turkic one; in particular in the mixed zone, thus, a particular brand of cultural codes developed. This included special forms of administration and warfare. For many scholars, these cultural codes are definitely beyond or outside the nomadic sphere; it has been stated above that in this paper, a more inclusive position is tested.

Professional soldiers and standing armies

It may take long before full-time soldiering emerges as a separate activity within the social division of labor (as it did in the early caliphate only a couple of generations after the initial conquest). In the Central Asian context, the "society in arms" is the starting-point, and there is absolutely no difference between the warrior and the "ordinary" nomad in the tribal host. But even in the Central Asian context, professional warriors appeared who either no longer relied on pastoralism for their living, but on revenue extracted from the sedentary economy, or else were separated from their economic base and no longer tended to their flocks themselves. Both groups, thus, stopped being nomads, even if they continued in a nomadic way of life, including the seasonal migrations implied by nomadic stockbreeding. The personal following

¹⁰⁵ Aubin, *Emirs mongols*, Morgan, "Mongol or Persian", and Melville, *Fall*. It also has to be accepted today that the Ilkhans stayed nomadic in a real sense, that is, that their peregrinations along favorite routes were dictated not by military considerations, but by the „normal“ seasonal nomadic cycle. Morgan agrees with Melville's results ("Itineraries") in this respect, and he raises the question whether a similar case might be made for the Seljuqs.

¹⁰⁶ Aubin, „Khanat“, „*Quriltai*“, and Manz, "Military Manpower". – In older Soviet scholarship, the acculturation process is a one-sided one: Mongols become „Persian“ when they enter the mixed zone, and before, their relationship to sedentary economy is a purely predatory one. Stroevea, "Bor'ba" with references to earlier writers.

in the *ordu* is a case in point, the ruler and his retinue, and even the inner army; other professional soldiers are those on duty in garrisons and fortresses, and of course the technically specialized corps, e.g., naphta throwers. But the last groups at least partly seem to have been recruited from the sedentary population.¹⁰⁷ In periods when campaign followed on campaign, professional soldiering must have developed; thus, fighting as a profession certainly was an issue in Timur's time, but there seem to have been professional warriors in the *ulus* Chaghatay before Timur.¹⁰⁸

In the mixed zone, warfare stops being entirely mobile, fortresses, and therefore siege warfare, become more important than they ever were on the great steppe. Garrisons and soldiers coming from a sedentary background constitute a non-negligible part of the army. But garrison duty and siege warfare seems to have been the lot of nomadic warriors, too.¹⁰⁹

At any rate, the men forming the personal retinue of a nomadic leader may be called professional warriors; groups may range from a rather simple and small bodyguard to much larger groups which come close to standing armies. Professional soldiering thus includes both the warband and the inner army. The size of such groups evidently depended on the resources at the ruler's disposal. Another crucial point is control of these revenues. A standing army could evolve out of the warband only if the ruler was able to maintain the salaried form of redistribution as the main form of payment; and this presupposes not only large revenues extracted from all quarters, but also a high level of control over them (redistribution process not modeled on the booty or allocation scenarios).¹¹⁰

Research along these lines has made some progress in the Mongol, Timurid and Safavid¹¹¹ cases. Sources on pre-Chingisid empires are much scantier than those for the later periods. For the Central Asian states founded by Uzbeks and Kazakhs and so on, research is still in its infancy¹¹²; we simply do not know at which point, if at all, professional soldiers emerged after 1500.

¹⁰⁷ The extent to which sedentary people were enrolled in an otherwise nomadic army awaits further study. Manz, "Military Manpower" is a starting point.

¹⁰⁸ See Manz, *Rise and rule*, Appendix A on the Qa'uchin (161–2).

¹⁰⁹ Timur as shown in Aubin ("Comment Tamerlan prenait les villes", "Réseau"). Yet to be studied for Timurid successor states. For later periods, see McChesney, "Conquest" and Matthee, "Unwalled Cities".

¹¹⁰ See above on the Qarakhitay and the Khazars, notes 46 and 70.

¹¹¹ The Safavids also form an interesting transitional case.

¹¹² McChesney (*Waqf* and McChesney, "Conquest") for the Uzbeks, *Istorija Kazakhstana* and Kushkumbaev, *Voennoe delo*, for the Kazakhs. Material for Kazakhs tends to stem from later periods, mostly 18th and 19th centuries, when official reports and other writings by Russian authors become the main source.

Why was the creation of a professional salaried standing army precluded in most cases? It seems that the redistribution code did not leave room for that, that is, of all the wealth extracted from the sedentary economy, not enough was left at the ruler's personal disposal for him to create a military machine at his orders. He had to share out whatever came in to his retainers (not to his tribesmen, but to his personal retainers, including the inner army as well as the members of the original warband) who in turn needed this wealth in order to keep their followers. Moreover, considerations of efficiency, loyalty and cost make the creation of a professional salaried army unattractive in a pastoralist context. Regarding loyalty, there was little to gain from a salaried army; as long as the ruler was successful, he could count on his retainers, and if he failed, a professional salaried army certainly would not prove to be better in this respect. The "inner army" still is made up of personal retainers, even if it comes closest to a professional standing army; only in a few cases was it salaried, and it was loyal to its leader personally.

As far as efficiency is concerned, one of the most important incentives to build up a salaried professional army is its mobility. Sedentary "peasant" armies or rural nobles are either unable or unwilling to fight in theaters far away from home.¹¹³ As long as they are not professional soldiers, one has to give them a reason for fighting, and of course, as a general rule, the only reason that everybody will accept is that he is going to fight for his homeland in a rather narrow sense, the only notable exception being religion. Moreover, in many cases rural noble or peasant armies will be able to take the field only for a limited period of the year in order to be back in time for agricultural work (this is the case of the European feudal host). All this strongly worked for the creation of a salaried professional (standing) army in a sedentary context, but it simply does not apply with a pastoralist army. Pastoralist armies time and again have been used – and very successfully – in offensive warfare in very distant and varying locations; there was no obstacle in time either, since the source of livelihood could be taken along. Scale is an important point: Conquest and large-scale raiding can be carried out only with very large armies. For these purposes, the tribal host is evidently needed, the inner army does not suffice.

And of course, a salaried army is much more expensive, or more precisely, cost is differently structured. In the redistribution mode, the ruler is obliged to

¹¹³ I have developed this argument in the Samanid case, Paul, *State and Military*. – Ottoman and other examples to the contrary presuppose elaborated imperial structures (among other things), and then, the Janissaries were founded just because of the restraints inherent in the *timariot* system.

give what has been gained, much or not so much, but in the salaried mode, he is obliged to give what he has promised, and he may prove unable to deliver.

There is yet another point: A salaried professional army would mean a radical change in tactics, since the numerical superiority which is the basis of pastoralist victories cannot be achieved with salaried armies – they have to be much smaller; no pre-modern state could afford paying armies the size the Mongol armies were, to give but the most obvious example.¹¹⁴ Thus, the creation of a professional salaried army simply seems not to have been an issue, and the instability going with the model of redistribution mentioned above kept bedeviling all states founded by pastoralist conquerors.¹¹⁵ Thus, for a number of reasons, the nomad states and empires did not create what sedentary states and empires quite frequently did in the medieval Middle East and Central Asia (not to mention China): they did not create the coercive apparatus *par excellence* which is the professional standing army.

One of the most fascinating questions that can be asked – and hopefully analyzed – in this context is the gradual development of a pastoralist conquest state and its army after the conquest of a large sedentary region has taken place. A sort of transition society emerges, no longer pastoralist in the pure sense – resources now come mainly from the settled economy the pastoralists have entered as conquerors, and not yet a sedentary state as perhaps its predecessors were. Efforts to make subjects, tax-paying subjects, out of the erstwhile conquerors, are visible in a couple of cases, even if the means employed in the process are not yet altogether clear. Changes introduced into the redistribution code put the mutual loyalty between rulers and retainers into jeopardy: It was very difficult to achieve the transition from the redistribution code to the accumulation code, which perhaps forms its opposite on the sedentary side. But on the whole, detailed study of this process has yet to be undertaken.

Of course, increased surplus also increases the degree of inequality within a given society. The long process leading to the exclusion of nomads with a Central Asian background not only from power, but also to a large extent from the army, can be studied in the history of the Iranian Safavid Empire. The later Timurids and their contemporaries, the Aq Qoyunlu in Western Iran, also tried centralizing reforms in order to regain control over taxation, but the purpose seems not to have been to get money in order to build up a professional

¹¹⁴ There has been some discussion around the size of nomadic armies, for example in the context of the battle of Ain Jalut: Amitai-Preiss (“Whither the Ilkhanid Army”), and Smith (“Mongol Nomadism” and “Nomads on Ponies”) on the Mongols in Syria in general.

¹¹⁵ In this respect, the Ottomans were not Mongol at all, see Lindner, “How Mongol?”.

standing army, but to return to earlier forms of redistribution, which are better controlled by the central government.¹¹⁶

Military service, integration and submission

Whereas the stories of nomadic conquest have been told many a time, nomads (or leaders of pastoralist groups) gaining access to agricultural surplus through military services have been the focus of historical research much less frequently, perhaps because nomadic conquest is so much more spectacular.¹¹⁷ Yet it is evident that this type of interaction between sedentary states and pastoralists on their periphery is not exceptional at all, on the contrary, that it was the normal type of interaction over extended periods of time.

Services, including military services, can be positive-active or negative-passive, they may consist in doing something or in refraining from doing something. Payments may take the form of presents or subsidies, they even may be at least partly immaterial (titles and the like), and they may take the form of payments for commodities.

Not all of the services performed by pastoralists are of necessity military. Guiding and guarding caravans is a good example of how military and non-military services are linked. Guarding caravans means that not only the group serving as caravan guards will not attack, but that it will also see to it that nobody else does.¹¹⁸

Unlike raids and conquest, however, services are negotiated between partners. The terms of the contract depend largely on the power relationship between them. When the pastoralists are strong, they can force the sedentary side of the contract to buy their services even if they are unwelcome.¹¹⁹ This is

¹¹⁶ Subtelny, "Centralizing Reform" for the late Timurids, Woods, *Aqqoyunlu* for the Aq Qoyunlu.

¹¹⁷ Military services offered by nomad peoples seem to be much more frequent in the Middle East.

¹¹⁸ Khazanov on mediating trade (*Nomads and the Outside World*, 209).

¹¹⁹ Golden, "War and Warfare" on Byzantine relations with nomads in the Pontic steppes. The nomads all wanted treaties with Byzantium, offering their military services, and made it clear that the offered services could well be turned against their prospective „partners“. By no means did the nomads imply „conquest“ of Byzantine territory. Golden's description of the Huns and their attitude towards Byzantium seems paradigmatic: They „quickly established a pattern of raiding alternating with military service in both the Roman and the Persian Empire, exploiting as best they could the ongoing Roman-Sāsānid rivalry“. Even Attila did not aim at conquest (which might well have been precluded given the narrowness

a form of extortion, to be sure, and it occurs most frequently perhaps with what I have termed negative-passive services – that is, the pastoralists promise not to do something, e.g., not to perform raids on border regions, caravans, or pilgrimage routes. In some cases, services may turn out to be largely fictitious; the empire then uses them as a pretext to pay the pastoralists who otherwise would be hard to manage. There were nomadic states who succeeded in getting subsidies from several quarters: The Crimean Tatars were paid by the Ottomans (their overlords), but they extorted large sums from Poland and Russia as well; the northern neighbors hoped that they would not be raided.¹²⁰

In other cases, sedentary states tried embargoes as a means to subdue pastoralists.¹²¹ This can imply the closing down of frontier markets, but also the cutting off of supplies to outlying areas.¹²²

Quite frequently, cooperation is seen as the best way to deal with the restless nomads. Sedentary states prefer striking a bargain with them in order to gain a measure of control to fighting them.¹²³ The forms vary. The empire can choose to integrate the pastoralist leaders into the state structure, to this purpose it confers titles on them (China is the most prominent example).¹²⁴ In some cases, submission of the pastoralists to the sedentary empire seems to have been implied more or less on paper. In other cases, the submission was real enough. Competition between two neighboring empires could largely enhance the bargaining power of the pastoralists living in the interstices; this can very well be shown in the case of Safavid Iran and the Ottoman Empire.¹²⁵

The empire also can conclude treaties of mutual succor, and there are instances when a nomad empire saved a sedentary dynasty against internal

of his ecological base in the Pannonian plains), but at extortion or the regularization of „subsidies“ (p. 109). See also Lindner, „What was a Nomadic Tribe?“.

¹²⁰ The Tatars were mainly interested in slaves and livestock; Fisher, „Rappports“, „Ottoman Crimea“) The influx of wealth into Crimea was essential in maintaining the Khans in power, the main tribal groupings otherwise would have gone their way.

¹²¹ Khazanov, *Nomads and the Outside World*, 207, Shibani khan – what is interesting is that this ruler had himself a very distinct nomadic past and thus knew very well how he could put pressure on his Kazakh enemies; see above at note 52.

¹²² See above at note 52. During the „revolt“ of Arig-Böge (who used the steppe region as his main area of support), his capital, the steppe city Qaraqorum, was subdued because Qubilai Khan stopped the shipments of grain there (Barfield, *Perilous Frontier*, 218).

¹²³ Golden, „War and Warfare“, 111: „It was, on the whole, cheaper and certainly less dangerous to buy the nomads off [...] Ideally, one group could be supported and encouraged to check the others.“

¹²⁴ Many of the titles used in the steppe can be traced back to Chinese origins, e.g. the Qalmaq *taishi*.

¹²⁵ Murphey, *Ottoman Warfare*. This is not untypical: See above, Golden and Lindner on the Huns (note 119).

rebellion (the Uighurs and the An Lu-shan rebellion)¹²⁶. Mutual succor can be a bone of contention later on: the empire may take this treaty to be a document of submission whereas the pastoralists may think that it was concluded for a limited period of time and could be renegotiated, as in the famous case of the “submission of the Kazakhs” to the Tsar in the 18th century.¹²⁷ This is close to patterns of “calling the nomads in” against internal or external enemies¹²⁸; this frequently led to the final overthrow of the ruling dynasty in the sedentary state and its replacement with a leadership coming from the pastoralist side.¹²⁹ Other treaties were designed to keep the nomads out: They were hired against other nomads in the remoter parts of the steppe or desert.¹³⁰

Tasks assigned to the pastoralists also varied. First, the pastoralists were asked to help the empire in its dealings with other pastoralists or to take over the protection of the steppe or desert frontier. Pastoralists can also be integrated into the imperial armies (as the Turks were into the Chinese army under the Tang). Nomads served as auxiliary forces in a great number of imperial armies, including the Roman, the Byzantine, the Sasanian, the Ottoman and the Russian. Russia used the Qalmaq against the Crimean Tatars¹³¹ who in turn were in the service of the Ottomans (among other battles, at Vienna in 1683). Russian use of the Qalmaqs was not restricted to fighting other nomads, however: Qalmaq battalions participated in wars in distant parts of the world, for instance in the 1813 campaign which led them all the way to Paris.¹³²

The sedentary partner in the bargain did not have to be an empire. Thus, the Sogdian city states in Mavarannahr “called the Turks in” against the Arab-

¹²⁶ See Allsen, *Commodity and exchange*, Beckwith, “Impact”, and Jagchid/ Symons, *Peace, War, and Trade*.

¹²⁷ Istorija Kazakhstana, Erofeeva, Khan Abulkhair, Kushkumbaev, Voennoe delo.

¹²⁸ Some examples: the Qarakhanids were called into Mavarannahr by Samanid leaders engaged in factional strife; the Ghaznavids at first tried to use the Seljuqs as auxiliary forces; the Khwarazmshahs (themselves steeped in nomadic traditions) served as a sort of conveyor belt for Qipchaqs moving into Iran where they pursued their own interests, to be sure, but in the name of their Khwarazmian overlord.

¹²⁹ Both the Samanids and the Ghaznavids are cases in point. – When the Ashtarkhanid rulers in the Bukharan khanate tried to use Qazaq tribesmen as auxiliaries (they were available because they were on the run from the Qalmaqs), this proved to be a disaster, and this can be said to have contributed to the demise of the dynasty.

¹³⁰ Best known examples: Byzantine and Sasanian vassal states on the desert fringes, another example is the Turks in the service of the early T’ang emperors (Barfield, *Perilous Frontier*, 145f).

¹³¹ Collins, “Military organization”, Fisher, “Rapports”, “Ottoman Crimea”), Khodarkovski, “Virtues”.

¹³² Schorkowitz in this volume.

Muslim onslaught in the second half of the 7th century; but it has to be noted that the Turks were their overlords.¹³³

Cooperation between pastoralists and sedentary empires also can lead to state formation on the pastoralist side. There are several reasons for this. First, the subsidies involved enable the leadership on the pastoralist side to redistribute wealth hitherto unavailable, and it is the leadership (some sort of chief) who retains control over this influx of wealth. By the same token, pre-existing hierarchies in the pastoralist society are accentuated where they existed, and created where none existed previously. This is because the state wants to deal with persons or structures responsible for the terms of the contract with a view to ensuring their validity over time. A time-honored device to ensure this has been to appoint chiefs over populations who up to then had had no need for them; thus it can be affirmed that states created tribes. Such “tribes” can evolve into more complex structures to which the minimalist definition of the state can meaningfully be applied. This has important repercussions on the political situation in the pastoralist society. Decision-making moves away from the consensus-oriented mode, since of course the sedentary side interferes, for instance in succession disputes.¹³⁴ Such states have been called vassal states, and they were numerous indeed on the steppe and desert frontiers of many an empire. Despite their vassal status, they were at times able to pursue quite independent policies, much to their patrons’ alarm. Interference in steppe affairs is so frequently reported that it is not necessary to go into detail here.¹³⁵

Conclusion

Nomadic statehood (in the large understanding used in this paper) in the vast majority of cases presupposes the interaction of nomadic and sedentary economies, whether within the state borders or not; the sedentary economy providing much of the surplus needed for state construction (in often asymmetrical forms of interaction). In the nomadic context even more than in the sedentary world, statehood and the military are closely intertwined;

¹³³ Golden, *Introduction*.

¹³⁴ Khodarkovski, “Virtues”.

¹³⁵ Timur and the Timurids interfered regularly in steppe affairs, hoping thus to come to terms with the Great Steppe which they otherwise were unable to control. The results were however deceiving; the candidates they supported often turned against them as soon as they could afford to do so.

statehood seems to be linked to the military mobilization of the “society in arms”.

The overview given in this paper shows that transformation processes within the military as well as the state structure have received much less scholarly attention so far as “pure” types of either nomadic or sedentary states. Time and again, nomadic armies as well as states underwent significant change due to their intense interaction with the sedentary world. Thus, the “society in arms” was in some cases gradually doubled or even superseded by more specialized forms (professional warriors). In all this, nomads entering what has been called the mixed zone in this paper or an altogether sedentary region did not differ from those nomads who started their political careers within the mixed zone.

Military as well as political structures depended on the redistribution mechanisms prevalent within a given nomadic group. It is here that differences between the great steppe and the mixed zone can be expected, with the more elaborate forms prevailing in the mixed zone. Transition processes ending in the adoption of altogether sedentary models like the professional standing army (and its civilian counterpart, the professional fiscal bureaucracy) form the sedentary end of the scale, whereas ephemeral nomadic states, collapsing after the death of a charismatic military leader or after the first decisive defeat, never even had a chance to get a transformation process going.

On the other hand, the transformation of nomadic states through their interaction with the sedentary world was no one-sided affair. In the Turco-Iranian world, that is, in large parts of the mixed zone, a particular kind of cultural synthesis emerged which also included specific forms of waging war and of organizing the military.

Broader concepts of the nomadic state and minimalist definitions of state are perhaps helpful in bringing such transformation processes more into focus.

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Parthia and Nomads of Central Asia. Elements of Steppe Origin in the Social and Military Developments of Arsacid Iran

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To Professor Józef Wolski

Introduction

The Arsacid kingdom of Parthia came into existence as the result of the interaction between the steppe peoples of western Central Asia and the world of sedentary Iran in the 2nd half of the 3rd century BC. Less than a century later, under Mithradates I (170–138 BC), the Arsacid state had become a world power. The empire of the Arsacids, named “Parthian“, lasted up to the beginning of the 3rd century AD, when the old Arsacid dynasty was replaced by the Sasanians. A number of ancient authors (including Trogus apud Justin, Strabo, Pliny the Elder, Arrian, and Curtius) repeatedly testify to the affinity between the Arsacid Parthians and the nomads of the northern steppes in terms of their customs, manner of warfare, and type of dress. Moreover, they emphasize the „Scythian“ – i.e. nomadic – origin of the Arsacid Empire.¹ In order to gain a better understanding of this relationship, it is important to distinguish which nomadic elements contributed to the emergence and historical development of Arsacid Iran.

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¹ Strabo 11.9.2–3; 11.7.1; 11.8.2–3; 7.3.12; Justin 2.1.3; 2.3.6; 41.1.1f.; 41.1.10; 41.2.3–4; Pliny, *NH* 6.50; 112f.; Arrian, *Parth.* Fr. 1.2a; 3; Curtius 4.12.11; 6.2.13f. Cf. also Steph. Byz. s. v. Παρθυαῖοι; Pomponius Mela 3.4; 33; Lucan 2.552f.; 8.301f.



The beginnings of the Arsacid kingdom, its social structure and nomadic heritage, are the subject of much controversy. On the one hand, the impact of nomadic components is fully neglected, for example by M. Boyce who vigorously rejected the theory of Arsacid nomadic legacy in the following statement: "Weak straws (...) have been gathered into a meagre bundle of 'evidence' to support the theory of the Arsacids' nomadism".² Also K. Schippmann has denied any significance of the nomadic background in Parthia and argued that to label the founders of the Arsacid state, namely the Aparni, "as nomads from the steppes would be injudicious".³ On the other hand, in recent years awareness has grown that the links between Parthian Iran and the nomads of Central Asia were in many respects strong.⁴ The theory of nomadic origins of the Arsacid state has been combated by J. Wolski, who asserted the conquest of northeastern Iran by the steppe tribe of the Aparni under their leader Arsaces as the "Schlüssel zur Beurteilung der weiteren sozialen Entwicklung Parthiens".⁵ The persistence of nomadic legacy in the social structure and military affairs of Arsacid Parthia was stressed by G. A. Koshelenko.⁶ This issue has recently been approached by V. P. Nikonorov who concluded: "It was the nomadic origin of the founders of the Arsacid empire and its continuing relations with kindred nomadic peoples of Central Asia that underlay in the basis of all of its peculiarities and achievements".⁷

The intention of this paper is to consider ancient Parthian social and military developments in the context of their origins as well as to determine the impact of steppe traditions upon them. It must be stated that these elements of nomadic descent should be separated from those, which the Arsacid Parthians inherited from the sedentary Iranians and from Greeks and Macedonians living in Hellenistic Iran. The sources, which will be discussed in the present study, comprise both pertinent testimonies of classical authors and Iranian evidence.

² Boyce, *Arsacids*, 249.

³ Schippmann, *Arsacids*, 532.

⁴ For the relations between Parthian Iran and the nomads of Middle and Central Asia, see Nikonorov, *O roli*; idem, *Sredneaziatskie katafraktarii*; idem, *Central Asian Nomads*; Koshelenko/ Pilipko, *Parthia*; Zadneprovskiy, *Nomads*; Olbrycht, *Beziehungen*; idem, *Parthia*; idem, *Kultur der Steppengebiete*; idem, *Significance*; idem, *Central Asia*.

⁵ Wolski, *Aufbau*, 380.

⁶ Koshelenko, *Cavaliers*, passim, esp. 193–195; idem, *Zakliuchenie*, 344.

⁷ Nikonorov, *Central Asian Nomads*. Drawing on written evidence and archaeological materials, Nikonorov emphasized the importance of nomadic legacy in Parthian warfare, cf. Idem, *Vooruzhenie*; idem, *K voprosu*.

*The origins of the Arsacid kingdom:
the nomadic Aparni in northeastern Iran*

The history of ancient Central Asia was tied to the relationship between nomad and sedentary populations. The specific features of links between these two groups were due to their differences in economic and social development as well. The areas of western Central Asia with some rich grasslands and several abundant rivers, with semi-deserts, deserts and oases were on the whole not only a land of roaming nomads, but also of agricultural and urban centres developing in the zones suitable for a sedentary life. Thus, it is not surprising that in many regions of western Central Asia, nomads, semi-nomads and agriculturalists lived side by side (e.g. on the lower Amu Darya and in Semirechye). An important point, which should be stressed here is that unlike agricultural production, the pastoral nomadic economy was basically not self-sufficient.⁸ The nomads had to interact with the surrounding sedentary areas to gain access to certain foodstuffs as well as the products of urban manufacture.⁹ In such circumstances, the relations between steppe and sown land determined the development of western Central Asia and of the neighbouring areas, moreover, those links and their implications – particularly in the form of migrating nomads – heavily influenced Iran at several stages of its history.¹⁰ An example of such interrelations is provided by the steppe tribes of western Central Asia who in the 3rd century BC conquered northeastern Iran and started a process that led to the foundation of the Arsacid Empire.

The origins of the Arsacid kingdom were closely linked with the nomadic Dahae, who migrated from Transoxiana to the frontiers of the Seleucid kingdom in the vicinity of Parthyaia/ Parthia and Hyrcania, where they wandered in the region of what is today southern Turkmenistan. From the 3rd century BC onwards, the Dahae settled in the area from the Caspian Sea in the west up to the middle Amu Darya region in the east.¹¹ The people of the Dahae – divided into three tribes: the Aparni, Xanthii and Pissuri – frequently invaded the agricultural zones of northeastern Iran (Hyrcania and Parthyaia/ Parthia), exacting

⁸ For the definitions of pastoral nomadism, see Khazanov, *Nomads*, 15ff. Cf. also Scholz, *Nomadismus*. Apart from nomadism proper one can distinguish various mixed forms of semi-sedentary or semi-nomadic pastoralism.

⁹ On this problem, see Khazanov, *Nomads*, 69–84; Jagchid/ Symons, *Peace*; Barfield, *Perilous Frontier*; Seaman/ Marks (eds.), *Rulers*; Khazanov/ Wink (eds.), *Nomads in the Sedentary World*.

¹⁰ For more details, see: Daffinà, *Nomadismo*; Olbrycht, *Parthia*.

¹¹ See Strabo 11.8.2.



tribute from the local settled population, which was an important source of their revenue.¹²

There is another relevant aspect concerning the role of the Dahae. They were known to Hellenistic rulers as excellent horse-archers (*hippotoxotai/ equites sagittarii*) and are attested in the sources as mercenaries in the army of the Seleucids.¹³ Due to the close contacts with Hellenistic Iran, the Dahae were surely well aware of the internal relations and tensions in the Seleucid Empire.¹⁴ Thus, it is not surprising that in the middle of the 3rd century BC when the state of the Seleucids suffered from internal and external conflicts, the nomads living on the northeastern border immediately took advantage of that situation. The Aparni, a tribe of the Dahae confederacy who lived along the river Ochos (Usboi), under the leadership of a certain Arsaces, seized some of the frontier districts of northeastern Iran. They advanced their conquests “initially without interference from their neighbours” (ca. 250–247 BC).¹⁵

Soon afterwards (around 239–238 BC), Arsaces led the Aparni in an invasion of Parthyaia/ Parthia.¹⁶ When he heard the news of Seleucus’ defeat by the Gauls in Asia Minor, “freed from fear of the Seleucid king”, Arsaces entered Parthyaia/ Parthia with his detachments. Here he defeated the former Seleucid governor Andragoras, put him to death and assumed command of the people.¹⁷ The Seleucid garrisons were annihilated.¹⁸ The conquest of Parthyaia/ Parthia

¹² Cf. Strabo 11.8.3.

¹³ Griffith, *Mercenaries* 143–145, 167 and 251. The Dahae appear in the battles of Raphia (217 BC) and Magnesia (190 BC), but it is quite possible that they fought already at Ipsos (301 BC): in the army of Seleucus I there were 12,000 horsemen „including mounted archers“ (see Diodorus 20.113.4). The Dahae had already fought in the army of Alexander, but the status of their contingent is not clear (see below).

¹⁴ Our sources are meagre, but we can imagine that the role of the Dahae in Seleucid Iran was in some respect similar to that of the Turks in the 9th–10th centuries AD. The Turkish slave guards of the Caliphs achieved at that time an “unenviable reputation for violence” (Bosworth, *Incursions*, 3) and were prized as “the military people par excellence” (Bosworth, *Incursions*, 6). On the other hand, they appear in the sources as robbers attacking the villages and agricultural areas of Khorasan and Transoxiana, for details see Agadzhanov, *Gosudarstvo*, 42–44.

¹⁵ Justin 41.1.11. At first, Arsaces conquered the plains of Nesaea and parts of Astauene in the periphery of Hyrcania and Parthyaia. There, in the city of Asaak, Arsaces was proclaimed king. In Asaak, an everlasting fire was guarded (Isidore, *Mans.* 11); its existence suggests that the act of proclaiming a king had a religious dimension. In the present paper, the chronology of the Arsacid beginnings follows the scheme established by J. Wolski, see idem, *Zusammenbruch*; idem, *Empire*, 37ff. Literature on the establishment of the Arsacid state is extensive, compare Wolski, *Empire*, 52ff.; idem, *Seleucids*, passim; Olbrycht, *Parthia*, 51ff.; Lerner, *Impact*, 13ff.

¹⁶ Strabo 11.9.2.

¹⁷ Justin 41.4.7.

¹⁸ Ammianus 23.6.3.

was followed a little later by the subjugation of the nearby country of Hyrcania.¹⁹ Seleucid attempts to regain their lost satrapies failed, enabling the Arsacids to consolidate their position in northeastern Iran and the adjacent steppe areas. Arsaces' actions show him to have been a distinguished leader taking into account the political situation not only in the region under his direct rule, but also events in the distant areas, including Asia Minor and Bactria.²⁰

Who was Arsaces? The available sources repeatedly testify to his military exploits. Thus, according to Justin, he had been making a living "by robbery and banditry",²¹ and was "a man of obscure origin but proven courage".²² Ammianus Marcellinus says about Arsaces: "a man of low birth; he had been a brigand chief during his younger days, but since his ideals gradually changed for the better, by a series of brilliant exploits he rose to greater heights".²³ To be precise it should be noted that classical authors often present a very negative view of nomadic life in which the nomads are stereotypically called robbers or brigands. In modern terms, Arsaces was a military leader of steppe nomads attacking centres of sedentary populations, exacting tribute, and, finally, trying to subjugate some settled areas. It seems highly likely that he was for some time a mercenary soldier in the Seleucid army or in Bactria.²⁴

Strabo relates that at the outset Arsaces was weak, "being continually at war with those who had been deprived by him of the territory (*chora*), both he himself and his successors".²⁵ This statement concerns two aspects: firstly, the subjugation of some areas in Parthyaia/ Parthia at the expense of the local sedentary population, and, secondly, further conquests of the first Arsacids at the expense of the Seleucids and Graeco-Bactrians. In northeastern Iran (Parthyaia/ Parthia), the nomadic conquerors were confronted by two segments of the sedentary population: the Iranian Parthyaia/ Parthians and Greeks as well as Macedonians. The striking achievements of Arsaces I and a prompt, successful establishment of a mighty state were hardly possible without a strong support by large numbers of the sedentary Iranians. It seems that the Greeks and

¹⁹ Justin 41.4.8.

²⁰ Compare the statement of Justin (41.4.8) that Arsaces feared Seleucus II and Diodotus I, ruler of Bactria.

²¹ Justin 41.4.7.

²² Justin 41.4.6.

²³ Ammianus 23.6.2.

²⁴ Principally, Strabo (11.9.2–3) believes that Arsaces was of Scythian – i.e. nomadic – descent. In this opinion he seems to follow Apollodoros of Artemita, the best-informed author writing about Parthian Iran. Yet, Strabo (11.9.3) also knows the view that Arsaces came from Bactria. This supposition does not find any corroboration in the sources, it can however reflect some links of Arsaces with Bactria.

²⁵ Strabo 11.9.2.

Macedonians were the common foe both for the steppe invaders and for large parts of the local population.²⁶ Certainly they were deprived of their leading position and estates, but there was no need to eliminate them fully; the early Arsacids employed Greek builders, artisans (e.g. for minting coins), and artists.²⁷

Little is known regarding the Iranian inhabitants of Parthyaia/ Parthia and Hyrcania, but in the Achaemenid period they were culturally linked both with their western neighbours – the Medes, and with the peoples of western Central Asia.²⁸ It is beyond dispute that during the Aparnian conquest a number of the settled natives in northeastern Iran were deprived of their land estates; the archaeological data testify to the fact that some fertile plains and valleys in the area, including the Sumbar valley and northern parts of the foothills of the Kopeth Dagħ range, were occupied by nomad hordes in the Arsacid period.²⁹ On the whole, however, the Arsacids must have set limits on their steppe tribesmen not to devastate and occupy most of the farming lands. In some regions of Parthyaia/ Parthia, a stable agriculture can be observed in the early Arsacid period.³⁰ The important role played by the sedentary Parthyaiaans/ Parthians can be seen most strikingly in the language – it was essentially Parthian, which became the language of the Arsacids and of their nation. It contained, however, some elements typical of eastern Iranian languages, one of which was used by the steppe Aparni.³¹ According to Justin Parthian language was “halfway between Scythian (i.e. “nomadic” – MJO) and Median, and was a blend of the

²⁶ Here it should be remembered that the sedentary Sogdians were strongly supported by the nomadic tribes of the Dahae, Massagetae and Sacae in the war against Alexander’s invasion. The political situation in northeastern Iran in the middle of the 3rd century BC was to some extent different from that in Sogdiana under Alexander, but the assumption about a kind of co-operation between the Aparnian newcomers and parts of sedentary Iranians directed against the Macedonians and Greeks is highly plausible.

²⁷ The presence of Greek artisans and builders is to be assumed at Old Nisa in the first half of the 2nd century BC at the latest. This view is vindicated by finds of clay sculptures in the Hellenistic style, which were certainly made in Nisa by experienced Greek sculptors, cf. Pilipko, *Staraia Nisa*, 255–264. In Hyrcanian Syrinx, Greeks are attested about 209 BC (Polybius 10.31.6–11).

²⁸ See Diakonov, *Istoria Midii*, passim; Vogelsang, *Rise*, 203, 284–287, 293–298.

²⁹ Burial grounds of the nomads were excavated in those regions see Marushchenko, *Kurgannye pogrebeniia*; Mandelshtam, *Novye dannye*; idem, *Meshrepitakhtinskii mogilnik*; idem, *Istoriia*; Khlopin, *Antichnye pogrebeniia*; Olbrycht, *Parthia*, 247f.

³⁰ In western Parthyaia, a sophisticated system of underground channels (*qanats*) was in use about 209 BC (Polybius 10.28.1–7). Moreover, in the middle of the 2nd century BC, several decades after the nomadic subjugation of northeastern Iran, a stable farming (including a system of vineyards) was well developed in the vicinity of Old Nisa in Parthyaia, cf. Diakonoff/ Livshits, *Parthian Economic Documents*.

³¹ Henning, *Mitteliranisch*, 93f.



two".³² It must be emphasized that the languages of the sedentary Iranians in Parthyaia/ Parthia and of the coming Aparni were closely related, and this affinity facilitated the adoption of Parthian by the new elite of nomadic origin.³³

Some sources praise Arsaces as a mild ruler and a judge of his subjects.³⁴ Such a somewhat idealized picture of him is based, however, on real facts: Arsaces managed to make a farsighted compromise between the steppe newcomers and the sedentaries. The subjugation of Parthyaia/ Parthia and Hyrcania was not a devastating attack in Temujin's style. While creating a new state, Arsaces needed officials and experienced administrators from the milieu of the local Iranian population. Similarly, for his army the sedentary Iranians were indispensable as manpower. Arsaces concentrated his efforts on creating a mighty fighting force according to the pattern of a military organisation, which was repeatedly employed amongst the nomads of Central Asia. Justin emphasizes twice Arsaces' efforts to strengthen his military power; thus, the king proceeded to raise a large army³⁵ and levied troops.³⁶ After his victory over Seleucus II, Arsaces settled the affairs in Parthia, built fortresses and strengthened the cities.³⁷ Such measures demonstrate the elasticity of his policy and the ability of the Arsacid clan to adopt certain important forms of sedentary life. The first Arsacids also introduced their own dynastic coinage, which established the view of their farsighted policy tending towards creating a stable state in Iran.³⁸ A strong army and fortified centres were to be the real mainstay of Arsacid power. Evidently, from the early stages of their rule, the Arsacids realized that they would need at their disposal a more politically reliable military force than just Dahaen tribesmen. But the links with the steppe were by no means broken. In their hard fought wars on the Seleucids,³⁹ Arsaces I and II were aided by the nomadic Apasiacae.⁴⁰ And thereafter, the nomads were repeatedly emerging as an important – sometimes even decisive – factor in the

³² Justin 41.2.3.

³³ On the close similarity between the Iranian languages (including Bactrian, Sogdian and Median), see Strabo 15.2.8.

³⁴ Ammianus 23.6.3; Suda/ Suidas, s. v. Ἀρσάκης.

³⁵ Justin 41.4.8.

³⁶ Justin 41.5.1. Cf. the development of the Seljuks (11th century AD) who created a regular standing army (Agadzhanov, *Gosudarstvo*, 17).

³⁷ Justin 41.5.1–4. A similar picture is given by Ammianus (23.6.4): Arsaces filled Persia with cities, fortified camps and built strongholds.

³⁸ On the coinage of the early Arsacids, see Olbrycht, *Parthia*, 70.

³⁹ Seleucus II was completely defeated by Arsaces I in ca. 230 BC (Justin 41.4.9–10), and later (209 BC) Arsaces II fought with „extraordinary valour“ against Antiochus III (Justin 41.5.7). On these wars, see Lerner, *Impact*, 33–62.

⁴⁰ Olbrycht, *Parthia*, 59f and 64f.

internal Parthian developments up to the 1st century AD.⁴¹ The Arsacids carried out an active policy with regard to their steppe neighbours and made the kindred tribes of Central Asia one of the bastions of their political and military power. Moreover, they often employed the northern and eastern nomads by recruiting them in their armies – both as auxiliaries and mercenaries –, and were supported by Central Asian and Sarmatian nomadic clans in internal affairs. Finally, in the royal ideology of the early Arsacids, a strong impact of steppe legacy is discernible.⁴²

The exceptional position of Arsaces and of his clan was manifested in many political respects. Every Parthian king was named Arsaces. In keeping with old nomadic traditions of “collective sovereignty”, the polity created by the Arsacids, namely the Arsacid state, was viewed as the possession of the ruling clan.⁴³

Arsaces was worshipped by his successors as the dynasty’s founder and the ancestor of the Arsacid Parthians. To illustrate this issue, one has to mention a statement of the Roman writer Ammianus Marcellinus, who claims that Arsaces “was placed among the stars according to the sacred custom of their country; and (as they believe) he was the first of all to be so honoured. Hence to this very day the over-boastful kings of that race suffer themselves to be called brothers of the Sun and Moon (...). Hence they venerate and worship Arsaces as a god”.⁴⁴ The quoted passage – based on very valuable sources, including Trogus/ Justin – gives a picture similar to the practices attested in the milieu of the nomads of Central Asia and southeastern Europe. Thus, amongst the Hsiung-nu, the ruler was closely linked with Heaven, Sun and Moon.⁴⁵ The Scythian genetic legend emphasizes the divine origin of the ruler and his clan, as it also legitimizes the hierarchical order and social structure: the Scythian king Idanthyrsos calls the gods Papaïos and Tabiti his ancestors.⁴⁶ Most of the Inner Asian nomads possessed the idea of a heavenly mandate for the rulers

⁴¹ A general study of the Parthian-nomadic relations was presented by Olbrycht, *Parthia*.

⁴² Cf. Raevskii, *K voprosu*; Olbrycht, *Policy*.

⁴³ According to Tacitus (*Annals* 15.2) Vologases I (AD 50–80) placed one brother Pacorus in Media Atropatene and another brother Tiridates in Armenia as kings. These measures demonstrate that the Arsacids viewed their state as their „collective possession“. For parallels in the history of the Turkic peoples, see Golden, *History*, 220.

⁴⁴ Ammianus 23.6.4–6.

⁴⁵ Shih-chi/ Watson II, 167, 171. Cf. Kürsat-Ahlers, *Ideology*, 139ff.

⁴⁶ See Herodotus 4.127 and 4.59. On the divine sanction in Scythian ideology, see especially Khazanov, *Early State*, 426f, and Kürsat-Ahlers, *Ideology*, 137f.

designed to win the subjects' acceptance of a single, legitimate authority.⁴⁷ In Achaemenid Iran such notions were not known, the king did not claim any divine descent or divinization. Thus, one can assess the worship for Arsaces and the Arsacids as a steppe element originating in the milieu of the Aparnian conquerors from Central Asia. That worship had of course its social dimension: the king of Parthia and members of the royal Arsacid clan occupied the highest position in the structure of Parthian society and in the Parthian state. The divine sanction allowed for the subjugation of all peoples in Iran and existing social relations in the empire.

The Structure of Parthian Society

The social structure of Arsacid Parthia is a crucial issue in understanding the importance of the nomadic conquests under Arsaces I and its impact on Parthian affairs.⁴⁸ First, let us consider the accounts of three ancient authors, who were well acquainted with Parthia: Justin, Josephus Flavius and Plutarch. These accounts – the main classical sources for the study of the social structure in Parthian Iran – are quoted here to facilitate their evaluation.

A. Justin, Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus.⁴⁹

A1 – Justin 42.2.5–6.

Their army differs from that of other races in being composed mostly of dependants (*servitia*) rather than free men (*liberi*); and the dependent population increases daily, since no one is allowed to manumit and all slave children (*servis nascentibus*) are therefore born into a lifetime of slavery. The Parthians bestow as much care on these children as they do on their own, taking great

⁴⁷ Such an idea has deep roots in the history of the steppe (Allsen, *Geography*, 116f.), e.g. in the Turkic *kaganats* and in the Uygur state. Legitimizing ideologies played an integral role in the emergence of nomadic states.

⁴⁸ On the social structure in Arsacid Iran, see: Wolski, *Aufbau*; idem, *Classi inferiori*; idem, *Aristocratie parthe*; idem, *Aristocratie foncière*; idem, *Bevölkerung*; idem, *Stellung*; idem, *Servitia*; Harnack, *Parthische Titel*; Widengren, *Feudalismus*, passim; idem, *Iran*, passim, esp. 263ff.; Koshelenko, *Cavaliers*; idem, *Zakliuchenie*; Nikonorov, *O strukture*.

⁴⁹ Teubner's edition by O. Seel has been selected as the basic text for these translations: *Marci Iuniani Iustini epitoma Historiarum Philippicarum Pompei Trogi. Accedunt Prologi in Pompeium Trogum post Franciscum Ruehl iterum* ed. Otto Seel, Stuttgartiae 1985.

pains to teach them horse-riding and archery, and it is the extent of an individual's wealth, which determines the number of horsemen he supplies to the king for service in war. In fact, when Antony conducted his attack on the Parthians, he was met by 50,000 cavalry (*equites*), of whom only 400 were free men (*liberi*).

A2 – Justin 41.2.2.

Next in rank to the kings is an estate of kinsmen/ grandees (*propinquorum/ praepositorum ordo*), from which the Parthians draw commanders in war and officials in peacetime.

A3 – Justin 41.3.4.

They [i.e. the Parthians, MJO] ride horses constantly, using them to go to war and to feasts, and for all private and public functions. On them they travel, halt, conduct business and hold conversations. In fact, the only clear difference between slaves (*servi*) and free men (*liberi*) is that slaves travel on foot, free men invariably on horseback.

B. Plutarch, The Life of Crassus.⁵⁰

B1 – Plutarch, Crassus 21.7

He [i.e. Surenas, MJO], used to travel on private business with a baggage train of a thousand camels, and was followed by two hundred wagons for his concubines, while a thousand mail-clad horsemen (*kataphraktoi*) and a still greater number of light-armed cavalry (*koufoi*) served as his escort; and he had altogether, as horsemen (*hippeis*) – dependants (*pelatai*) and slaves (*douloi*) – no fewer than ten thousand men.

B2 – Plutarch, Crassus 27.2

As the enemy [i.e. the Parthians, MJO] got to work, their horsemen-slaves (*hippotai oiketai*) and dependants (*penesteroi*) rode round on the flanks of the Romans and shot them with arrows, while those in front, plying their long lances (*kontoι*), kept driving the Romans together into a narrow space.

⁵⁰ These translations are based on Bude's edition: *Plutarque, Vies, tome VII. Cimon-Lucullus, Nicias-Crassus*, texte établi et traduit par R. Flacelière et É. Chambry, Paris 1972.

C. Josephus Flavius, Jewish War and Jewish Antiquities.⁵¹

C1 – Josephus Flavius, Bell. iud. 1.255.

Pacorus left with Herod some of the cavalry called by the Parthians “freemen” (*eleutheroi*).

C2 – Josephus Flavius, Ant. 14.342.

Pacorus left with Herod 200 horsemen (*hippeis*) and ten of the “freemen” (*eleutheroi*), as they were called.

The Roman historian Justin (probably 3rd century AD) undertook an abridgement of the *Historiae Philippicae* written by Pompeius Trogus in the Augustan period. In relation to Trogus’ selection of material, it is worth noting that as his main source for the Parthian accounts in the 41st and 42nd books of the *Historiae Philippicae* served the *Parthika* by Apollodoros, a Parthian writer of Greek descent.⁵² Coming from Artemita in western Parthia, he was by birth a subject of the Arsacid kings. This circumstance and his acquaintance with the peoples of the Orient gave Apollodoros a rare insight into the world of the Arsacid state. Plutarch (2nd century AD) provides much important, somewhat detailed and in general reliable information concerning the war between Rome and Parthia in 53 BC and the battle of Carrhae. His sources were extremely knowledgeable in regard to Parthian affairs.⁵³ Josephus Flavius (1st century AD) gives some extremely valuable information about the Jewish-Parthian contacts and the situation in the Arsacid Empire.⁵⁴

⁵¹ These translations follow the edition: *Flavii Iosephi Opera*. Edidit Benedictus Niese. I–VII, Berolini 1955.

⁵² The view that Trogus drew on the *Parthika* of Apollodoros has been supported by Altheim, *Weltgeschichte* I, 2–23; II, 21–24; Altheim/ Stiehl, *Geschichte Mittelasiens*, 359–379; Olbrycht, *Parthia*, 9 and passim; Nikonorov, *Apollodoros*, 107f.

⁵³ Attempts to specify sources for the Parthian affairs in the *Life of Crassus* have yielded little more than speculation. For a detailed discussion of this problem, see Scardigli, *Römerbiographien*, 107–113. Cf. also the proposals of K. Regling, *De belli Parthici*, 8ff. (Timagenes) and Altheim, *Weltgeschichte* I, 69f., 75 (Asinius Pollio). Anyway, it seems quite certain that Plutarch drew on some relations of the Romans who participated in the disastrous Crassus campaign.

⁵⁴ The value of Josephus’ Parthian accounts has been demonstrated by Täubler, *Parthernachrichten*, and Rajak, *Parthians*. Cf. also Olbrycht, *Parthia*, 9f.

It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that all the accounts presented above closely connect social structure and military organization.⁵⁵ These statements merit closer examination, but even the most superficial analysis raises fundamental questions about the employed terms. We must keep in mind that the classical authors tried to translate Iranian designations or to convey relations in Parthia, and the terms used had specific connotations in the Graeco-Roman world, quite different from the equivalents employed in Parthian Iran.

Almost all quoted accounts mention “horsemen” (*equites/ hippeis*). The army of the Arsacids was essentially composed of cavalry, foot soldiers were of little importance. In the light of Justin’s statements (fragm. A1 and fragm. A3), the “horsemen” appear to have been not only a military formation, but also a social category.⁵⁶ With regard to their significance in the social hierarchy of Parthia they may be termed the “equestrian estate”. In Justin (fragm. A3), the “horsemen” (*equites*) as “freemen” (*liberi*) are contrasted with the “slaves” (*servi*), who travel only on foot. Also in Plutarch (fragm. B1), the notion “horsemen” (*hippeis*) is used both as a social term (in relation to the *pelatai* and *douloi*) and as a military one (horsemen as soldiers in the Parthian army).

Apart from the above listed accounts, there are also other classical references to Parthian horsemen (*equites/ hippeis*). An important statement is provided by Josephus Flavius; he reports that Zamaris, a Jew from Babylonia, crossed the Euphrates with 500 horsemen (*hippeis*) – all of them were mounted archers (*hippotoxotai*) – and a group of kinsmen (*syngeneis*) amounting to a hundred men, and was settled by Herod the Great at Batanea (second half of the 1st century BC).⁵⁷ Also in this account a social term (*syngeneis*) is closely linked with a military one (*hippotoxotai*). The Iranian equivalent for the classical terms *equites/ hippeis* – *asbārān* – is documented by Oriental epigraphic remains and literary sources. In the texts from Old Nisa, there is the mention of “horseman Sāsān” – *ssn ’sb’r (y)*.⁵⁸ The purely Parthian form *’spbr(k)* occurs

⁵⁵ On the links between those two spheres in Parthia, see Koshelenko, *Cavaliers*; Wolski, *Aristocratie foncière*.

⁵⁶ Social and military dimensions of the term „horsemen“ are emphasized in Koshelenko, *Cavaliers*, 177, and Bader, *Ostraca*, 270f.

⁵⁷ Josephus Flavius, *Ant.* 17.24; 17.26.

⁵⁸ No 1669, old no. 280-bis, year 72 BC. The document belongs to the group referring to the receipt of wine “personally from” (MN NPŠH) individuals (nos. 1646–1687). It cannot be said with certainty whether Sāsān had a plot for equipment, as suggested by Bader, *Ostraca*, 271. The documents from Nisa are cited here after numbers allotted to the texts in Diaconoff/ Livshits, *Parthian Economic Documents*.

on an ostrakon from Merv, which is dated to the Sasanian period.⁵⁹ A parallel Parthian form is known from the *Dēnkart*.⁶⁰ There are also Old Persian examples of the term under discussion.⁶¹ In the Sasanian *Book of Law - Mātakdān-i hazār Dāristān* – mention is made of a special horseman-document – *asābar nīpīk* (*PRŠY' npyk'*).⁶² Furthermore, Nisa texts provide information about a “chief cavalry commander” – *asppat* (*'sppty*) – called Tīridāt (tyrydt)⁶³, and about an anonymous cavalry commander with the same title (*'sppty*).⁶⁴

The Parthian cavalry troops were comprised mainly of mounted archers (*hippotoxotai/ equites sagittarii*). Heavily armoured and armed cavalymen (*kataphraktoi*) were numerically a relatively small formation, but constituted in fact the most powerful offensive force.⁶⁵ In social terms, the “horsemen” constituted a privileged estate whose origins reached the nomadic conquest of northeastern Iran.

Apart from the terms relating to the “horsemen“, the classical accounts also mention the “freemen“ (*liberi/ eleutheroi* – fragm. A1, A3, C1, C2). Thus, Justin knows 400 “freemen” (*liberi*) and almost 50,000 “dependants” (*servitia*)⁶⁶ in the Parthian army fighting against Mark Antony (fragm. A1). Josephus Flavius’ statement (fragm. C1) accentuates that the designation “freemen” (*eleutheroi*) was employed by the Parthians themselves. In light of the classical testimonies, the rank of the “freemen” (*liberi/ eleutheroi*) shows two distinguishing marks: first, it is numerically small, and, second, it appears exclusively as part of the “equestrian estate”. Two of Hesychius’ glosses provide insight into the meaning of this rank: ἀζήται, “intimates of the king”,⁶⁷ and ἀζάτη, “freedom” (*eleutheria*).⁶⁸ Hesychius’ statements indicate that the “freemen” (*azetai*) formed the elite of Parthian nobility closely connected with the

⁵⁹ Livshits/ Nikitin, *Epigraphic remains*, 116f.; V. A. Livshits apud Bader, *Ostraca*, 271. Paleographic dating: 3–5 centuries AD, archaeological dating: 5–6 centuries AD. The ostrakon was discovered by Z. I. Usmanova’s at Gyaur-kala (1973, trench 9).

⁶⁰ Ed. Madan, 241, l. 17: *'spw'r* (*aspwār*).

⁶¹ *asa-bāra*–: DNb 41, 44, 45; DB II.2.71; III.41.72. Cf. Bader, *Ostraca*, 271.

⁶² MHDA 16.11–15; 17.11; 19.2–6 (Ritterurkunde/ Ritterbrief). Cf. Macuch’s commentary (*Rechtsbuch*, 173f. and 178).

⁶³ Nos. 1646–1658. On the ostraca nos. 1646–1653, a date – corresponding to 76 BC – is preserved. Cf. Bader, *Ostraca*, 270.

⁶⁴ No. 2685, compare Bader, *Ostraca*, 270.

⁶⁵ In the war against Mark Antony (36 BC), the Arsacid king Phraates IV had at his disposal 50,000 horsemen including 400 cataphracts (Justin, fragm. A1). Vologases I (AD 50–80) offered 40,000 mounted archers to assist Vespasian (Sueton, *Vesp.* 6.4; Tacitus, *Hist.* 4.51).

⁶⁶ On the Latin term “servitium“/ “servitia“, see Glare, *Dictionary*, 1746.

⁶⁷ *Hesychii Alexandri Lexicon*, ed. Latte 1469 D.

⁶⁸ *Hesychii Alexandri Lexicon*, ed. Latte 1442 D.

king.⁶⁹ In this sense, the “freemen” can be identified with the so-called *syngeneis* – kinsmen of the kings or grandees – mentioned by Strabo⁷⁰ and Josephus Flavius.⁷¹

The classical accounts tend to differentiate another meaning of the term “freemen” (*liberi/ eleutheroi*). Justin refers namely to the “freemen” (*liberi*) as a social formation in opposition to the *servi - pedites* (fragm. A3), and in this sense the “freemen” denote the whole Parthian nobility which was principally free. The *servi* mentioned by Justin, travelling on foot, were for the most part not real slaves without civic rights, but peasants and townsmen. Actually, they made up a lower social rank in Parthian society (see below).

In Middle Persian and Parthian texts of the Sasanian period, the expression *āzād* (plur. *āzādān*) is widely attested as designating a free man.⁷² In Armenia, the term *azatk*‘ (plur.), a derivative of the Iranian *āzād*, referred to the middle and lower nobility as opposed to the grandees (*naxarark*‘). At the same time, however, *azatk*‘ was used to designate the entire nobility, especially in contrast to the commoners (*šinakank*‘ – peasants, villagers and town-dwellers).⁷³ The situation in Armenia is of particular importance for a discussion of the social structure in the Arsacid Empire; it is well known that Parthia exerted a strong influence on Transcaucasia in regard to political affairs, language and culture.⁷⁴ Considering the close links and similarities between Parthia and Armenia, and taking into account the available data, one can conclude that the term *āzādān/ liberi/ eleutheroi* signified principally the entire body of the Parthian nobility (ordinary nobles or knights as well as grandees), but in a narrower sense it referred to the upper rank of nobility (grandees alone), standing next to the king.

In the classical sources, several designations appear for Parthian great lords or grandees. This highest rank of nobility was constituted by the most powerful clans from among the rank of the “freemen” (*āzādān/ liberi/ eleutheroi*). One of Justin’s statements (fragm. A2) mentions an *ordo*, i.e. a social estate called

⁶⁹ Both glosses reflect Parthian forms. Cf. De Blois, *Freemen*, 5 (*āzāt-īh; *āzāta-, with the Greek plural suffix –ai). Additionally it is interesting to notice that in one of the documents discovered at Avroman (1st century BC), the name Azate is attested (wife and half-sister of Mithradates II), cf. Karras-Klapproth, *Prosopographische Studien*, 44.

⁷⁰ Strabo 11.9.3.

⁷¹ Josephus Flavius, *Ant.* 17.24; 17.26.

⁷² Actually, the word *āzād* possessed two meanings: “free”, as opposed to “slave”, and “noble” as a member of a noble clan (cf. De Blois, *Freemen*, 5 and 11). A detailed discussion of the term is presented by Chaumont, *Āzād*. Cf. Lukonin, *Institutions*, 700.

⁷³ Chaumont, *Āzād*, 170; Toumanoff, *Armenian azat*.

⁷⁴ For details, see Chaumont, *Armenia and Iran*, 419–438, esp. 433ff.

propinqui or *praepositi*.⁷⁵ It is certain that the highest society rank is meant, from which the Parthians draw their commanders and officials. Another term designating the highest category of the Arsacid nobility was the word *syngeneis* signifying probably not only real kinsmen but also other grandees standing close to the king.⁷⁶ As a whole, classical authors offer for Parthian magnates several designations: *megistanes*⁷⁷, *primores*⁷⁸, *nobiles/ nobilitas*⁷⁹, *illustres Parthi* (regarding the powerful clan of Carenēs)⁸⁰, *proceres*⁸¹, and *aristoi*.⁸² Under the early Sasanians (3rd century AD), a fourfold internal division of the nobility is noted. Grandees (*vuzurgān*), including the mighty clans of the Sūrēn and Kārin, constituted the third category of aristocracy followed by the ordinary *āzādān*.⁸³ The magnates were preceded by *šahrdārān/ šahryārān* (kings or dynasts, including Sasanian sub-kings) and *vāspuhrāgān/ wispuhrān* (princes of the royal blood).

In the Arsacid state, the position of the grandees was of particular importance. It was the clan of the Sūrēn, which played a leading role amongst the rank of the great lords and enjoyed “the ancient and hereditary privilege of being first to set the crown upon the head of the Parthian king”.⁸⁴ Plutarch’s statement refers to the year 53 BC, but if the mentioned custom was so ancient, its origins must have reached several generations earlier, i.e. up to the beginnings of the Arsacid state. It is therefore highly probable that the Sūrēn were,

⁷⁵ In the passage under consideration there is a corruption regarding the term preceding the word “ordo”. In my opinion, a conjecture into “propinquorum” (Altheim/ Stiehl, *Geschichte Mittelasiens*, 458f.) or perhaps “praepositorum” (this I. Jeep’s conjecture (Iustini Historiae Philippicae recensuit Iustus Jeep, Lipsiae, 1859 - accepted Lukonin, *Institutiones*, 699) is highly probable. The form “probulorum” occurs in the editions by F. Ruehl (Lipsiae, 1886) and O. Seel (Lipsiae, 1985), but historically it does not make good sense and should be abandoned.

⁷⁶ Strabo 11.9.3; Josephus Flavius, Ant. 17.24. This term is attested already in the Achaemenid period. A comprehensive discussion is to be found in Jacobs, *Die Verwandten*.

⁷⁷ Sueton, *Caligula*, 5; Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.27 (*megistanes* in Armenia); Frontinus, *Strateg.* 2.9.5 (*megistanes* in Armenia). Seneca (*Ep.* 21.4) broadly refers to *megistanes* and *satraps*, but does not mention the Parthians in the passage. It is plausible that the term *megistanes* was used by the Parthian themselves, and the Romans borrowed it due to close contacts with Parthia during the early 1st century AD.

⁷⁸ Tacitus, *Ann.* 2.2; 6.31; 6.37.

⁷⁹ Tacitus, *Ann.* 6.31; 11.10; 12.10. Cf. Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.2 (*Monaesi nobili viro*).

⁸⁰ Tacitus, *Ann.* 12.12.

⁸¹ Statius, *Thebais*, 8.289.

⁸² Plutarch, *Crassus* 30.2 (tip by V. P. Nikonorov).

⁸³ On the third nobility rank in the early Sasanian epoch see Tafāzžolī, *Bozorgān*.

⁸⁴ Plutarch, *Crass.* 21.7.

as the Arsacids, of nomadic, Aparnian stock, and that they played a significant role in establishing the Arsacid kingdom.⁸⁵

Another question, which should be examined closely is the role of lower classes in Parthian society.⁸⁶ Plutarch (fragm. B1, B2) and Justin (fragm. A1) use specific terms to designate the majority of Parthian armed troops. These designations are strictly speaking not military but social ones, and point to a dependent status of the warriors forming the bulk of the troops. The authors give the following equations:

Plutarch (fragm. B1): *hippeis* = *pelatai* + *douloi*

Justin (fragm. A1): *equites* = *liberi* + *servitia*

What is remarkable in Plutarch's description of the battle at Carrhae is the fact that he does not employ the term "freemen" (*āzādān/ eleutheroi*). But there must have been "freemen" in the Parthian army at Carrhae. The Parthian commander Surenas and an officer in his troops, Sillaces, satrap of Mesopotamia, were surely "freemen".⁸⁷ Still, it is hardly possible that in such a powerful army as that of Surenas at Carrhae there were only two members of the "freemen"-rank. But Plutarch also mentions *aristoi* among Surenas' followers,⁸⁸ and they can conceivably be equated with the *eleutheroi* or *liberi* known from other accounts. Thus, in all likelihood, amongst the warriors called by Plutarch *pelatai* there were a number of "freemen". If so – how can we explain Plutarch's terminology? It is not by chance that he employs the term *pelatai* which designated in the Greek world groups of dependent populations,⁸⁹ and which was often used as a social term for non-Greek peoples, including Illyria,⁹⁰ and the

⁸⁵ It is within this context that another statement of Plutarch (24.2) is relevant, in which he describes the hairstyle of the Parthians in the Surenas' army as "Scythian", i.e. nomadic. On the „nomadic“ character of the Parthians in Plutarch, see Bernard, *Plutarque*. There is another point, which should be noted: in the battle of Carrhae, specific percussion instruments were employed by the Parthians, which exerted strong psychological impact upon enemies (Plutarch, *Crass.* 23.9; 26.4). Such instruments, noted also in other testimonies, had not been known in Iran before the Arsacids and they originated among steppe nomads. The whole problem has been studied in depth by Nikonorov, *Musical Percussions*.

⁸⁶ On this issue, see Wolski, *Classi inferiori*; idem, *Bevölkerung*.

⁸⁷ See Plutarch, *Crass.* 21.4; 33.3. Cf. Karras-Klapproth, *Prosopographische Studien*, 159–161. The status of Exathres, who killed Crassus, cannot be estimated (Karras-Klapproth, *Prosopographische Studien*, 55f.).

⁸⁸ Plutarch, *Crass.* 30.2.

⁸⁹ On the *pelatai*, see Gehrke, *Pelatai*. Similar connotations had also the term *penestai* referring to the dependant population in Thessaly, see Cartledge, *Penestai*.

⁹⁰ Theopompus, *FGrHist* 115 F 40.

Bosporan kingdom.⁹¹ Three important points should be stressed at this stage. Firstly, the Latin equivalent for *pelatai* was the designation *clientes*.⁹² Secondly, the term *clientes* is found in Roman sources with regard to Parthian nobles.⁹³ It is therefore conclusive that the *pelatai* in Plutarch were not commoners of low rank⁹⁴ but noble dependants or bondsmen of Surenas. Thirdly, in one of the classical sources, Surenas is designated as “lord of a thousand *oiketes*”.⁹⁵ The word *oiketes* should not be understood here as relating to the real slaves but again to the bondsmen of Surenas who formed apparently the bulk of the mighty division of cataphracts (1,000 soldiers) in the battle of Carrhae. In one of his statements Plutarch also uses the term *oiketai*, derived from *oiketes*, for some Parthian soldiers at Carrhae (fragm. B2, see below). But it seems that the designation *oiketai* (and *douloi*) in Plutarch signify the attendants of the nobles recruited mostly from the sedentary peasants (see below).

According to Justin’s description of the Parthian army, there were just 400 “freemen” (*liberi*) in the military forces led by Phraates IV against Mark Antony. The rest – all generally termed *servitia* – surely comprised several categories, including dependants and bondsmen of the king as well as of the grandees. Some of the *servitia* were in all likelihood horsemen recruited from among peasants trained for service in war, as stated by Justin (fragm. A1). Considering terminological and factual parallels between the accounts in Plutarch (fragm. B1) and Justin (fragm. A1), the assumption can be made that the *servitia* in Justin are to be equated with both the *pelatai* and the *douloi* in Plutarch’s account.⁹⁶

A further issue to be evaluated is the term *servi* as a social category in Justin. According to this historian, Parthian society was divided into *liberi* (“freemen”) and *servi*. The latter travelled only on foot, and this implies that they were excluded from the “equestrian estate”. Apparently, the *servi* belonged to the non-nomadic rural and urban populations in Parthia proper and in other regions under the direct rule of the Arsacid kings or controlled by the members of the highest Parthian families (e.g. in Media and Sakastan). It

⁹¹ CIRB 976 (AD 151).

⁹² Cf. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Rom. Ant.* 1.81.2; 1.83.3; 2.9.2; 2.10.1ff. See also Gehrke, *Pelatai*, and Nikonorov, *O structure*, 20.

⁹³ Tacitus (*Ann.* 12.14) mentions Parraces, a client of Vonones I. Cf. Karras-Klapproth, *Prosopographische Studien*, 127.

⁹⁴ According to Koshelenko, *Zakliuchenie*, 346, *pelatai* are to be equated with peasants.

⁹⁵ Theodoret, *Hist. Eccl.* 5.39. The text offers the name Σουήνην (see *Theodoretī Ecclesiasticae Historiae*, recensuit Thomas Gaisford, Oxonii 1854, p. 241, 10), but Nöldeke, *Tabari*, 76, Ann. 2 has convincingly corroborated the form into Σουρήνην.

⁹⁶ Similarly also Wolski, *Relations*, idem, *Servitia*, 98f.

should be stressed that a number of the *servi* underwent the same pattern of military training as the nobles; Justin (fragm. A1) reports: “Parthians bestow as much care on the servi-children as they do on their own, taking great pains to teach them horse-riding and archery”. Thus, the term *servi* in Justin should not be taken literally as “slaves”, but rather as “servants/ retainers”. Similarly, the *douloi* in Plutarch, referring to the mounted archers in Surenas’ army, are to be identified not as real “slaves”, but as members of the rural and urban populations dependent on the nobles called in the passage under discussion *pelatai*.⁹⁷ Plutarch (fragm. B2) employs two other terms for the Parthians in Surenas’ army at Carrhae, namely *penesteroi* – apparently a derivative of *penestai*⁹⁸ – and *oiketai*. Both designations correspond with the terms *pelatai* and *douloi* used in passage B1 respectively. The status of the *douloi/ oiketai/ servi* was defined by the nomadic conquest of northeastern Iran – the sedentary Iranians from villages and towns were forced to accept the new rigid hierarchy, in which the nobility of nomadic descent would predominate.

There is another point regarding Iranian society, which should be noted. In the Iranian languages, the term *bandaka* (Old Persian) or *bandag* (Middle Persian) is attested, which means “owing to the servile submission to masters”.⁹⁹ The form *bandaka* occurs first in the inscription of Darius I at Bīsūtūn: all Darius’ generals, except his father, are named *bandaka* (Vidarna, Vindafarnā, Gaubaruva and others). They all were noblemen of high rank, but subordinate to the king.¹⁰⁰ For the Greek authors, the entire Persian people under the Achaemenids were “a crowd of slaves” of the king.¹⁰¹ Strikingly, in Darius’ letter to Gadatas, *bandaka* was rendered by the word *doulos*, meaning in Greek “slave”.¹⁰² Principally, *bandaka/ bandag* denoted under the Achaemenids and Sasanians people subject to the king, namely loyal servants and vassals, as well as people dependent on men of higher rank,¹⁰³ and it could be applied to every subject of the sovereign. Thus, even the phrase *šāhān šāh bandag* – “subject of the king of kings” – is attested.¹⁰⁴ The term *bandag* is of crucial relevance for evaluating the accounts of Justin and Plutarch on Parthian society and military

⁹⁷ The real slaves, i.e. people without civil rights, were not present in the Parthian army. For the slaves (*anšahrīg/ wardag*) in Parthian and Sasanian Iran, see Macuch, *Barda*, 763f.

⁹⁸ Cf. Cartledge, *Penestai*.

⁹⁹ Cf. Eilers, *Banda I*; Widengren, *Feudalismus*, 21ff.

¹⁰⁰ Herrenschmidt, *Banda II*, 683f.

¹⁰¹ Herodotus, 7.135; Xenophon, *Anab.* 2.5.38. Cf. Aeschylus, P. 242.

¹⁰² I. Magnesia 115.4. Here, the King of Kings calls his satrap in Ionia his slave (*doulos*). Cf. Dandamaev, *Barda*, 762.

¹⁰³ Herrenschmidt, *Banda II*, 684. *Banda* might have been applied to real slaves in only a few cases in the documents of the Sasanian epoch.

¹⁰⁴ Macuch, *Barda*, 764.



organization. In Plutarch, *bandag* can be applied to the ordinary nobles called *pelatai*, as dependants or bondsmen of the great lord Surenas and – in some cases – of the Arsacid King, whose commander named Sillaces fought in the battle. In Justin, the upper rank of the *servitia* was constituted by the ordinary nobles, thus their status is comparable with the *pelatai* in Plutarch.

It seems that the rank of ordinary nobles was formed by Aparnian tribesmen of lower status (pauperized nomads) as well as by a number of Parthian knights of sedentary origin.¹⁰⁵ As a whole, they were clients of their richer kinsfolk, and remained dependent on the magnates belonging to the rank of upper nobility. In the Arsacid Parthian army they fought – alongside the grandees – partially as heavily armoured horsemen/ cataphracts (e.g. in the army of Surenas), but it seems plausible that the majority of them formed horse-archers' units.

Taking an overall view, the main principle defining the social structure of Parthia was a clear, strong stratification with a very limited elite and the vast majority of the population in the rank of dependants or retainers/ servants. At the apex of the structure stood the clan of the Arsacids. Next to the royal clan great families are attested, including the most powerful Sūrēn and Kārin. These great clans formed the highest rank amongst the so-called “freemen” (*āzādān/ liberi/ eleutheroi*), and they originated – as for example the Sūrēn – from among the nomadic supporters of Arsaces I.¹⁰⁶

The rest of the nobles comprised ordinary knights of lower status, who were socially related to the grandees and the king as bondsmen or dependants (*bandag/ pelatai*, in Justin the elite of the *servitia*). This rank included knights of both nomadic and sedentary Parthian origin. The ordinary nobles and grandees constituted the so-called “equestrian estate” (*asbārān/ hippeis/ equites*).

Next to the social stratum of the “horsemen” there was an estate comprising peasants and townsmen, i.e. the sedentary population of Parthyaia, Hyrcania and other areas in Iran conquered by the Parthians. They were termed *douloi* in Plutarch, in Justin they occur as *servi* and as commoners from among the *servitia*. They were dependent on the nobles of higher and lower ranks. A significant number of them were recruited to the Parthian army.

The social structure of Parthia was characterized by strong dichotomies between the “freemen” (*āzādān/ liberi/ eleutheroi*) and the rest of the population,

¹⁰⁵ According to Nikonorov, *O strukture*, 20, this social category formed ordinary Dahaeen nomads. But it is probable that a number of noble sedentary Parthians – providing excellent cavalry troops, as did the Aparni – were incorporated into that rank.

¹⁰⁶ On the nomadic origins of the Parthian grandees, see Wolski, *Aristocratie parthe*, 133; Koshelenko, *Cavaliers*, 191.

similarly between the “equestrian estate” (*asbārān/ equites/ hippeis*) and non-cavalrymen. It is essential to realize that such dichotomies were the result of the Aparnian conquest of northeast Iran under Arsaces I.¹⁰⁷ This subjugation of the indigenous settled population by the invading nomads had created the specific, rigid structure of Arsacid Parthian society, in which the victorious nomads and some parts of the sedentary nobility formed the upper social ranks, but the vast majority of sedentary populations became socially and economically dependent on the clans of nomadic origin. That this division remained rigid can be deduced from Justin, when he claims no one is allowed to manumit and all servi-children are therefore born into a lifetime of slavery (fragm. A1).

When analyzing the social structure, striking similarities can be observed between the Parthian and Scythian societies.¹⁰⁸ It should be noted that the Scythian kingdom was a state similar to the Arsacid kingdom: in Scythia, there was a large dependent population – servants, clients, tenants and tributaries. There were, however, several estates with full rights – the ordinary Scythians, the aristocracy and the royal lineage or clan, probably also the priesthood.¹⁰⁹ The Scythian commoners formed the bulk of the army. The Royal Scythians considered all other Scythians their slaves,¹¹⁰ which mirrors the position of the Arsacids and of the “freemen” in Parthia towards the rest of the population. On the whole, rigid social systems based on an opposition between new ruling ranks and the conquered indigenous subjects existed in the states, which emerged as the result of rapid military subjugations.¹¹¹

It remains to be seen whether the Parthian social structure was inherited from Achaemenid Iran. In the Achaemenid period, there was naturally a social stratification, but without rigidly limited ranks. There is no evidence of a rigid social structure resembling that of Parthia in the many sources for the period. There were no “freemen” as a social group. The only attested dichotomy be-

¹⁰⁷ Cf. a similar conclusion in Koshelenko, *Cavaliers*, and *Zakliuchenie*, 344.

¹⁰⁸ The socio-political structure of Scythia analyzes Khazanov, *Early State*, 431ff.

¹⁰⁹ Khazanov, *Early State*, 433f.

¹¹⁰ Herodotus 4.20. See Khazanov, *Early State*, 435.

¹¹¹ Such strictly stratified social systems are attested in ancient Greece in Sparta and Thessaly. In both cases, the subjugation of the indigenous peoples led to the creation of estates comprising the conquered inhabitants called respectively *helotai* or *penestai*, cf. Hunt, *Slaves*, passim, and Welwei, *Unfreie*, passim.

tween the rich and the poor is rather vague.¹¹² Such dichotomies as free/ unfree or horsemen/ not-cavalrymen did not exist in Achaemenid Iran.¹¹³

Parthian customs and costume

There is another sphere in which nomadic influence can be observed. In Arsacid history, customs and dress determined the specific picture of the Parthians as a people. Particularly, it was horse-riding, archery and riding clothing which occur in the sources as most striking hallmarks of the Parthians (cf. fragm. A1).

What were the sources of Parthian manners and customs? Are they to be linked with the Achaemenid period, with the old Persian or Median traditions of western Iran? Clearly, to the old Iranian way of life belonged a military training in horse-riding and archery, as similar to the Achaemenid Medes and Persians.¹¹⁴ However, under the Achaemenids other military virtues were equally valued, including training as foot-warriors using lances or javelins. The fact of the matter is that the noble Persians were schooled for service in war both afoot and on horseback¹¹⁵ and they formed not only cavalry troops, but also infantry units.¹¹⁶ Sources relating to the Arsacid Parthians present quite a different picture. In the Parthian regular army of the Arsacid epoch only cavalry units formed the real kernel of Parthian military power,¹¹⁷ and we hear nothing about infantry from among the Parthian nobility.¹¹⁸ In one of his grave inscriptions from Naksh-e Rostam (DNb), the Achaemenid king Darius I (521–486 BC) boasts about his military valour: “As a horseman I am a good horse-

¹¹² Nobles (*āmāta*) or strong men (*tunuvant*) are in some Persian inscriptions contrasted with poor people (*skauθi*, Greek *autourgoi*). For the opposition *skauθi*/ *tunuvant*, see DNb 8–11. For the privileged groups in Persian society, see Herodotus 1.133; 1.206; Strabo 15.3.19.

¹¹³ R. Frye, *Institutions*, 85f. emphasizes the unclarity of social divisions in Achaemenid times and rightly remarks: „There is no evidence that in the Achaemenid period the classes of society or castes were institutionalized“.

¹¹⁴ E.g. in Herodotus 1, 136.

¹¹⁵ Herodotus 1.136; 9.122; Strabo 15.3.18f.; Xenophon, *Kyr.* 1.2.9–11.

¹¹⁶ Herodotus (7.40–41) maintains that the guard troops of Xerxes comprised a thousand spearmen “of the best and noblest blood of Persia” and ten thousand footmen chosen out “of the rest of the Persians”. According to Strabo (15.3.19) the Persians served in the army and held commands from twenty to fifty years of age, both as foot soldiers and as horsemen. Cf. Head, *Achaemenid Persian Army*, 22–30 and 39–44; Wiesehöfer, *Persien*, 133. Xenophon (*Kyroupaideia* 4.3.23) clearly exaggerates when he claims that no noble Persian may have been seen going on foot.

¹¹⁷ Olbrycht, *Parthia*, 262f.

man. As a bowman I am a good bowman both afoot and on horseback. As a spearman I am a good spearman both afoot and on horseback“.¹¹⁹ No one of the Arsacids would pride himself on being a good infantry soldier. It is no coincidence that such a difference regarding the commonly accepted virtues between the Achaemenid and Arsacid periods can be observed. Under the Arsacids, horse-riding became a symbol of a high social status (cf. fragm. A3), and this development can be explained as the continuation of a steppe tradition. This view can be vindicated by further arguments. Justin observes that the Arsacid Parthians ride horses constantly, using them to go to war and to feasts, and for all private and public affairs (fragm. A3). A comparison of Justin's description with other classical testimonies referring to the nomads shows striking resemblances. Thus, Ammianus Marcellinus (4th century AD) writes about the Huns: „They are almost glued to their horses (...), and sometimes they sit on them in woman-fashion, and thus perform their ordinary tasks. And when deliberations are called for about important matters, they all consult for a common object in that fashion“.¹²⁰ Priscus (5th century AD) maintains that the Huns carried on their negotiations with Romans on horseback.¹²¹ Thus, for the nomadic Huns and the Parthians, high status and horse-riding were inevitably connected. In the light of the above mentioned sources there can be no doubt that the remarkable significance of horse-riding in the Parthian way of life – both in social hierarchy and in military sphere – was one of the traditions inherited from the steppe nomads of Central Asia.

The costume of the Arsacid Parthians may give an important clue as to the cultural tradition to which they belonged. The most characteristic Parthian dress was composed of wide trousers and a long sleeved caftan belted around the waist and crossed over the chest, with the right part overlapping the left.¹²² Parts of this garment are depicted as royal dress on most Arsacid coins.¹²³ The best-known representation of a Parthian caftan and trousers is the famous bronze statue from Shami.¹²⁴ A number of other monuments show the Parthians as wearing such clothing.¹²⁵ Representations of persons wearing such garb are

¹¹⁸ Infantry troops did exist but they were of little relevance, compare Dio 40.15.2.

¹¹⁹ *DNb*, 8h.40.45: Kent, *Old Persian*, 140.

¹²⁰ Ammianus Marcellinus 31.2.6.

¹²¹ Priscus, *EL* 122 (1).

¹²² On the Parthian dress, see Curtis, *Costume*, eadem, *Culture*, and Pilipko, *O kostiume*.

¹²³ Cf. Curtis, *Costume*, 70f., pl. I–II.

¹²⁴ Kawami, *Art*, cat. no. 8, pl. 11; Vogelsang-Eastwood, *Clothing*.

¹²⁵ Comparable with the Shami statue is a stele from Parthian Assur (von Gall, *Architektur und Plastik*, pl. 4a). The Parthian jacket with front closure is depicted on the late Parthian stele from Susa (AD 215), cf. Curtis, *Costume*, pl. 4b.



attested at Kampyr-tepe¹²⁶, at Takht-i Sangin¹²⁷, Tillya-tepe¹²⁸, Khalchayan¹²⁹, and at other sites in western Central Asia. The costume of the Parthian type is documented also in the Caspian steppes at Kosika (on the Volga, 1st century AD).¹³⁰ The use of the crossed-over caftans in conjunction with wide trousers spread during the Arsacid period to many countries from northwestern India up to Mesopotamia and Armenia. In the pre-Arsacid period, a costume similar to the Parthian dress is attested among archaeological objects coming from the steppe areas of Central Asia and southeastern Europe. First the famous grave of Issyk should be mentioned, dated to the 4th–3rd centuries BC. The Sacian chieftain or shaman of Issyk wore a caftan with a V-shaped neckline, and trousers.¹³¹ Similar caftans and trousers are depicted on a vessel from the Scythian cemetery Chastye Kurgany (on the Don, 4th century BC).¹³²

During the pre-Arsacid and Arsacid period peoples living between the Caspian Sea, the Usboi and Aral Lake seem to have stayed in close contact with Iran. This may be surmised from the recent discoveries on the Ustyurt plateau and in the Mangyshlak region.¹³³ They revealed a large number of stone statues dated to the second half of the 1st millennium BC, mainly to the 5th–3rd centuries BC. The dress worn by the nomads in the Transcaspian steppes, as depicted on the sculptures from the Ustyurt and Mangyshlak areas, shows striking similarities to Arsacid garb. Moreover, the sculptures from the steppe were curved frontally, and thus exhibit a general similarity to the Parthian habit of showing figures full-face („Parthian frontality“). Of particular importance is the fact that the Mangyshlak and Ustyurt regions were inhabited by the nomads closely related to the Massagete and Dahae. In other words, those peoples constituted the milieu, from which the nomads founding the Arsacid Empire came.

To sum up: the Parthian dress was clearly of steppe origin and it was introduced by the Aparthian nomads. Such dress was not employed by the Medes and Persians. They used of course a trouser-suit as appropriate for horse-riding,

¹²⁶ Nikonorov, *Armies II*, fig. 36 e, d.

¹²⁷ Nikonorov, *Armies II*, fig. 27.

¹²⁸ Nikonorov, *Armies II*, fig. 32h.

¹²⁹ Stawiski, *Kunst*, 96.

¹³⁰ Depictions on two vessels, cf. Treister, *New Discoveries*, fig. 24, 27, and 28. It cannot be excluded that the vessels were originally made in Transcaucasia or even in Iran.

¹³¹ Pilipko, *O kostiume*, Fig. 4.2.

¹³² Jacobson, *Art*, Figs. 85, 86a, b.

¹³³ Olkhovskii/ Galkin, *Komplex*; Zuev/ Ismagilov, *Ritual complexes*; Zuev/ Ismagil, *Steinstelen*.

but it was a quite different garb. The trouser-suit of the Achaemenid Persians and Medians was composed of tight trousers and a long-sleeved tunic.¹³⁴

Warfare and military organization

The present section will focus on the impact of the Central Asian steppe legacy upon the military organization and warfare of Arsacid Iran. As already stated above, the army of the Arsacid Parthians relied on cavalry, their infantry being relatively weak. Parthian cavalry, whose reputation surpassed all others in antiquity, was comprised of two main fighting arms: mounted archers (*hippotoxotai/ equites sagittarii*)¹³⁵ and heavily armoured cavalymen (*kataphraktoi*).¹³⁶ Some accounts of classical authors describe the character of the Parthian military training as well as warfare. For instance, Cassius Dio claims that the Parthians “make no use of a shield, but their forces consist of mounted archers (*hippotoxotai*) and lancers (*kontoforoi*), mostly as cataphracts (*kataphraktoi*). Their infantry is small, made up of the weaker men; but even these are all archers. They practise from boyhood, and the climate and the land combine to aid both horsemanship and archery”.¹³⁷ Ammianus Marcellinus states that the Parthians relied especially on the valour of their cavalry, in which all the nobles and men of rank underwent hard service.¹³⁸ What were the roots of Parthian warfare? This question can be answered by the examination of comparative practices of Achaemenid and Hellenistic Iran as well as of the Central Asian nomads.¹³⁹

In the Achaemenid period (550–330 BC), the cavalry forces of western Central Asian steppe peoples, including the Dahae and Massagetae, and those from the northern satrapies of the Persian empire, including Parthyaia/ Parthia, belonged to the elite of the Achaemenid army. The importance of contingents of the Eastern Iranian and Central Asian peoples to the Achaemenid army is illus-

¹³⁴ Bittner, *Tracht und Bewaffnung*, 180ff.

¹³⁵ For the horse-archers in general, cf. Sulimirski, *Archers*.

¹³⁶ On the cataphracts, see Nikonorov, *Sredneaziatskie katafraktarii*; idem, *K voprosu*; Mielczarek, *Cataphracti*.

¹³⁷ Dio 40.15.2.

¹³⁸ Ammianus 23.6.83. He wrote in the 4th century AD, but the description of Persian military affairs refers in many respects to the Parthian period.

¹³⁹ On the genesis of the Arsacid Parthian cavalry forces and tactics, see the fundamental studies by Nikonorov, *Central Asian Nomads*; idem, *Sredneaziatskie katafraktarii*; idem, *Armies I*, 21ff.; Mielczarek, *Cataphracti*. Cf. Olbrycht, *Origins*.



trated by their role at the battle of Gaugamela (331 BC).¹⁴⁰ Alexander made extensive use of Iranian cavalry forces, including Bactrians, Sogdians, Parthians/ Parthyaianas, Arachotians and Areians.¹⁴¹ Cavalry units of the Dahae were incorporated into Alexander's army in the Indian campaign as elite cavalry force (327–325 BC).¹⁴² To the royal agema of Alexander, a number of Iranian nobles were admitted, including Sisines and Phradasmanes from Parthia/ Parthyaia (324 BC).¹⁴³ In the armies of the Successors (323–281 BC), the Parthyaiaans/ Parthians were often fighting alongside the Medes.¹⁴⁴ The Median and Parthyaian/ Parthian cavalry troops constituted the decisive force in several battles under Pithon (in Antigonos' army)¹⁴⁵ and then under Seleucus I.¹⁴⁶

The Arsacid Parthians, well acquainted with Hellenistic warfare, managed to solve the problem of how to defeat the enemy's unbroken spear-line and destroy the Macedonian phalanx successfully. Such operations proved possible due to the employment of the cataphracts and horse-archers. Arsacid mounted archers and cataphracts were complementary, each providing the others with powers not inherent in either separately. The horse-bowmen could swarm around the enemy's troops, shooting them down from a safe distance, for Parthian bows were extremely efficient. If the enemy tried to attack, the Parthian horse retreated and then repeatedly attacked. The broken enemy's lines were charged by the cataphracts. The acts of disruption were usually followed by the act of annihilation – the final charge of the cataphracts overwhelming the hostile troops. The long lances of the cataphracts, imitating the Macedonian

¹⁴⁰ The cavalry regiments under Mazaeus, including the Medes and the Parthyaiaans, disrupted the Macedonian lines and seized the enemy's base-camp. In another engagement of the same battle, the Macedonian Companions clashed with a retreating detachment of Parthyaiaans, Indians and Persians, and lost 60 riders. Superb was Bessos' cavalry use on the Persian left wing, which included mainly horsemen from Central Asia: Bactrians, Sogdians, Dahae, Persians, Massagetae and Sakas. However, the Persian defeat in the centre forced Bessos to draw his troops off, although in quite good order. For sources and further details, see Olbrycht, *Origins*; Vogelsang, *Rise*, 221–224; Head, *Achaemenid Persian Army*, 67.

¹⁴¹ Arrian, *An.* 5.11.3; 5.12.2; 7.6.3.

¹⁴² Dahae fought as hippotoxotai, cf. Arrian, *An.* 4.24.1; 4.28.8; 5.12.2.; 5.14.3; 5.15.1; 5.16.4; 5.20.3; 5.22.5; 6.5.5.; 6.6.1; 6.21.3; 6.22.1; Curtius 8.14.5; 9.2.24.

¹⁴³ Arrian, *An.* 7.6.4.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Diodorus 19.29.2–3 (Medes and Parthyaiaans at the battle of Paraitacene).

¹⁴⁵ It was probably the overwhelming superiority of Pithon's cavalry, which enabled him to win a victory over the revolting Greeks of the Upper satrapies in 323 BC (Diodorus 18.7.1–9; cf. Tarn, *Developments*, 71). At the battle of Paraitacene, Pithon commanded a mighty cavalry division (Diodorus 19.26.1–32.3). In Gabiene, his Iranian cavalry detachments turned the battle into a spectacular success of Antigonos (Diodorus 19.39.6–44.3).

¹⁴⁶ The Iranian cavalry troops were the real military mainstay of Seleucus up to 301 BC. After defeating Nicanor, Seleucus gained control of a large army and annexed Media, Parthyaia and the adjacent regions (Diodorus 19.92.1–5; Appian, *Syr.* 55). At Ipsus (301 BC), Seleucus had 12,000 cavalry, practically all from Iran and Turkestan (cf. Diodorus 20.113.4).



sarissa, but somewhat stronger, and heavy armour made them able to crush the Macedonian phalanx and Roman legions.¹⁴⁷

The earliest explicit literary evidence concerning the genuine Parthian cataphracts is late and dates to the battle of Carrhae (53 BC). But already in 69 BC, the cataphracts fought in the army of the Armenian king Tigranes against the Roman legions at Tigranocerta.¹⁴⁸ In all likelihood these soldiers were not Arsacid Parthians, but cavalry troops recruited from Media Atropatene, a country belonging to the Arsacid Empire. However, the Median cataphracts must have been modelled on Arsacid Parthian cavalrymen. Units of cataphracts are noted also in the Armenian army ca. 53 BC.¹⁴⁹ The first literary testimonies about the cataphracts refer to the presence of such formations in the Seleucid army at the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 2nd century BC.¹⁵⁰ It is scarcely to be expected that they were a Seleucid invention. It was W. W. Tarn who first recognized that the Seleucid cataphracts were borrowed from the Arsacid Parthians under Antiochus III.¹⁵¹ This Seleucid king, who fought against Arsaces II about 209 BC, must have been deeply impressed by the efficiency of Parthian cataphracts and horse-archers, for such arms, being promptly employed in the Seleucid army on a large scale, clearly intended to be the decisive offensive force in the battles of Panion (200 BC)¹⁵² and of Magnesia (190 BC).¹⁵³

In the Achaemenid period, heavy cavalry troops were evolved mainly amongst the steppe peoples of western Central Asia. At Gaugamela, a number of riders and horses of the nomadic cavalry regiments, in all likelihood of the Massagetae, were well protected by defensive armour.¹⁵⁴ Herodotus¹⁵⁵ and Strabo¹⁵⁶ mention breastplates for horses and corselets for riders as employed

¹⁴⁷ Tarn (*Developments*, 76) pointed out: "For centuries cataphracts were the weapon of Asia".

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Plutarch, *Luc.* 26.6; 28.1–7; Sallustius, *Hist.* 64–65 (Maurenbrecher). Some authors – Eutropius 6.9 and Festus 15 – use the term *clibanarii* for heavy armoured cavalry troops of Tigranes. For more details, see Mielczarek, *Cataphracti*, 51f.

¹⁴⁹ Plutarch, *Crass.* 18.3 and 19.1.

¹⁵⁰ Polybius 16.18; 30.25; Livy 35.48; 37.40; Appian, *Syr.* 32; Florus 1.24; Athenaios, *Deipnosophistai* 194D–F. Cf. Mielczarek, *Cataphracti*, 67ff.

¹⁵¹ „Antiochus III made the acquaintance of the cataphract, such as he then was, when he invaded Parthia, and he experimented with some at the battle of Magnesia“ – Tarn, *Developments*, 76. Cf. also Mielczarek, *Cataphracts*.

¹⁵² In the battle of Panion, the Seleucid cataphracts overwhelmed Ptolemaic horsemen and alongside with the elephants largely contributed to the victory – see Polybius 16.18–19.

¹⁵³ At Magnesia, Antiochus's army included 6,000 cataphracts and 1,200 horse-archers of the Dahae (Livy 37.40).

¹⁵⁴ Arrian 3.13.4.

¹⁵⁵ Herodotus 1.215.

¹⁵⁶ Strabo 11.8.6.

by the Massagetae. This steppe people was closely related to the early Arsacids,¹⁵⁷ so it is conceivable that the development of the Massagetaean arms and tactics influenced the military equipment of the neighbouring Dahae and the early Arsacids in Parthia. It is more than coincidence that significant objects documenting an early development of heavy cavalry come from the areas, which were controlled or directly influenced by the Massagetae and Dahae. An early representation of a heavily armoured cavalryman (on a ceramic fragment), dating from the beginning of the 3rd century BC, has been found at Khumbuz-tepe (Southern Chorasnia).¹⁵⁸ At Chirik-Rabat (east of the Aral Sea), pieces of cavalry armour have been discovered, belonging to a heavily armoured rider.¹⁵⁹ Both finds can be connected with the initial stage of the cataphracts' development. From Old Nisa (Northern Parthia) armour pieces of a cataphract come.¹⁶⁰ When fighting against the Macedonians, Iranian cavalrymen saw that the long Macedonian lances had an advantage over their own short javelins or spears.¹⁶¹ Iranian noblemen (including Parthians/ Parthyaiaans), admitted to the royal agema of Alexander, were equipped with Macedonian lances in place of shorter „barbarian“ javelins.¹⁶² Apparently, some Iranian cavalry, including the Parthians/ Parthyaiaans and the steppe peoples of the Massagetae and perhaps Dahae, adopted long lances imitating the Macedonian sarissa in the Hellenistic period. It was this innovation, which largely contributed to the emergence of a new kind of cavalry force – the cataphracts.

The Arsacid Parthians gave a prominent role to the cataphracts. That cavalry force, combined with the horse-archers, earned the Arsacids decisive triumphs over armies of contemporary powers. One such overwhelming victory was the crushing defeat of the Roman legions at the battle of Carrhae (53 BC). During the Arsacid period, cataphract cavalry appeared in those areas, which were influenced or subjugated by the Parthians, e.g. in Media Atropatene and Armenia.¹⁶³ Heavy cavalry troops similar to the Parthian cataphracts also developed

¹⁵⁷ The Apasiacae, a tribe from the Massagetaean confederation, supported Arsaces I (Strabo 11.8.8) and Arsaces II (cf. Polybius 10.48 with Olbrycht, *Parthia* 64f.) in their military campaigns against the Seleucids.

¹⁵⁸ Mambetullaev, *Reliefnoe izobrazhenie*. Cf. Nikonorov, *Armies* I, 21; II, 4, fig. 4g.

¹⁵⁹ Tolstov, *Po drevnim delam*, 148, 150, fig. 82.

¹⁶⁰ Pugachenkova, *O pantsirnom vooruzhenii*, 33f.

¹⁶¹ Cf. Arrian, *An.* 1.15.

¹⁶² Arrian, *An.* 7.6.5.

¹⁶³ Imitating the Parthians, the Romans also introduced units of cataphracts in their army (2nd century AD), see CIL XI 5632. Cf. Mielczarek, *Cataphracti*, 73–85.

amongst the Sarmatian tribes,¹⁶⁴ midst the nomads of Central Asia (including the Sacae) and in Bactria of the pre-Kushan und Kushan period.¹⁶⁵

The horse-archers of the Arsacids were principally of Central Asian origin, having evolved especially among the nomadic Dahae¹⁶⁶; their mounted bowmen distinguished themselves in the fierce struggles against Alexander's forces and then, in the Hellenistic period, belonged to the best mercenary troops in the East. The Dahae exhibited their military valour as excellent light cavalry troops in the army of Spitamenes fighting against the Macedonian invasion (329–327 BC). Spitamenes' greatest exploit was the victory on the Polytimetos/ Zervavshan,¹⁶⁷ in which his troops, comprising Bactrian and Sogdian cavalry units as well as Dahae mounted archers routed a mighty Macedonian-Greek division.¹⁶⁸ As already mentioned above, Alexander fully recognized the quality of the Turkestan cavalry troops, and used the excellent cavalry units of the Dahae in India.

To sum up: in developing their cavalry forces, the Arsacids followed primarily the steppe traditions of the Dahae and Massagetae,¹⁶⁹ enriched by some local developments of Parthyaia/ Parthia and influenced by Hellenistic warfare. On the whole, it was especially the Parthyaia/ Parthians who managed to become familiar with Hellenistic warfare, including the use of Western arms. The Parthians/ Parthayains of the Hellenistic epoch were neighbours of the steppe peoples of the Massagetae and Dahae, and as such they must have acted as intermediaries between Hellenistic Iran and the steppe world. Besides, fighting in Alexander's army, the Dahae were able to know Macedonian tactics, arms and armour. The Roman historian Justin claims rightly that the fashion of Parthian arms was „partly native, partly Scythian“, it means Iranian and nomadic.¹⁷⁰ The highly skilled light horse-archers of the Dahae fulfilled a skirmish and harass function in the battles and supported the actions of the

¹⁶⁴ Mielczarek, *Cataphracti*, 95ff.

¹⁶⁵ For the cataphracts and similar cavalry formations in western Central Asia and Bactria, see Nikonorov, *Armies*, 50ff. and passim.

¹⁶⁶ The mounted archers did not play any important role in the Iranian warfare under the Achaemenids and they are seldom attested (cf. the presence of Bactrian horse-archers in the battle of Plataea, 479 BC - Herodotus 9.49).

¹⁶⁷ Various reported in Curtius (7.7.31–39) and Arrian (*An.* 4.5.2–9; 4.6.1–2).

¹⁶⁸ 2,000 foot and 300 horse of Alexander's army were killed, only few escaped. Horse archers – apparently Dahae forces (cf. Curtius 7.7.31–39) – proved particularly effective, whilst other cavalry units repeatedly charged the disrupted formation of the Macedonians.

¹⁶⁹ Concerning military issues, Coulston (*Developments*, 70) is convincing in his statement: „The Parthian takeover of Mesopotamia-Iran replaced the Old Persian system with the steppe form“.

¹⁷⁰ Justin 41.2.4.



cataphracts. The Arsacid Parthians employed large numbers of horse-archers, reaching up to almost 50,000 soldiers in one campaign. The horse-archery tactics originated in the milieu of the Turkestan nomads, and not in Iran. Those tactical developments are closely connected with changes in armour and weaponry, as shown by the evolution of the cataphracts. The cataphracts seem to have appeared amongst the Central Asian nomads at the end of the 4th – beginning of the 3rd century BC, and they were a response to Hellenistic tactics. While Iran remained under the control of Hellenistic rulers, the steppe tribes of Central Asia, especially the Massagetae and the Dahae, developed a new kind of cavalry troops, which enabled them to fight efficiently against Graeco-Macedonian armies. Thus, the Central Asian nomadic cavalymen employed a new type of lance imitating the Macedonian sarissa. Additionally, the cataphracts were equipped with heavy armour for horse and man. On the whole, the nomadic subjugation of Iran caused a shift over to reliance upon cavalry as the primary tactical arm.

Finally, there is another issue, which may be of significance with regard to the origins of Parthian warfare. Steppe traditions seem to have directly influenced the organization of the Parthian army, which was based on a decimal system. Lucian knows a Parthian division as having 1,000 soldiers. Also in the army of Surenas at Carrhae a decimal grade is to be observed.¹⁷¹ Achaemenid military units were organized decimally, too.¹⁷² However, the tradition of the Achaemenid military organization was interrupted after Alexander's invasion and replaced by new Hellenistic patterns, which used another system.¹⁷³ It seems probable that the Arsacids followed the steppe legacy of Middle and Central Asia, in which the rigid decimal organization of armies predominated, as seen among the Hsiung-nu.¹⁷⁴ The decimal system also existed in the military forces of the European Huns.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ Lucian, *Quomodo hist.*, 29; Cf. Shahbazi, *Army*, 496.

¹⁷² Shahbazi, *Army*, 492.

¹⁷³ On the structure of Hellenistic armies, see Bar Kochva, *Judas Maccabaeus*, 8ff. The basic unit of the Seleucid phalanx was the column made up of 16 soldiers.

¹⁷⁴ Each of the 24 leaders of the Hsiung-nu had a force of 10,000 soldiers which were subdivided along decimal lines, see Shih-chi/ Watson II, 163f. Each of the 24 leaders in turn appointed his own „chiefs of a thousand“, „chiefs of a hundred“, and chiefs of a ten“. The decimal system was used especially in time of war, see Barfield, *Hsiung-nu Confederacy*, 48f.

¹⁷⁵ Nikonorov, *Voennoe delo*, 239 with n. 16.



Conclusions

The most obvious approach to ascertain the importance of the nomadic traditions in Parthian Iran lies in the study of the social structure and military developments in the Arsacid Empire, with particular reference to its origins. To understand Arsacid history properly it must be kept in mind that the Parthian kingdom emerged as the result of a nomadic invasion in northeastern Iran. Although tightly bound to their steppe heritage, the Arsacids showed a remarkable ability to adopt promptly and efficiently a number of the hallmarks associated with the sedentary peoples whom they had subjugated, including the establishment of new cities, the creation of strongholds, and the introduction of a coinage system. On the whole, the first Arsacids – Arsaces I and Arsaces II – managed to create a new stable state.¹⁷⁶

The character of socio-economic and cultural relations within the Arsacid kingdom is an extremely complex one. The Arsacid Parthians maintained different relations with the nomads of Central Asia and the Caspian-Pontic steppes, including ties in terms of political marriages and alliances, moreover, even some Parthian kings highlighted their nomadic background (e.g. Sinatruces and Artabanus II). All those links strengthened the nomadic legacy in Parthia.

After the conquest of Parthyaia and Hyrcania, Arsaces I found himself in the predicament of ruling two worlds: the nomadic Aparni and the settled population of northeastern Iran. Apparently, the principal under which the social structure of the Arsacid heartland and of Arsacid Parthia operated was the nomadic legacy of the Aparni. The rigid division of Parthian society into „free-men“ and the lower ranks of the dependants as well as the dichotomies between an „equestrian estate“ and the rest of society (peasants and townsmen) originated in the period when the Arsacid kingdom was established and when the invading nomads subjugated the indigenous population of northeastern Iran. Essentially, the aristocracy of the victorious Aparni became the ruling

¹⁷⁶ In the history of Iran and Central Asia, a number of states of the conquest type emerged as established by the intruders from the steppe. As a rule, the nomads quickly adopted important achievements of the sedentary populations. Thus, the Seljuk steppe chieftains “easily acclimatized to the regal trappings of Middle Eastern monarchy” (Golden, *History*, 219). The early Ghaznavids showed “remarkable faculty for assimilation to the Perso-Islamic governmental ethos in the lands which they took over” (Bosworth, *Incursions*, 9). The Qarluk Khans and Seljuk Begs “achieved power with surprising ease, when one considers the superiority in manpower, weapons and equipment which the conventional professional armies of the Sāmānids, Būyids and Ghaznavids must have possessed” (Bosworth, *Incursions*, 10).

elite in Parthia, but it assimilated – mainly in the lower ranks – also parts of the traditional sedentary Iranian nobility of Parthyaia (and the adjacent lands including Hyrcania). Parthian social structure was closely connected with the state's military organization, which for the most part was founded on nomadic practices inherited from the Aparni.

The ethos of the Arsacid Parthians – understood as the fundamental character underlying the Parthian guiding assumptions, customs, manners, mentality and Arsacid social as well as military institutions – was quite different from that of the Iranians in the Achaemenid period.¹⁷⁷ This ethos was essentially of nomadic descentance. Particularly striking in the picture of Parthian society is a close connection between higher status and horse-riding.¹⁷⁸ Horse-riding was treated by the Parthians as a hallmark of upper social ranks, being essentially reserved only for the free born men. Needless to say the military position of Parthian cavalry reflected this as well. All this is again nomadic heritage, and not Iranian sedentary tradition. Also the Parthian dress was of steppe origin. As rightly recognized by H. von Gall, the Parthian dress is to be treated as „ein Prärogativ, eine Art Amtstracht“, especially in the conquered territories of western Iran and Mesopotamia.¹⁷⁹ As far as can be judged at the present state of research, the iconographic materials provided by the statues from Ustyurt and Mangyshlak areas supply new evidence pointing towards close cultural relations between the Arsacid Parthians and the nomads of western Central Asia and set the research of many aspects of the nomadic-Parthian affinities upon a new course.

Generally speaking, the main fighting arms of the Parthians, the cataphracts and the horse-archers, were principally of steppe origin. The early Arsacid cavalry forces with their special equipment and highly sophisticated tactics were created in the milieu embracing the nomadic Dahae and Massagetae in Central Asia. A certain role in this process was played also by the sedentary Parthyaiaans/ Parthians in northeastern Iran. In developing their warfare, the nomads of the pre-Arsacid period, and then the Arsacid Parthians had to take

¹⁷⁷ Most central to a number of ancient societies was the aristocratic warrior ethos, in some aspects comparable with the ethos of the Arsacid Parthians. See, e.g., Gropp, *Herrscherethos*, 32–42 (military ethos of the Achaemenid Persians and the Macedonians); McCall, *Cavalry*, 2–12 and 78–99 (Roman cavalry and elite reputation); Hanson, *Classical Ethos*, 111–126 (Greek egalitarian military ethos); Nikonorov, *Voennoe delo*, 273f. (ethos of the Huns in Europe).

¹⁷⁸ A similar phenomenon – a link between cavalry service and elite status – is well documented in the history of Rome throughout the Republic. The term „cavalrymen“ (*equites*) referred there to a distinct class of the Romans, which was superior, in social and economic terms, to the infantry, see McCall, *Cavalry*, 2ff.

¹⁷⁹ Von Gall, *Architektur und Plastik*, 77.

into account Hellenistic innovations brought into Iran and Middle Asia by Alexander the Great and his successors.

The culture of the Parthians, their political, economic and military institutions underwent different influences, including Hellenistic and Old Iranian traditions. At the same time, the essential components of Parthian society, way of life and warfare remained rather conservative and were based on steppe nomadic factors, and as such they exhibit no principal ties with the Achaemenid period or with other traditions of the sedentary world in Western Asia.

The arguments I have put forward are best summarized by the classical writer Strabo, who evaluates the character of the Parthians. Thus, he claims that they „rule over so much land and so many tribes that in the size of their empire they have become, in a way, rivals of the Romans. The cause of this is their mode of life (*bios*), and also their customs (*ethe*), which contain much that is barbarian and Scythian in character, and which are conducive to power and success in war“.¹⁸⁰ In other words, nomadic elements proved to be one of the decisive causes of the Parthian rise to a world empire.

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¹⁸⁰ Strabo 11.9.2.

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Abbreviations

DNP = Der Neue Pauly

EncIr = Encyclopaedia Iranica

Ethno-Linguistic Markers of the Turco-Mongol Military and Persian Bureaucratic Castes in Pre-modern Iran and India

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The Muslim states that emerged in southwest and South Asia after the establishment of Turkish ruling dynasties in Ghaznavid times (tenth century C. E.), and persisted until the nineteenth century in India and the early twentieth in Iran, exhibit the symbiosis of a ruling military élite of pastoral nomadic provenance from the Inner Asiatic steppes (hitherto of Turkic language and ethnicity) and a bureaucratic administration of urban Iranian (or Persianized Indian) extraction and Persian language and culture. In post-Mongol administrations of Iran and northern India this bipartite pattern became routinized under a virtual caste system, consolidated by appeals to genealogy and pre-Islamic traditions, and labeled by ethnolinguistic references respectively to Turks and Persians. Attempts to cross lines under this system, as recorded in Safavid times, were often resented and resisted.

The ethnolinguistic labeling was not confined to the conventional catchphrase *Turk-o Tāzīk* and to *Fachsprache* use of Turkish and Persian, but is discernable at a subconscious level in the noun phrase syntax of the onomastics and titulature of the classes and individuals on each side of the professional dichotomy. The paper will discuss the history and rationale of this sociolinguistic sub-system, and illustrate the ways in which it was integrated with other ethnic and professional markers and how it influenced the languages involved.

1. Surface structure: the Grammar of the System

Professional castes and functional specialization of ethno-linguistic groups are nothing new in Iran. The Achaemenian kings reserved Persian for ceremonial

use, relying on Aramaic and Aramaean scribes in the day-to-day administration of their far-flung empire. The interdependence of status, function, language and ethnicity has been a notable feature of Persianate societies throughout the Islamic period. Western observers are accustomed to spotting these relationships primarily through surface lexical clues (in the terms used for a class as a whole or typical of individual members of the class: sayyid, shaykh, mulla, khoja, mirza, khan, aqa, begum, etc.), which they readily assimilate into their own languages and treat as discrete labels. Sometimes, however, the linguistic clues are subtler, concealed in the syntax of onomastic phrases in a way that supercedes the etymological or primary signification of the pertinent terms and defies assimilation or translation. Such a case is that of the relations between ethnicity, class and profession (more precisely, ethno-linguistic affiliation and professional caste) among the élite (and would-be élite) components of the Turco-Persian and Indo-Turco-Persian polities that coalesced after successive waves of Turk and Mongol nomadic armies conquered the Perso-Islamic lands of South and Southwest Asia between the eleventh and the sixteenth centuries. These socio-linguistic signposts are often more systematic than mere lexical labels in their delineation of both the idealized and the pragmatic relations between rulers and the military, bureaucratic, and religious élites of their realms.

In previous articles I have alluded to a systematically contrastive feature of word order (as it expresses noun phrase syntax) in Persian onomastic phrases (title and name) involving the terms *mīrzā* and *shāh*. I described the distinction as a marker of social class or caste, contrasting its referents in complex terms of ethnicity (Turk vs. Persian), profession (soldier vs. bureaucrat), and status (ruler vs. subject).¹ Here I propose to illustrate in greater detail the ramifications of this scheme and, so far as possible, outline its historical development.

It has long been remarked in passing that the Persian title *mīrzā*, when preposed as in, e.g., “*Mīrzā Šādiq Nāmī*,” denotes a court secretary or other civil servant, often with ambitions as a poet or historian and usually an ethnic Persian or Persianized (Shi‘i) Muslim Indian, Armenian, etc., whereas postposed *mīrzā*, as in “*Abbās Mīrzā*,” denotes a prince (the son of a ruler) of one of the Turkish (or Turco-Mongol, or Turkicized) dynasties that ruled in Iran, Central Asia, or India between the fifteenth and the nineteenth (in Iran, early twentieth) centuries. Since the latter usage means literally ‘born of a ruler’ and antedates the former, it has been taken as the original, the assumption being that the bureaucratic *Mīrzā Fulān* (to use the Persian universal pseudonym) was a devalued imitation of the autocratic *Fulān Mīrzā* by upwardly-mobile state function-

¹ See Perry, “*Mīrzā*”, 218–23, and “Historical Role”, 196–97.

aries, or was wished on them by those who noted their pretensions² – somewhat as an English youth with the surname “Clark” (cognate with the profession *clerk* and its doublet *cleric*) would be nicknamed “Nobby” (i.e., having pretensions to nobility) by his fellow soldiers or sailors.

A similar phenomenon, which has not (so far as I know) attracted any notice, is the fact that whereas the Safavid monarchs, from the accession of Shāh Ismā‘īl in 1501 to the death of Shāh Sulṭān-Ḥusayn in 1722 – or even, in the background, until the last of the Safavid puppets and pretenders left the stage in 1773 – used the royal title **before** their names, all the monarchs of subsequent Persian dynasties, from Nādir Shāh in 1736, through the Qajars, to Muḥammad Riżā Shāh ending in 1979, placed it **after** the name. This formulation was also adopted by the kings of Afghanistan, whose line began with Aḥmad Shāh Dur-rānī in 1747, the year of Nādir’s assassination.

The distinction of word order in both these cases is far from arbitrary, and may be explained in terms of Noun Phrase (NP) syntax. Essentially, a preposed title introduces a Persian onomastic phrase, and a postposed title marks a Turkish one. Linguistically speaking, in an onomastic noun phrase that includes an epithet, the epithet (or title, or honorific) is the head noun, i.e., the constant term, whereas the given name is the modifier, i.e., the variable: King John, King Charles, etc., answer the question: Which king? (For further precision, the name may then become the head noun and another epithet the modifier: Charles the Second answers the question: Which [King] Charles?) In Persian, NP syntax is right-branching, i.e., modifiers follow the head: *dukhtar-i zibā* ‘the beautiful girl’, *Kākā Rustam* ‘Uncle Rustam’, *Shāh ‘Abbās*. In Turkish, NP syntax is left-branching, i.e., modifiers precede the head: Persian phrases like those above appear in Turkish (and Turco-Persian of Iran) in mirror-image: as *güzel kız*, *ikinci Mehmet*, *Rüstem Paşa*, and *Faṭḥ-‘Alī Shāh*. This applies likewise to collocations such as the possessive *ezāfeh*, as in servile names: thus, Persian *Ghulām(-i) Ḥusayn* vs. Turkish (strictly, Turco-Persian) *Ḥusayn Qul-i*, ‘Slave of Ḥusayn’.

The contrasting word order in both *shāh* and *mīrżā* phrases may thus be seen as manifestations respectively of Persian and of Turkish NP word order. Now, Turkish dialects have been (as they still are) widely spoken in Persia, especially by the ruling élites and their troops during the Turco-Mongol hegemony. Nevertheless, as even the Ilkhans, Timurids, Safavids, and Qajars acknowledged, the primary and official language of the realm – ceremonial, administrative, literary – was Persian. The selective and systematic (though unconscious)

² E.g., Ahmad, “The British Museum *Mīrżānāma*”, 100, 108–9.



flouting of normal grammatical rules, in this instance the use of the NP syntax of Turkish within the context of Persian, is sociologically significant. A contemporaneous and parallel phenomenon, the use of the “Persian *izafet*” in (Ottoman) Turkish (e.g., *bāb-i ‘Ālī* ‘Sublime Porte’ – the converse of the Turkish NP construction, as seen, perversely, in the synonymous Safavid “Persian” phrase *‘Ālī qāpū*) was a marker of high, or literary, style. These collocations were, moreover, of comparatively widespread occurrence and instantly recognizable; whereas the use of a “Turkish *ezafet*” in Persian was virtually confined to onomastic phrases, and has gone unremarked.

This socio-linguistic distinction by syntactic rather than lexical means, as in Turco-Persian vs. Persian, has a close analogy in Anglo-Norman vs. English. After the Norman conquest of England in 1066 C.E., Franco-Norman political dominion introduced military and legal terms ordered in accordance with the right-branching NP syntax of French (head before modifier), which are still part of the English lexicon: *sergeant major*, *court martial*, *attorney general*, *notary public*, *letters patent*, *heir apparent*, *prince regent*, *queen mother*. Such frozen loans and calques (not all of them etymologically French) contrast not only in syntax but also in social register with the majority of left-branching Anglo-Saxon NPs (even where these include words of French origin) such as *private soldier*, *public house*, *junior clerk*. (And, incidentally, their aberrant syntax is as opaque and unremarkable to most modern English speakers as their Turco-Persian analogues are to Persian speakers.)

A closer look at the chronology and geography of these and similar usages reveals a complex underlying system that is intimately connected with the structure and evolution of Turco-Persian states and societies in South and Southwest Asia. Reference will be made to the Table, so as to illustrate the arguments below, in the following abbreviated form: P and T designate the columns exemplifying, respectively, Persian and Turkish syntactic formulations of onomastic phrases; the numbered lines proceed through historical examples (1–4) to an “inertial” instance (5), comprising dervishes’ names preserved only in shrines, and modern shahs deposed within living memory, and finally to modern variations on the theme (6–7). The symbols are used as follows: > indicates historical continuity of class reference (the referents are of the same social group, though in the case of *sultān* the term was progressively devalued); X denotes a differentiation in social class; / denotes a context-sensitive difference in usage that is not necessarily class-exclusive. Names, as distinct from titles or epithets, begin with a capital.

Table: Syntactic Switches in Ethnolinguistic Class Markers

Persian (P)		Turkish-in-Persian (T)
Historical		
1. sultān Sanjar...	>	Rustam sultān...
2. (Shāh-i Shujā'), shāh 'Abbās...	>	Nādir shāh, Aḥmad shāh...
3. shāh mīr Ḥamza,	X	Muḥammad shāh,
4. mirzā Bedil, mīrzā Malkum(-khān)	X	Shāhrukh mīrzā, 'Abbās mīrzā...
Inertial		
5. shāh 'Abd al-'Azīm, shāh Rizā...	X	Rizā shāh, Ṣāḥir shāh
Modern		
6. āqā sayyid 'Alī, āqā Najafī...	X	
7. [āqā-yi/ khānum-i Tīhrānī...	/	Ḥasan āqā, Zhāla khānum...]

2. Deep Structure: Historical Antecedents in Social Classes

Under the Sasanians, the functional classes or estates of the realm were traditionally four: Priests, Warriors, Cultivators and Artisans. In a later treatise (the "Letter of Tansar," ca. 6th century?) this division was modified to conflate Cultivators and Artisans and specify a class of Scribes (including administrators, poets and scholars) independently of Priests.³ Thenceforth Iranian societal theory was influenced successively by Arab-Islamic and Turco-Mongol notions of the components of society and their management.

Islam emphasized two salient components, "Men of the Sword" (*ahl al-sayf*) and "Men of the Pen" (*ahl al-qalam*), corresponding to Tansar's Warriors and Scribes. The Men of the Sword were ethnically heterogeneous, but in practice, beginning in the ninth century in the eastern caliphate (both in Baghdad and Samanid Bukhara) they came to be represented especially by the imported Turkish slave troops and their commanders. Both in Baghdad and in Ghazna, these commanders soon became supreme political as well as mere military

³ Shaki, "Class System", 656.

leaders. The Men of the Pen included both secular scholars and functionaries and the *‘ulamā’*, the latter in effect a priestly caste.

Islamic society was intrinsically more mobile than Sasanian society had been: the expanded scope of literacy went far to realize the Islamic ideal of a single community graded by degrees of piety rather than class distinctions. The traditional Iranian estates, too, had ideally constituted not a hierarchy, but a division of labor into categories of equal rank: farming and industry were acknowledged to be as essential and worthy occupations as the military or the priesthood. However, the categories were evidently conceived as self-perpetuating, functionally exclusive, and of unequal political power. Firdawsī’s description of the four estates, as established by the mythical culture-hero Jamshīd, recapitulates the classic Sasanian (pre-Tansar) world view, adding “Thus he [*sc.* Jamshīd] chose for each one a proper station (*pāyigāh*) and showed him the way/ So that each person might appreciate his own rank (*andāza*) and recognize those lesser and those greater.”⁴

This dual nature of the traditional classes – each enjoying equal theoretical value as functional components of the state, but the priestly-scribal and military-executive taking political precedence over the proletariat — continued into Islamic times, and was immediately complicated by a tendency for ethnic groups to identify themselves functionally with one or the other of the two upper classes. The Ghaznavid state contemporary with Firdawsī presented a social structure more like that of Tansar’s revision, but one already expressed to a great extent in ethnic terms: a Turkish executive and military élite, a Persian bureaucracy (scribal and priestly classes), and a third estate of cultivators-cum-artisans now formalized as the *ra‘īyyat*, the tax-paying proletariat of various Iranian and Indian peoples. From a modern scholarly perspective, the first class made history, the second class wrote about it, and the third class paid for it in silent anonymity.

Perhaps significantly, the formula for successful political economy known as the “Circle of Justice,” beloved by theorists of Persian government such as the celebrated Seljuk vizier Nizām al-Mulk, omits mention of the bureaucracy as a body from the five-fold causal chain of state stability: The Ruler is kept in power by the Army, which is paid from Revenue, which is derived as taxes from the Proletariat (*ra‘īyyat*), who are secured by Justice, which emanates from the Ruler. In the Ruler and his Army we at once recognize the military-executive class, and their explicit relationships with the cultivator-artisan class in the *ra‘īyyat*, but where are the Priests and Scribes? Hidden behind the re-

⁴ *Shāhnāma*, reign of Jamshīd, vv. 17–32 approx.



maining abstractions, of course, as the *éminences grises* who oversee both the collection of taxes and appropriation of revenue, and the administration of justice, linking all three functioning sectors of the circuit they have devised.

3. Turk and Tajik: Caste and the Lexicon

The Iranian Samanid rulers (9th–10th century) bore the Arabic title *amīr* ‘commander’, as bestowed on them by the caliph. This became in informal and poetic usage the Persianized word *mīr*, as seen also in its compounds *mīrzāda*/*mīrzā*, *mīr-āb* ‘irrigation supervisor’, *mīr-ākhur* ‘master of the stables’; the same apheresis is seen in the onomastic *bū* (< Ar. *abū*), and was typical of spoken Persian (Dārī) as distinct from written Pahlavī.⁵ However, their Turkish Ghaznavid and Seljuk successors (when not enjoying the new title of *suḷṭān*), appear to have been addressed only by the more formal, Arabicate *amīr*. The Persian poets and secretaries of both *mīr* and *amīr* were addressed mostly as *ostād* or *khwāja*, both these being Persian terms for educated men of prestige in the secular realm, while their religious functionaries went usually by the Arabicate honorific *shaykh*. The Perso-Arabic honorifics (Khwāja Ḥasan, Ustād Ḥasan, Shaykh Ḥasan) were now balanced by Turco-Mongolian ones (Ḥasan Beg, Ḥasan Khān, Ḥasan Āqā), each reflecting the NP syntax of its respective language.

Pari passu with the functional distribution of titles there evolved collective designations for the two top classes on an overtly ethnic basis. The Arabs were known generically to the Sasanians and their Near Eastern neighbors by the name of one of their more turbulent tribes, the *Ṭayyī*’ (Syriac *tayyāye*, Middle Persian *tāzīg* ‘a tribesman of the *Ṭayy[i]’* – cf. *Rāzīg*, New Persian *rāzi* ‘a citizen of Rayy’). A variant form of this, *tājik*, was later applied to Muslim Iranians and became the Persian term for Iranians, as distinct from Turks, much as the alliterative and assonant term ‘*ajam*’ distinguished Iranians from ‘*arab*, the A-rabs.⁶ From ca. 1300, the alliterative phase *Turk-o Tāzīk*/*Tājīk*, generally rhymed with *dūr-o nazdīk* ‘far and near’, is found frequently in histories of the Ilkhanids, Timurids, Safavids and so on. In itself ‘*az Turk-o Tāzīk*’ means little

⁵ Other such doublets, of Persian words, are *Anāhid*/*Nāhid*, *Anūshiravān*/*Nūshiravān*, and the prepositions *abā*/*bā*, *abar*/*bar*.

⁶ The chronology and sociology of *tāzīk*/*tājīk* is too complex to be debated here. See, e.g., Sundermann, “Early attestation”; Subtelny, “Symbiosis”, 48, dates it after the Arab Muslim conquest of Central Asia, which is certainly too late.

more than the English ‘every Tom, Dick and Harry’ or the German ‘Krethi und Plethi’, i.e., all and sundry. Beneath the cliché, however, lies an acknowledgment of the importance of the two most salient ethno-linguistic groups of the states ruled by Mongols or Mughals, Qizilbash or other Turkmans, and of the paramount societal functions that each had appropriated.

The symbiosis of Turk and Tajik in Iran reached its zenith in the early 1500s, when a Turkicized Sufi *ṭarīqāt*-turned local ruling dynasty, the Safawiyya, with a Turkman tribal army (the Qizilbash), forcibly converted the Persian populace to Imami Shi‘ism, and ruled as yet another classic Turco-Mongol steppe oligarchy, administering its realms through co-optation of the age-old Persian bureaucracy, which (in its top echelons) was itself equally dynastic and self-conscious in its God-given function. The ideal division of labor advocated in Firdawsi’s dictum was not always achieved. Ethnic Mongols and Turks occasionally exercised functions that were more administrative or bureaucratic than military, and indulged in poetry and the arts;⁷ and Persians were sometimes appointed to high military command. In the latter case, at least, this “usurpation” was actively resented: when the first Safavid shah, Ismā‘il, persisted in appointing Persians to the post of *vakīl*, his personal viceregent, and even in sending these men on campaign in supreme command of his Turkman supporters, the humiliated Qizilbash amirs bridled. They deserted one such “Tajik” in a crucial battle against the Uzbeks, and murdered another.⁸

4. *Kings and Beggars*

It is often forgotten that under the “slave” dynasties of the Ghaznavids and the Delhi sultans, the ruling élites of northern India were Turkicized from the eleventh century, even before the Mongol invasions, and more thoroughly than in Iran. It was among these rulers that the New Persian form of the old title, *shāh*, was first assumed, four centuries before the Safavids formalized this titulature in Iran – and predominantly in Turkish, not Persian, syntactic form. In this newly conquered pagan land, class distinctions were established earlier and more emphatically than in Iran, between Turco-Muslim ruler (*pādshāh*) and Indian subject (*ra‘īyyat*), and between Turco-Mongol warrior (*khān*) and Indo-Persian scribe (*mīrzā*). The majority of Turkish rulers, from later Ghaznavid times (Bahrām Shāh and Khusraw Shāh, 1118–1160), through the various dy-

⁷ See Savory, “Qizilbash”.

⁸ Savory, “Significance”, 185; *Iran under the Safavids*, 32.

nasties of Delhi sultans (Ārām Shāh, Tughluq Shāh, Muḥammad Shāh and twenty others (1210–1450) – all assumed the Persian title of *shāh*, but in a Turkish syntactic style. The sultans of Bengal (1336–1576) and of Gujarat (1403–1573, of Punjabi origin) virtually all followed suit, as did the non-Turkish Afghan Sūrī dynasty (Islām Shāh, Sikandar Shāh).⁹

In western Iran, from the post-Mongol period, regional rulers occasionally assumed (or were given) names incorporating the title *shāh*: such were the Muẓaffarids Shāh-i Shujāʿ, Shāh Yaḥyā, Shāh Maḥmūd and Shāh Maṣṣūr, between 1358 and 1393. Although these onomastics are Persian NPs and may appear to anticipate the Safavid assumption of the royal title, they remain individual names and not items in a systematic dynastic nomenclature (as is shown by the names of other Muẓaffarid rulers, Sulṭān Abū Ishāq and Sulṭān Muʿtaṣim – and by the fact that members of the family who did not accede to rulership bore names such as Shāh Muẓaffar and Sulṭān Uvays).

Of the few Mughal emperors who affected the title, surprisingly, only three names show the standard Turkish formulation (Aʿzam Shāh, Aḥmad Shāh and two Bahādur Shāhs); while four individuals have the Persian word order (two Shāh ʿĀlams and two Shāh Jahāns). But here, as with the Muẓaffarids, we must be careful. The last two examples are in essence common nouns in transparent Persian *ezāfeh* phrases meaning ‘king of the world’. Like many Persianate **regal** names in either Turkish or Persian syntax, they are **regal** names, i.e., modes of address assumed on enthronement, not given names supplemented by a title. There are Jahānshāhs and ʿĀlamshāhs in other dynasties, which can be interpreted either as Turkish-style possessive NPs or Persian compound nouns of the type *sar-dard* ‘head-ache’, with preposed modifier; it therefore seems best to treat both these formulations as Persian collocations equivalent to given names. (There are a few exceptions on other grounds, such as *shāh-rukh*, which is the name of a chess move, and is simply a given name – as in Shāhrukh Mirzā, the son of Nādir Shāh).

During the latter part of this same period (i.e., the Timurid era in Iran and India, before the Safavids, ca. 1400–1500), two complementary socio-linguistic changes occurred. First, some leaders of Sufī orders and prominent dervishes began to preface their names with titles appropriate to soldiers and rulers – *mīr* (usually this vernacular Persian form, be it noted, not the re-formalized *amīr* of the Turco-Mongol ruler) and *shāh* – in accordance with Persian syntax: Mīr Ḥaydar, Mīr Surkh, Mīr Niʿmat-ʿAlī, Mīr ʿĀlamshāh-i Hindī, Shāh Mīr (d. 1396), Shāh Niʿmatullāh Valī (d. 1431), Shāh Mīr Ḥamza. Most apparent ex-

⁹ For these and other dynasties mentioned, see Bosworth, *New Islamic Dynasties*.



ceptions to these formulations may be explained syntactically. Thus *Mullā Shāh*, an alternate designation of *Shāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Aḥmad*, an Indian *Qādirī* saint (d. 1661), is evidently the result of a superordinate (Persian-style) title *mullā* combining with a deleted given name, i.e., “*Mullā Shāh(-Muḥammad)*.” So, too, it should be noted that the *shāh* postposed after the name ‘*Alī* in many dervishes’ names, as *Mast ‘Alī-shāh*, *Mullā* (for *Mawlā-yi*) ‘*Alī-shāh* ‘bondsman of ‘*Alī the king*’, is not an honorific of the bearer but a title belonging to the Imam ‘*Alī*, who is conventionally *shāh-i mardān* ‘king of men’ – admittedly in his Safavid-era Turkish royal syntax (‘*Alī Shāh*); but the whole phrase is thus a composite given name, not a titular phrase.

Secondly, many secretaries, poets (*Mīrzā Bedil*), painters (*Mīrzā Bābā*), and other courtiers began to affect the princely title *mīrzā* (Indo-Persian variant, *mirzā*, with a short first vowel) before their names, likewise Persian style. Thus the Turco-Mongol rulers and the two classes with which they functioned most closely – their protégés and spiritual patrons the dervishes, and their court employees the clerks, ministers, poets and artists – were chiasmically contrasted by the syntax of their identical lexical labels (Table, rows 3 and 4).

The psychology, and even the chronology, of the early stages of this process are far from clear. In many cultures, the figures of King and Beggar are polar opposites, ripe for anecdotal and metaphorical reversal, and in Persia especially the Dervish as King is an established poetic trope. Turco-Mongol rulers, notably Timur (while often flouting the strictures of formal Islam) acknowledged certain dervishes as their patrons, acquiesced in being treated imperiously and took no umbrage as these ragged saints assumed the titles of *mīr* or *shāh*. It may indeed be fair to speculate that the assumption of the (Persian-style) title *shāh* by *Ismā‘il*, head of the *Ṣafavī* Sufi order (and in hindsight king of Iran), was inspired by the recently established tradition of dervish “kings” rather than by political examples in contemporary Gujarat or long-ago Sasanian Iran.¹⁰ This view is supported by the fact that European travelers to Safavid Persia usually referred to the ruler (for upward of the first hundred years of Safavid rule) as the “Sophy” (a blend of *Ṣafavī* and *ṣūfī*), rather than the “Shah”; this last term, in fact, did not gain wide currency in European use until Qajar times.

The appropriation of the (etymologically Persian) title *mīrzā* in a syntactically Turkish onomastic by the hereditary Turkish-speaking rulers of *Irān-zamīn* can be seen as a subconscious expression of their ethno-linguistic solidarity while they continued to function within a Persianate society, a marker of their status as scions of a ruling élite and a warrior caste vis-à-vis the scribal

¹⁰ Cf. Algar, “Darvish”, 75.



class of urban, Persian-speaking administrators. Similarly, the historical switch in the *shāh* onomastic from Persian to Turkish word order appears to be a belated acknowledgement of this centuries-old scheme, a paradigmatic normalization by *Systemzwang*. The Arabicate title *sulṭān* had been similarly postposed in (Turco-)Persian by early Qajar times, and had additionally been devalued to the rank of a village headman (Table, row 1).¹¹ But it is also tempting, looking ahead, to see the delayed postposing of the title (precisely after the demise of the Safavid dynasty) as not merely an alignment with the inherited usage of *Fulān Mīrzā* but also an assertion of secular royalty, a break with the failed Safavid experiments in quasi-priest-kingship. That it was inaugurated by Nādir Shāh, notorious for his no-nonsense *Realpolitik* in matters of religion, lends substance to this view.

5. The Two *Mīrzās*: Caste and Syntax

The genesis of Persian-style *mīrzā* onomastics is even less clear, and its application far from absolute (Persian-style epithets *Mīr* and *Mīrzā* also preface the names of a few of the élite priestly caste of religious scholars, as *Mīr Lawḥī*). But whatever the historical dynamics, a synchronic perspective confirms that the appropriation of *mīrzā* and *shāh* in Turkish syntagmata marked the political dominance of Turco-Mongol military dynasts over the Persianate world; and that this circumscribed syntactic shift had left the way clear for the titles, first of *shāh*, then of *mīr* and *mīrzā*, to be used in Persian syntagmata, **metaphorically**, in the titlature of Sufi leaders (a new vernacular priestly caste) and bureaucrats, writers, and painters (the scribal caste), each of which represented social niches where Persians and other non-Turks retained cultural and quasi-political prominence.

If the ethno-syntactic differentiation of *shāh* NPs began in India, that of *mīrzā* NPs appears to have begun in Timurid-era Iran, and established itself rapidly under the early Safavids. The respective functions of the *mīrzās* were often manipulated by royal politics. Thus Shāh Ismā‘īl established the new office of *ṣadr* (head of the religious establishment), generally headed by scholars of the Persian scribal caste such as *Mīrzā Makhdūm Sharīfī*, in a bid to bureaucratize the Shi‘i ulama, i.e., to amalgamate the clerical and scribal castes under royal control. The Safavid Queen Mother a few decades later, scheming

¹¹ See Malcolm, *History of Persia II*, 123–25; Perry, “*Mīrzā*”, 221–23.

to secure the succession for her son Ḥamza Mīrzā, had him appointed *vakīl* of the Supreme Divan, authorizing him to affix his seal to documents above that of the vizier, Mīrzā Salmān – posing a potential confrontation between the military-executive and scribal-secretarial castes.¹²

Over the course of the next two centuries, however, this syntactic chiasmus was not only established in Persia, but was carried by the periodic emigration of Persian *Mīrzā Fulāns* (and, in smaller numbers, of deposed or ignored *Fulān Mīrzās*) from their politically unstable homeland to the hospitable courts of Muslim India. Here the “preposed” Mīrza, much in demand and highly respected, established his collective credentials and burnished his mystique. He was a Persian (or Persianized native), not a Turk, who used Persian in his secretarial and poetical writing; an administrator following traditional practice, not an arbitrary executive; a civilian, not a soldier; an urban resident, not a steppe dweller; hence, civilized and urbane, not wild and boorish. To make these points (albeit in non-confrontational terms) and reinforce class solidarity, there evolved the literary genre of “manuals for Mīrzās” (*mīrzā-nāma*), a bourgeois successor, as it were, to the Persian “mirrors for princes.” Significantly, this development took place in seventeenth-century Mughal India, where so many aspects of the Turco-Persian tradition became routinized and sophisticated, and where quasi-ethnic and professional castes had been institutionalized long before the advent of Islam. One of these works was penned by a Mīrzā Kāmran – not to be confused with the emperor Bābur’s son, Kāmran Mīrzā.¹³

It is probably a sociolinguistic universal that titles tend to be progressively devalued over time. By the end of the nineteenth century, in large part as a result of the proliferation of Qajar progeny and the Shahs’ indiscriminate bestowal of epithets, *khān* and (Persian-style) *mīrzā* were no longer worth their weight in paper, and no longer served to distinguish Men of the Sword from Men of the Pen (since many upwardly-mobile persons boasted both epithets). Even before their decline, these epithets underwent a shift of ethnic (though not so much linguistic) affiliation in Iran. Within a century of the establishment of Safavid power, as a result of the reforms of Shāh ‘Abbās, a new ethnic source of royal support – the Georgian and Armenian *ghulām* (‘slave’) class – had effectively displaced the Turkman Qizilbash in positions of military leadership, and was even selectively invading the purview of the Persian bureaucracy. Men such as the Georgian Allāh Verdī Khān and his son Imām Qulī Khān (ffl. 1595–1633) and the Armenian Muḥammad Beg (1640s–60s) served as military

¹² Cf. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, respectively 30, 71.

¹³ See Ahmad, “The British Museum *Mīrzānāma*”.

commanders, regional governors, ministers of state with the vizierate and other portfolios.

These Caucasians took Persian or Turkish or Arabicate names, were generally bi- or tri-lingual, and blurred the classic distinction between Turkish warrior and Persian scribal castes. Ultimately, however, they were assimilated into the bureaucracy rather than the military, and by early Qajar times (1800) were largely indistinguishable from their Persian colleagues. Typical is the name, and socio-professional status, of the Armenian Mīrzā Malkum Khān (1815–1908), a “preposed,” i.e., Persianized bureaucratic *mīrzā*, enhanced by the erstwhile military and executive title *khān*, which was by his time ethnically and professionally neutral and suffering an inflationary decline in prestige.

6. Modern Developments

When the European-style surname was mandated under Rīzā Shāh in 1930s Iran, the Turkish epithets *āqā* and *khānum* were syntactically Persianized, i. e., adapted to the right-branching *ezafeh* NP (Table, P7). Informal Persian usage, however, prefers the Turkish syntax of *ḥasan Āqā*, etc. (T7), to address the same people in a different social context.

Relics of the old system lingered on into the twentieth century, though no longer actively motivated by ethnicity or profession. “Rīzā Shāh” was the king, even though not ethnically or linguistically Turkish (though indubitably of the military caste), whereas “Shāh Rīzā” (*shahrīzā*) was a dervish, no longer alive, but (like Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīm and Shāh Mīr Ḥamza) the saintly incumbent of a shrine, in the town of Qumishah. This distinction is no longer generally transparent to Iranians, who in the 1920s changed the town’s name to Shahreza in flattery of Rīzā Shāh, then after the Islamic revolution changed it back to Qumishah in order to purge it of associations with the deposed Pahlavis. Ironically, Qumishah (with consonantal *h* – not Qumishé, as generally pronounced!) is etymologically *qawn-e shāh*, the clan of some secular shah,¹⁴ whereas Shāh Rīzā was a pious Sufi.

There is one arena where a subtle subroutine of onomastic syntax still defines status and function: between the secular and the clerical, on the “Persian” side of the Table (P6, P7). It is marked by variations of usage in yet another ti-

¹⁴ Nawbān, *Vajh*, 85–86.

tle, the only one to have developed a three-way syntactic contrast: Turkish *aqā* (*āqā*).

Historically, ulama and Sufis (both men of the cloth, but explicitly different cloth – *‘abā* and *khirqā*) have often been at daggers drawn; one eighteenth-century mullā earned the sobriquet *Ṣūfī-kush* ‘the Sufi-slayer’. The dervishes’ lexico-syntactic bid for formal status as a clerical caste has since been trumped by the high clergy, the *rūḥānīūn* of pre-modern and modern Iran. Whereas the Sufi “shahs” and “mirs” are all in their graves, it has become customary for *mujtahids* and other prominent Shi‘i clerics to be addressed, and referred to, as *āqā*; and where this epithet is combined with a name, it is (a) preposed, Persian-style, but (b) without an explicit *ezāfeh* syllable: *Āqā Najafī*, *Āqā Shaykh ‘Alī*, *Āqā Sayyid ‘Alī Mūsavī-yi Ḥusaynābādī*. This formula, *Āqā Fulān(i)*, thus contrasts with the modern formula *Āqā-yi Fulānī* for civil surnames (which, indeed, it antedates).

The Turco-Mongolian word *aqā* has a long history in the Turco-Persian realms.¹⁵ It has evolved semantically from ‘big brother’ (as a postposed epithet) to ‘court eunuch’ (an independent substantive) and hence ‘government functionary, authority figure’; it has been applied Persian-style to civil servants (of the *mīrzā* class, e.g. *Āqā Buzurg Tihirānī*), writers (*Āqā Tabrīzī*), artists (*Āqā Rizā Haravī*), and even dervishes (*Āqā Mīrzā ‘Alī Naqī*, who died in 1878), but is now primarily, though not exclusively, the mark of the élite priestly class. The relegation of the Turkish-style formula “*Ḥasan Āqā*” (Table, P7) to the familiar and vernacular registers echoes the vernacular lexical status of much Turkish vocabulary used in Persian.¹⁶ The symbiotic confrontation of Persian scribe-poet-dervish with Turkish warrior-king (encapsulated in the *shāh* and *mīrzā* chiasmus) has given way to an uneasy juxtaposition of priest-ruler and secular citizen (Table, P6 X P7), both identified by the same Turkish lexeme (*āqā*) construed in Persian syntagmata, but distinguished by a single syllable.

¹⁵ Doerfer, *Türkische und mongolische Elemente I*, 133–40.

¹⁶ See Perry, “Historical Role”, 195–96.



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Das vorläufige Ende der Razzien. Nomadisches Grenzkriegertum und staatliche Ordnung im Sudan

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“The continuous wars between these two powers led to a special military organization in the districts on both sides of the frontier. The conditions in these districts, which we shall call “marches”, were quite analogous on both sides, on the Byzantine marches as well as on the Moslem marches. The population of the marches was destined to perpetual frontier warfare. These march warriors are continually in readiness to parry the raids of the enemy, and in turn also undertake similar raids, frequently penetrating deep into the territory of the foe. Booty constitutes for the marches the principal economic basis of life. [...] The continuous frontier fighting created warrior clans, faithfully devoted to their chiefs and aspiring to the greatest possible independence, fully conscious of their own importance in their relations with the government. [...] All these tensions enumerated above easily lead to open conflict, and then the march-warriors are quite ready to go over to the enemy on the other side of the frontier. For in the same degree that they differ from their own hinterland, they resemble the march-warriors of the foe.”¹

Grenzkriegertum an der Flanke des Staats

Im September 1898 schlugen anglo-ägyptische Truppen die entscheidende Schlacht bei der Eroberung des Sudans gegen ein mahdistisches Heer auf der Ebene von Karari, etwas nördlich von Omdurman. Dies war das Gründungsmassaker des anglo-ägyptischen Sudans, das der Bevölkerung des Niltals mit über 10 000 Toten an einem Vormittag ein für alle Mal die überlegene Fähigkeit des modernen Staats zur alles brechenden Gewalt vor Augen führte.

¹ Wittek, *Rise*, 17.

Die Eroberung des Sudans war einer der ersten industrialisierten Kriege des Kontinents. Nicht die Kavallerie entschied den Ausgang wie in früheren Kriegen der Region, sondern Kanonenboote und Maschinengewehre. Von Ägypten aus war über Jahre hinweg eine bürokratisch organisierte Kriegsmaschine in Gang gesetzt worden, hatte in den Jahren 1896 mit der Schlacht von Firket und der Besetzung von Dongola und 1897 mit der Schlacht von Abu Hamed an Schwung gewonnen und dann den Widerstand des Mahdireichs im Niltal in den dramatischen Monaten zwischen der Schlacht von Atbara und der Schlacht von Karari niedergewalzt.² Ihr Kommandeur zeigte noch im Monat von Karari den Franzosen, welche ebenfalls koloniale Interessen im Sudan besaßen, in Fashoda³ die Flagge. Hinter den Linien hatte die Eisenbahn, ausschließlich zum Zweck der Eroberung von Ägypten aus durch die Nubische Wüste gebaut, Truppen und immer neues Material nilauf transportiert.⁴

Die industrielle Armee eroberte das Niltal. Aber die angrenzenden Vorfelder, im Osten, im Süden und auch im Westen hat nicht die Armee erobert. Den Westen haben die Nomaden erobert. Der Westen war zwanzig Jahre lang nur nominell, bestenfalls punktuell anglo-ägyptisch, ebenso der Süden und die Nubaberge. Abgesehen von einem kleinen Kolonialkrieg gegen das Sultanat Darfur im Jahr 1916 ist die Integration des Westens in den kolonialen Staat nicht auf die militärische Leistung einer Armee, deren Stärke ohnehin bald durch den Abzug von Truppen und Offizieren in den Burenkrieg und an andere Schauplätze reduziert wurde, zurückzuführen. Vielmehr gründet sie auf der politischen Leistung der Verwaltung.

Die Eroberung der Savannen westlich des Nils geschah durch nomadische Milizen in einer langen Serie von Razzien, Gegenrazzien, kleinen Territorialkriegen und lokalen Rebellionen. Bereits vor 1896 hatten sich Milizen der nomadischen Kabābīš, Hawāwīr, Sawārāb und 'Abābda der Kriegsführung des anglo-ägyptischen Oberkommandos angeschlossen und hatten sich bei ihren Razzien tief in mahdistisches Gebiet vorgewagt.⁵ Nachdem mit der Eroberung des Nilufers bis Dongola und ad-Dabba, dem Ausgangspunkt der alten Karawanenroute nach Kordofan, abzusehen war, dass die anglo-ägyptische Armee tatsächlich ernsthafte Chancen hatte, erhielten die tribalen Milizen weiteren

² Schlacht von Firket Juni 1896, Besetzung von Dongola September 1896, Schlacht von Abu Hamed, wo die Eisenbahnlinie von Ägypten durch die Nubische Wüste wieder den Nil trifft, August 1897, Schlacht von Atbara April 1898.

³ Fashoda ist das heutige Kodok im Gebiet der Shilluk nördlich des Zusammenflusses von Sobat und Weißem Nil.

⁴ Keown-Boyd, *Good dusting*.

⁵ Wingate, *Mahdism*, 289–90, 338–9.

Zulauf. Sie trugen den Krieg an der Flanke der Niltalarmee auf ihre Weise durch die Bayuda-Wüste in die Savannen Kordofans. Je klarer sich der Zusammenbruch des Mahdireichs im Niltal abzeichnete, desto mehr weitete sich der Aufstand in der Savanne zu einer allgemeinen Plünderung der Ruinen des auseinanderfallenden Mahdireichs aus. Innerhalb eines Jahres stand der ganze Westen in Flammen.⁶

Mochten die Befehlshaber der Niltalarmee und im Anschluss daran auch die Geschichtsschreibung die nomadischen Krieger als „auxiliaries“ oder Hilfstuppen begreifen, so verstanden sich die Nomaden selbst keineswegs als ein Hilfsaufgebot unter Order der Armeeführung, sondern eher als Verbündete, die im Schatten der siegreichen Armee und von ihr aufgerüstet eigene Rechnungen zu begleichen hatten. Sie folgten damit einer Tradition des Grenzkriegertums, die bis in die Zeit der Sultanate der Für und der Funğ im 17. bzw. 16. Jahrhundert zurückverfolgbar ist.

Grenzkriegertum, ein Typ nomadischer militärischer Organisation

Mit dem Begriff des Grenzkriegertums greife ich auf ein Konzept des Historikers Paul Wittek zurück, der diesen Begriff im Zusammenhang der jahrhundertelangen Konfrontation zwischen Byzanz und den Seldschuken geprägt hat, aus der schließlich das Osmanische Reich hervorging⁷. Unter Grenzkriegertum fasst Wittek die kriegerische Bevölkerung an den Grenzen zwischen beiden Mächten, ethnisch gemischt und, wiewohl auf der einen Seite der Verteidigung des Islams und auf der anderen Seite des Christentums verpflichtet, eher von einer gemeinsamen Kultur des Grenzgebiets geprägt denn von der Zugehörigkeit zu ihren jeweiligen Staaten. Von der Zentralgewalt als militärische Institution zur Verteidigung der Grenze gedacht, bildete sich im Grenzgebiet eine eigene heroische, auf Razzia und Beute basierende Lebensweise aus, die neben der Tatsache, dass ethnische Zugehörigkeit häufig quer über die Grenze ging, die benachbarten Grenzkriegerschaften beider Seiten einander kulturell ähnlicher machte als ihren jeweiligen Zentralgewalten.

⁶ Beck, *Nomads of Northern Kordofan*, 76–7.

⁷ Das Konzept des Grenzkriegertums ist in Witteks Werk über den Aufstieg des Osmanischen Reichs (1938), insbesondere S. 17–21, und in einer eher unzugänglichen Schrift über das Fürstentum Mentesch (Wittek, *Das Fürstentum Mentesch*) versteckt. Ich bin Laszlo Vajda zu Dank dafür verpflichtet, dass er mich darauf aufmerksam gemacht hat. Vgl. auch Vajda, „Paul Witteks Konzeption vom Grenzkriegertum“.

Auch politisch verfügten die Grenzkriegerschaften über ein überraschendes Maß an Autonomie gegenüber ihren Zentralgewalten. In der tribalen Gesellschaft des Grenzgebiets, bemerkt Wittek, förderte der ständig präsente Krieg das Auftreten von militärischen Führern, die mit dem Versprechen von Schutz und Beute – sowie mit Ehrungen, Zuwendungen und Unterstützung ihrer jeweiligen Zentralregierung – Anhängerschaften um sich scharen konnten. („Krieger-Clans“ nennt Wittek diese und trifft damit das tribalisierende Element des Prozesses, der aus Anhängerschaft Stammeszugehörigkeit macht.) Der entfernten Zentralgewalt gegenüber traten die Führer selbstbewusst auf, führten ihre Razzien auch gegen deren Willen fort, forderten andererseits aber doch tatkräftige Unterstützung. An der Grenze herrschte also eine prekäre Balance zwischen Parteigängerschaft und Auflehnung, Unterwerfung und lokaler Autonomie, denn die Grenzkrieger waren nicht wie in einer Armee einem Oberkommando verpflichtet, sondern in erster Linie ihren eigenen Führern gegenüber loyal. Im Zusammenspiel zwischen Grenzkriegerschaft und Zentralgewalt schwang daher als Unterton stets auch die Drohung mit, mit der eigenen Regierung zu brechen und mit der gesamten Anhängerschaft zum Gegner überzulaufen.

Die Grenze, „the marches“, bietet den Generälen der Staaten, in der Thronfolge übergangenen Prinzen, einheimischen Häuptlingen und energischen Abenteurern allerhand Chancen, sich zu bewähren, sich zurückzuziehen, nach einem Rückschlag ihre Wunden zu lecken, eine Gefolgschaft unter den Grenzkriegern aufzubauen und von dieser Position der Stärke in die Politik der Staaten einzugreifen, möglicherweise sogar mit ihrer Kavallerie in die Hauptstadt einzumarschieren, ihre Regierung zu stürzen und selbst die Macht an sich zu reißen.

Sieht man einmal von den religiösen Implikationen der Verteidigung des Glaubens ab, die dem Grenzkriegertum im byzantinisch-seldschukischen Grenzgebiet eine spezifische ideologische Färbung und damit Loyalität verliehen, das Renegatentum jedoch nicht verhindern konnten, so blühte genau dieser Typ des Grenzkriegertums in den Savannen des Sudans bis in das erste Viertel des 20. Jahrhunderts, bis es der anglo-ägyptischen Verwaltung in einer zähen Anstrengung gelang, die Herrschaft ihres Rechts auszudehnen und die Nomaden der Savannen unter ihrem Projekt der Eingeborenenverwaltung neu zu organisieren. Vorher stand das ganze Savannengebiet westlich des Nils, zwischen den Nubabergen und Darfur bis weit in den heutigen Tschad unter der Herrschaft der Razzia.

Und damit bin ich bei meiner These über Nomaden, Militär und Staatlichkeit angelangt. Die Razzia war in den Savannen des westlichen Sudans en-

demisch. Aber sie war dennoch keine autonome Erscheinung, kein *pristines*, aus der nomadischen Lebensweise umstandslos hervorgehendes Gewaltphänomen. Sie ist nur im Kontext der staatlichen Organisation im Rücken der Nomaden, auf der einen Seite der Staaten am Nil, auf der anderen Seite der Staaten in den Bergen Darfurs und weiter im Westen verständlich. Die Nomaden waren die Grenzkrieger der Staaten.

Während Wittek mit seinem Konzept auf die Herausbildung der osmanischen Herrschaft zielt, geht es mir eher darum, sein Konzept zum Verständnis der politischen Prozesse innerhalb der Grenzgesellschaft nutzbar zu machen. Wie Vajda⁸ und in einem schwachen Echo auf Ibn Haldūn bin ich der Ansicht, dass das Grenzkriegertum einen spezifischen Typ in den Beziehungen zwischen Staat und Nomaden (besser: Beduinen, berittene und daher Nomaden mit militärischer Relevanz) bildet. Das Konzept greift dort, wo wir es mit Nomaden an der Grenze des Staats zu tun haben. Sie leben weder ganz unterworfen noch ganz autonom, sondern stützen sich in einer Situation der Nachbarschaft in ihrem politischen Handeln sowohl auf lokale als auch auf staatliche Ressourcen, die sie mit strategischen Allianzen von ihren jeweiligen staatlichen Verbündeten einwerben, um ihre lokalen Ziele zu verfolgen. Es handelt sich um eine ganz eigene Art der politischen Verflechtung. Dies wiederum hat wichtige Konsequenzen für lokale Herrschafts- und ethnogenetische Prozesse. Von ihren mächtigen Verbündeten mögen sie wie Spielfiguren behandelt werden, aber auf lokaler Ebene können sie, häufig mit geborgten Ressourcen ihrer staatlichen Verbündeten, wenn ihre lokalen Ressourcen nicht ausreichen, durchaus Ziele verfolgen, die den Interessen ihrer Verbündeten zuwiderlaufen. Vor allem besitzen sie eine große Freiheit, ihre Allianzen selbst zu wählen und aufzukündigen. Das unterscheidet sie von Untertanen. Dies weist auch darauf hin, dass Grenzkriegertum nur in Zusammenhang mit einem spezifischen Typus von Staat florieren kann, worauf ich allerdings nicht ausführlich eingehe.

Das nomadische Grenzgebiet im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert

Bei den Savannen des Westens handelt es sich im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert um ein vornehmlich nomadisches Gebiet, im Norden die Kamelnomaden, im Süden die Rindernomaden. In einem Gürtel dazwischen von Zentralkordofan bis Ostdarfur und in einigen inselhaften Gunstgebieten im Nomadenland siedelten

⁸ Vajda, "Paul Witteks Konzeption".

bäuerliche Ethnien. Die große Ausweitung des Anbaus von Hirse und Sesam ist jedoch eine Erscheinung des 20. Jahrhunderts.

Im Norden dominierten im 19. Jahrhundert die Kabābiš, im 20. Jahrhundert mussten sie sich ihr Gebiet mit Kawāhla und Hawāwir teilen. Weiter im Süden lebt heute die Föderation der teilweise nomadischen, teilweise sesshaften Dār Ḥāmid-Stämme, die im 19. Jahrhundert noch voneinander unabhängig und stärker nomadisch waren. Östlich davon leben die Šanābla und südlich die Bidairiya. Im Westen schließen sich die Ḥamar an, im 19. Jahrhundert teils auf dem Gebiet des heutigen Kordofan, teils in Darfur lebend und zu jener Zeit noch stärker nomadisch. Alle diese Ethnien gehörten im 19. Jahrhundert und die im Norden auch im 20. Jahrhundert zu den kamelzüchtenden Nomaden.

Im Süden zieht sich der Gürtel der ebenfalls arabischsprachigen jedoch rinderzüchtenden Nomaden, der sogenannten Baqqāra, von Ost- über Westkordofan in einem Bogen zwischen den Nubabergen und dem Massiv des Jabal Marra in Süddarfur bis nach Zentralafrika. Zu ihnen zählen in Südkordofan die Missairiya und in Süddarfur die Rizaiqāt, Ma‘āliya, Banī Halba, Ḥabbāniya und Ta‘ā’iša.

In Norddarfur sind die kamelzüchtenden Zaiyādiya Nachbarn der Kabābiš. An sie schließen sich die nördlichen Rizaiqāt an. Ihre ebenfalls nomadischen Nachbarn sind Mīdūb und Zagāwa, letztere bereits auf der Grenze zwischen dem heutigen Tschad und dem Sudan. Ihre sprachlich verwandten Nachbarn im Tschad sind wiederum die ebenfalls nomadischen Bidā’iyāt (Bāle) des Ennedi. Westlich und nördlich davon schließen sich die Teda des Tibesti und die Daza, zusammen auch als Tubu oder unter ihrem arabischen Namen Qur‘ān bekannt, an.⁹ Ihre Nachbarn im Süden und Westen sind die arabischen Aulād Slimān und noch weiter im Westen leben die Tuareg, sudanarabisch Kinnīn genannt, die aber in meinem Zusammenhang wie die Aulād Slimān nur noch als Randfiguren auftauchen. Dies sind die Savannen, das Gebiet mit einer starken nomadischen Tradition, ethnisch stärker als kulturell und nach der Lebensweise differenziert, das sich nördlich der Nubaberge vom Nil bis in den Tschad erstreckt und einen breiten Ausläufer zwischen dem Hochland des Jabal Marra in Darfur und den Nubabergen in Kordofan nach Süden ausstreckt.

Die Savannen waren nicht nur nomadisches Gebiet, sondern im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert auch ein Gebiet zwischen Staaten, oder besser: am Rand von Staaten, ein Grenzgebiet. Im Niltal entstand ab dem frühen 16. Jahrhundert auf den Fundamenten der vorhergehenden meroitischen Staaten das Sultanat der Funğ

⁹ Chapelle, *Nomades noirs*, Fuchs, *Völker der Südost-Sahara*.

mit seinem Zentrum im historischen Kornspeicher des Sudans zwischen dem Blauen und dem Weißen Nil. Auf dem Höhepunkt seiner Macht im 17. Jahrhundert beherrschte der Sultan das Niltal bis Dongola, aber mit dem Beginn des 18. Jahrhunderts brachen in den entfernteren Provinzen Rebellionen und dynastische Konflikte aus, die schließlich dazu führten, dass die Zentralgewalt immer weiter geschwächt wurde und sich im ganzen Niltal kleine, de facto unabhängige Fürstentümer ausbildeten, die je länger desto mehr miteinander und mit der Zentralgewalt rivalisierten, so dass eine militärische Expedition zur Eroberung des Sudans auf Befehl des ägyptischen Herrschers Muhammad 'Alī im Jahr 1820/1 nur noch vereinzelt auf organisierten Widerstand traf. Ab 1821 umfassten die ägyptischen Besitzungen im Sudan bereits das Niltal bis in die Sümpfe des Südens sowie Kordofan und den östlichen Sudan bis an den Fuß des äthiopischen Hochlands, in etwa das Gebiet des Sultanats der Funj zur Zeit seiner größten Ausdehnung. 1882 brach der Mahdi-Aufstand in Kordofan aus, 1886 erstreckte sich die Herrschaft des Mahdi-Reichs mit seinem Zentrum im Niltal von Darfur bis ans Rote Meer und von Dongola bis in den Süden des Sudans. Dem Mahdi-Reich folgte nach der Schlacht von Karari 1898 der anglo-ägyptische Sudan und ab 1956 die unabhängige Republik Sudan. Alle diese Staaten stützten sich auf das Niltal und die alte Kornkammer zwischen dem Weißen und dem Blauen Nil. Dort hatten sie auch den Sitz ihrer Macht.

Das nächste Glied in der Kette der Staaten war das Sultanat Darfur mit seinem historischen Kerngebiet am Massiv des Jabal Marra. 1875/6 wurde Darfur in den turko-ägyptischen Kolonialstaat inkorporiert, 1883 Teil des Mahdi-Staats. Nach der anglo-ägyptischen Eroberung des Niltals nutzte 'Alī Dīnār, ein später Nachkomme aus der Linie der Sultane, die Situation der Herrschaftsunsicherheit und ließ das alte Sultanat Darfur wieder aufleben. Zunehmend in Konflikte mit den Kolonialmächten, England im Osten, Frankreich im Westen, verwickelt, schloss sich Sultan 'Alī Dīnār im Ersten Weltkrieg der panislamischen Allianz gegen die Kolonialmächte an, was schließlich dazu führte, dass Darfur 1916 in einem kurzen Kolonialkrieg von der anglo-ägyptischen Regierung annektiert wurde.

Weiter im Westen als Nachbar Darfurs und die Kette der Staaten verlängern lag das Sultanat Wadai, wie Darfur an einer im 19. Jahrhundert wichtigen Handelsroute nach Norden. Durch das 19. Jahrhundert rivalisierten Darfur und Wadai um die Vormacht im Gebiet des heutigen Tschad und des westlichen Sudans. Wie Darfur schließlich in den anglo-ägyptischen Sudan und damit in das britische Kolonialreich integriert wurde, so wurde Wadai Teil der französischen AEF. 1899 besetzte die Mission Saharienne das Air-Gebirge in der Zentralsahara, 1900 den südlichen Tschadseeraum. Bereits in der zweiten

Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts hatte sich der Sufi-Orden der Sanūsiya von der Cyrenaica entlang der Handelsrouten nach Süden ausgebreitet. 1902 eroberten französische Truppen Bīr ‘Alālī, die befestigte Zāwiya der Sanūsiya, und damit Kanem, 1909 Wadai, 1914 das Ennedi und das Tibesti. Dies gelang auch deshalb, weil die Sanūsiya ab 1911 an einer zweiten Front aktiv wurde, denn 1911 waren italienische Truppen in der Cyrenaica gelandet und hatten 1913 Fezzan besetzt.¹⁰

Zwischen dem Sultanat der Funğ und dem Sultanat Darfur lagen die Savannen Kordofans, ein im 18. Jahrhundert zwischen den Sultanaten umstrittenes und wegen der Dynamik der Grenze stets gefährliches Übergangsgebiet. Zentralkordofan war der Zugang zu den Sklavenreserven in den Nubabergen, als Puffer zwischen den Sultanaten war es aber auch strategisch bedeutsam. In den Savannen sammelten sich die Oppositionellen der benachbarten Sultanate, gelegentlich versuchte ein Gouverneur in Kordofan von hier aus die Macht in seiner Heimat an sich zu reißen.

Teile Kordofans, insbesondere das bäuerliche Zentralkordofan, befanden sich wohl schon früh unter der Autorität der Funğ, obwohl unklar ist, wieweit sich diese Autorität tatsächlich erstreckte. Gegen Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts jedenfalls eroberte Darfur mit Hilfe der nomadischen Stämme Tumām und Ġudiyāt Zentralkordofan. Beide gerieten aber in Konflikt miteinander. Die Folge war, dass die Ġudiyāt, typisch für die Politik an der Grenze, die Seiten wechselten und sich mit den Funğ verbündeten, deren Statthalter sie für die nächsten fünfzig Jahre wurden.¹¹

Zu Beginn des 18. Jahrhunderts versuchte ein gewisser Ġanqal, ein Führer der Musabba‘āt, nach dynastischen Auseinandersetzungen in Darfur, aus denen die Musabba‘āt als Verlierer hervorgegangen waren, einen weiteren Einfall nach Kordofan, diesmal unterstützt von den Bidairiya.¹² Es wird berichtet, dass Ġanqal die Unterstützung der tribalen Anführer im Grenzgebiet suchte, indem er ihnen die *niḥās*, eine Bronzetrommel und Insignie legitimer Herrschaft in den Sultanaten, verlieh.¹³ Wenn ich die Quellen richtig deute, machte er also genau das, was die Anführer in der Grenzkriegerschaft für ihre Allianz forderten. Er verlieh ihnen Zuwendungen und Zeichen ihrer Anerkennung, legitimierte damit ihre tribale Führerschaft und stärkte ihren lokalen Rückhalt.

¹⁰ Ciammaichella, *Libyens et Français*, Gentil, *La Conquête*, Triaud, *Chad*, Triaud, *La légende*.

¹¹ O’Fahey, „Kordofan“, 35–6.

¹² O’Fahey, „Kordofan“, 36.

¹³ O’Fahey/ Spaulding, „Hashim“, 321.

Die folgenden Jahrzehnte sahen immer wieder Vorstöße bald des einen, bald des anderen der konkurrierenden Sultanate, gestützt auf die Kavallerie ihrer nomadischen Grenzkriegerschaft. Zur Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts, etwa 1750, wiederholte ein Nachfahre Ġanqals namens Ḥāšim wad ʿIsāwī das Abenteuer seines Vorfahren. Die Musabbaʿāt, in den dynastischen Konflikten Darfurs endgültig 1745 gescheitert, sammelten unter seiner Führung die Grenzkriegerschaft der Stämme. Um 1770 tauchen neben den Banī Ġarār auch die Ri-zaiqāt, Fazzāra und Kabābiš als ihre Unterstützer im Grenzland auf.¹⁴ Es gelang Ḥāšim, die Statthalter der Funğ, die Ġudiyāt, aus Zentralkordofan zu vertreiben, dann aber wandte er sich mit Unterstützung seiner Grenzkrieger, allen voran der Banī Ġarār, gegen seine Oberherren und fiel in Darfur selbst ein.¹⁵

Was die Musabbaʿāt im 18. Jahrhundert gegenüber ihren Oberherren in Darfur mehrmals versucht hatten, aber nie mit großem Erfolg, gelang Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts einem General der Funğ, einem gewissen Muḥammad Abū Likailik, der nach einer Karriere als Führer der Grenzkriegerschaft zum mächtigsten Mann im Sultanat der Funğ avancierte. Nachdem er für die Funğ Zentralkordofan erobert hatte, sammelte er eine Gefolgschaft in Kordofan und putschte bereits einige Jahre später, im Jahr 1761, erfolgreich gegen den Sultan am Nil.

Als jedoch das 18. Jahrhundert sich langsam seinem Ende zuneigte, endete auch die Vorherrschaft der Funğ im Grenzgebiet. Die Herren der Funğ waren schließlich mit ihren internen Problemen am Nil so beschäftigt, dass sie das Grenzland dem rivalisierenden Sultanat Darfur überließen und keinen ernsthaften Versuch der Wiedererrichtung ihrer Macht in Kordofan mehr unternahmen, bis 1821 die turko-ägyptische Eroberungsarmee einmarschierte. Keiner der starken Männer in Kordofan, vielleicht mit Ausnahme von Ḥāšim, hatte ein Interesse, ein unabhängiges Reich in Kordofan zu gründen, sondern alle verstanden sich als Prätendenten auf die Herrschaft in den benachbarten Sultanaten. Die Savannen des Grenzlands waren für sie lediglich Rückzugs- und Rekrutierungsgebiet. Hierher flüchteten sie aus den internen Konflikten ihrer Staaten, hier sammelten sie eine Kavallerie unter den Stämmen und versuchten wieder in der großen Politik ihrer Staaten eine Rolle zu spielen. Und immer in Allianzen mit den Nomaden der Region.

Was in den Staaten geschah, hatte also direkte Resonanz im nomadischen Vorfeld der Staaten. Die nomadischen Stämme formierten sich unter der Politik der Staaten und sie gingen auch wieder durch die Politik der Staaten unter.

¹⁴ O'Fahey/ Spaulding, „Hashim“, 326, 328; Spaulding, „Early Kordofan“, 55–6.

¹⁵ O'Fahey, „Kordofan“, 37–8, 40, O'Fahey/ Spaulding, „Hashim“, 322.

Sie waren Mitspieler an der Hand der Staaten, lokal mächtig in der Situation der Grenze, aber regional betrachtet eben doch eher Schachfiguren, wenn auch Schachfiguren mit einem widerspenstigen Eigenleben. Im 18. Jahrhundert dominierten die Ġudiyāt und Bidairiya Kordofan, später die Fazzāra. Im 19. Jahrhundert waren sie verschwunden oder unbedeutend geworden. Dafür tauchten die Banī Ġarār als Allianzpartner der Musabbaʿāt und Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts die Ḥamar im westlichen Kordofan und die Zayādiya und Kabābiš weiter im Norden zum Schutz der wichtigen Karawanenrouten nach Ägypten als Verbündete Darfurs auf. Die Kabābiš und die Hawāwīr wiederum gehörten beide zu den großen Gewinnern im Kordofan des 19. Jahrhunderts, als sie unter der Hegemonie des turko-ägyptischen Staates als Grenzkrieger gegen die Banī Ġarār und Zayādiya kämpften, welche auf der Seite Darfurs die Karawanenwege aus der turko-ägyptischen Provinz Kordofan nach Norden mit ihren Razzien störten.¹⁶ Die Reste aus den zerfallenen Fazzāra waren zu dieser Zeit entweder in den neuerdings dominanten Nomadenstämmen aufgegangen oder aber wie die Maġānīn, Ḥabbāniya, Ġilaidāt und Maʿāliya als unabhängige Stämme nach Darfur abgezogen.¹⁷ Ethnische Identitäten und Loyalitäten verblassten und mit ihnen die Stämme, neue tauchten auf, so wie die Šaiḥs der Savanne, die Anführer der Grenzkriegerschaften im Sinne Witteks, Anhänger um sich scharen konnten – immer im Schatten des Staats.¹⁸ Der Blick in die Geschichte der Grenze zeigt, dass hier ethnogenetische Prozesse im Gange waren, die nur dann verständlich werden, wenn sie nicht in einem staatsfreien Raum, sondern im Vorfeld der Staaten interpretiert werden.

Die Nomaden lebten zwar außerhalb effektiver staatlicher Kontrolle, zumindest konnten sie sich aufgrund ihrer hohen Mobilität bei Bedarf in die Tiefen der Savanne zurückziehen, dahin wo der Arm des Staats nicht mehr oder zumindest nur noch unter unverhältnismäßigem Aufwand hinreichte. Sie konnten, wie es oft geschehen ist, auf die andere Seite des Grenzgebiets abwandern und sich unter den Schirm der konkurrierenden Macht begeben¹⁹. Aus einer kleinflächigen Perspektive mag dies vielfach mit Freiheit und Ungebundenheit verwechselt worden sein. Aber dennoch lebten sie nicht in einem staatsfreien Gebiet, sondern im Vorfeld von Staaten – einem „Frontier-Gebiet“ wie Owen Lattimore²⁰ oder einer „Tribal Zone“ wie Ferguson und Whitehead²¹ die Wit-

¹⁶ Brehm, *Reiseskizzen*, 129; Parkyns, „Kubbabish“, 254–6, 258–60.

¹⁷ Brehm, *Reiseskizzen*, 144, 148.

¹⁸ Beck, „Stämme im Schatten“.

¹⁹ Über die Migrationen der Nomaden, insb. im Zusammenhang mit der Ethnogenese vgl. Braukämper, *Migration und ethnischer Wandel*.

²⁰ Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers*, 55–6.

tekschen „marshes“ genannt haben – auf vielfache Weise, ökonomisch, religiös, politisch, mit den Kerngebieten der Staaten verflochten.

Sowohl die Nomaden hatten ein Interesse an den Staaten als auch die Herrscher der Staaten an den Nomaden. Nomaden konnten Transportkamele organisieren; darauf beruhte im 19. Jahrhundert die Ökonomie der Kabābiš auf der Strecke zwischen dem Nilknie und Zentralkordofan, der Ḥasānīya durch die Bayuda-Wüste und der ‘Abābda zwischen Aswan und Berber auf turko-ägyptischer Seite, der Zayādiya auf der Ägyptenroute auf darfurischer Seite und der Teda des Tibesti, der Bidā’iyāt und anderer Nomaden, die den Karawanentransport zwischen Wadai und Kufra unter der Patronage der Sanūsīya betrieben. Sie konnten die Handelsrouten abschneiden oder aber gegen andere Nomaden schützen wie die Kabābiš, Ḥamar, Banī Ġarār und Zayādiya, die sich im 19. Jahrhundert in einem schwelenden Kriegszustand miteinander um die Handelsrouten nach Norden befanden. In die nomadischen Gebiete zogen sich die Verlierer aus den Machtkämpfen der Staaten zurück, etwa Familie und Anhänger des Funğ-Gouverneurs Muḥammad Šanbūl, die gegen Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts aus Sinnār, dem Kerngebiet des Funğ-Reiches, vertrieben worden waren und im 19. Jahrhundert als Stamm der Šanābla in Nordkordofan auftauchten, wo sie zunächst unter dem Schirm der Kabābiš lebten, sich dann aber zu Beginn der Maḥdiya selbständig machten.²² Gelegentlich begründeten solche Flüchtlinge im Exil in der Savanne eigene Herrschaftsgebiete mit ihren Panzerreitern oder sie sammelten Verbündete für einen neuen Anlauf. Die Beispiele der oben geschilderten Abenteuer Abū Likailiks und der Musabba‘āt wären durchaus vermehrbar. Die Nomaden waren – um ein Bild aus Ibn Ḥaldūns Repertoire zu borgen – sowohl die Wölfe am Rand der Staaten als auch ihre Wachhunde.

Staaten und Nomaden pflegten vielschichtige Beziehungen. Es gab entlohnte und gekaufte Nomaden ebenso wie es eingeschüchterte und erpresste Nomaden gab, angeheiratete und verbündete Nomaden, Nomadenkinder, die am Hof als Pagen erzogen oder aber als Geiseln für das Wohlverhalten ihrer Familien gehalten wurden – je nachdem wie man es betrachtet. Häufig ist nicht einfach zu entscheiden, mit was wir es zu tun haben: mit ethnischem Söldnertum, mit einem Zweckbündnis oder mit Unterwerfung. Was aus der Sicht der einen wie Tribut aussehen mochte, unter der Drohung einer großen staatlichen Razzia in das nomadische Gebiet eingetrieben, mag auf der anderen Seite als ein gegenseitiger Austausch von Geschenken und damit einem alten sudanesischen Mus-

²¹ Ferguson/ Whitehead, „The Violent Edge“.

²² MacMichael, *Tribes of Northern and Central Kordofan*, 206–8, Spaulding, „Dar Fur“, 14–5.

ter folgend der wiederholten Bekräftigung eines Bündnisses dienend wahrgenommen worden sein. Möglicherweise vermochte der Fruchtbarkeit verheißende Glanz des Großen Sakralen Herrschers am Fluss oder in den Bergen Darfurs die Nomaden darüber hinaus auch religiös und rituell zu binden.

Aber die Nomaden dienten nie ganz umsonst den großen Interessen der Staaten, Herrschern und Prätendenten auf die Herrschaft, sondern sie hatten vorrangig ihre eigenen kleinen Interessen im Sinn, klein natürlich nur aus der Sicht der Staaten: mit staatlicher Unterstützung Weidegebiete und Wasserstellen, Vieh und Sklaven, Zugang zu Handelswegen und Handelswaren zu erobern und sich gegen andere, die dies ebenfalls im Sinn hatten, zu schützen. Machtkämpfe innerhalb der nomadischen Gesellschaft und innerhalb der Stämme um die Führerschaft wurden mit Rückendeckung staatlicher Verbündeter ausgetragen. So verschwanden die Fazzāra, aufgerieben in den Auseinandersetzungen zwischen Musabbaʿāt, dem Sultanat der Funğ und Darfur; die Führer der Kabābiš dagegen konnten im 19. Jahrhundert ihre Macht ausdehnen, ursprünglich fremde Familien und ganze Stämme zum Teil unter ihre Herrschaft locken, zum Teil zwingen, und so die Kabābiš zum mächtigsten Stamm Kordofans konsolidieren, weil sie mit dem turko-ägyptischen Staat am Nil verbündet waren. Reste der Fazzāra unter neuen Führern und unter neuen Namen schlugen sich dann bei Ausbruch der Mahdīya bereits vor der Belagerung von El Obeid auf die Seite des Mahdi und dehnten sich später auf Kosten der Kabābia aus, die in der Mahdīya auf der Seite des ägyptischen Kolonialstaats und damit auf der falschen Seite standen. Sie wurden zur Beute erklärt und von den anderen Nomaden, allen voran ihren alten Konkurrenten, gejagt und ausgeplündert; viele ihrer Fraktionen, ganze Stämme, etwa die Kawāhla und Šanābla, fielen von ihrer Führerschaft ab und machten sich unter Parteigängern des neuen Staats als unabhängiger Stamm selbständig.²³ Die Nomaden im Grenzland lebten zwar außerhalb effektiver staatlicher Kontrolle, aber sie waren eben nicht wirklich unabhängig, sondern in einem Netz von Beziehungen der Grenzgesellschaft eingefangen, ohne das die ethnischen Prozesse der Grenzregion überhaupt nicht erklärbar sind.

Wie eng die Beziehung zwischen dem Kerngebiet der Staaten und der Grenze geknüpft waren, zeigte sich im Zusammenbruch des Mahdi-Reichs. Was in den Savannen westlich des Nils geschah, folgte dem alten Muster. Die Verbündeten der Nilarmee beglichen alte Rechnungen. Waren die Kabābiš und Hawāwir von den Wölfen der Mahdīya, den Kawāhla, anderen Kabābiš, den Banī Ġarār, den Dār Ḥamid, mit Rückendeckung des Mahdistats ausge-

²³ Asad, *The Kababish Arabs*, 158ff.

plündert worden, so waren sie jetzt die Wölfe. Ziele waren die Herden des mahdistischen Schatzamtes, die westlich von Omdurman in der Obhut der mahdistischen Nomaden weideten, und Ziele waren auch die kordofanischen Weiden und Wasserstellen, von denen sie in der Mahdiya vertrieben worden waren. Was aus der Sicht des Staats im Niltal als Raub, Plünderung und Zerstörung von Bewässerungsgärten erschien, war nichts anderes als der nomadische Stil der Machtübernahme im Schatten der industriellen Machtübernahme im Niltal. Und die Rebellionen der Stämme gegen die Reste mahdistischer Herrschaft reflektierten nichts anderes als Putsche innerhalb der Stämme gegen die alten Führer, die von der mahdistischen Herrschaft gestützt worden waren – eine neue Phase in den ethnogenetischen Prozessen der Region, lokal ausgeführt aber nicht ausgelöst, eine Resonanz im Grenzland auf die Politik der Staaten.

Im Westen setzte sich nach der Mahdiya unter extrem gewaltsamen Bedingungen ein neues Gleichgewicht der nomadischen Grenzgesellschaft, jedoch nach dem alten Muster, im Schatten des Staates, durch, wie etwa auch nach der turko-ägyptischen Eroberung oder nach der darfurischen Eroberung Zentral-kordofans oder der Eroberung Zentralkordofans durch die Fung.

Der pazifizierende Staat – das koloniale Zwischenspiel

Aber diesmal war der Staat ein anderer – nicht mehr der traditionelle Staat der Region, der zwar Interesse an den Nomaden im Vorfeld gezeigt, aber weder Mittel noch Ambitionen besessen hatte, das Vorfeld in die staatliche Struktur zu integrieren. Diesmal hatte der Staat ein Interesse an der Pazifizierung und der Eingliederung der Nomaden in seine staatliche Ordnung.

Damit war ein langer Prozess in Gang gesetzt, der zu einer vollkommen anderen nomadischen Gesellschaft führte. Die nomadische Gesellschaft verlor immer mehr den Charakter der kriegerischen Grenzgesellschaft, in der die Gewalt dominierte, in der Razzia mit Gegenrazzia vergolten wurde und in der Verhandlungen zur Beilegung von Konflikten, falls sie überhaupt gewollt wurden, immer unter der Drohung blutiger Konfliktketten standen. Die anglo-ägyptische Verwaltung verfolgte eine Politik der Befriedung der nomadischen Gesellschaft, deren Ziel die Ausdehnung des staatlichen Gewaltmonopols über die ganze Grenzregion war.

Die ersten 20 Jahre jedoch blühte immer noch die Herrschaft der Razzia, wahrscheinlich mehr denn je, denn der Tumult des gestürzten Mahdi-Reichs

hatte einen langen Nachhall und darüber hinaus spürte die Grenzregion die von allen Seiten anrückenden Kolonialarmeen. Die Nomaden der gesamten Region waren an einem einzigen umfassenden Razziensystem beteiligt. Razzien der Bidā'iyāt, Daza, sogar der Aulād Slimān und der Tuareg, durch die französische Kolonialarmee weit im Westen vertrieben, kamen bis Kordofan, kordofanische Nomaden stießen auf ihren Gegenrazzien bis ins Ennedi und bis ins Bahr al-Ġazāl-Gebiet von Kanem vor. Besonders die großen, mehrere hundert Krieger starken Razzien vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg hinterließen eine breite Spur von Verwüstung und Tod; sie raubten tausende von Tieren und hunderte von Menschen.²⁴

Die anglo-ägyptische Regierung versuchte, die Grenze zumindest nach Westen zu verschieben, um dahinter ihre Ordnung zu etablieren. Um die Brunnen und damit auch die Durchzugswege der Razzien zu kontrollieren, wurden ab 1907 nomadische Posten im Westen organisiert. Aber bald wurde deutlich, dass die Verwaltung und die Nomaden vollkommen unterschiedliche Erwartungen mit den Posten verbanden. Die nomadischen Söldner nutzten nämlich die Posten ganz selbstverständlich und dem militärischen Muster des 19. Jahrhunderts folgend dazu, eigene Razzien nach Westen zu unternehmen.

In der Zeit bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg gelang es der Verwaltung nur selten, ihre Nomaden zu schützen oder sie zu zügeln. Wie wenig, mag eine Begebenheit von 1912 illustrieren. Nach vielen offiziellen Beschwerden Sultan 'Alī Dīnārs aus Darfur über die Raubzüge der kordofanischen Nomaden beim Generalgouvernement in Khartoum war bekannt geworden, dass geraubte Kamele aus dem Westen in Herden der Hawāwīr in der Nähe von Dongola aufgetaucht waren. Die Verwaltung sandte darauf hin eine Polizeipatrouille, um sie zu konfiszieren. Im Lager des Šaiḥs wurde die Patrouille gastfreundlich aufgenommen und bewirtet, die Kamele stolz vorgeführt. Aber als die Patrouille ihre Aushändigung verlangte, reagierten die Hawāwīr überrascht. Es war ihnen vollkommen unverständlich, weshalb die Kamele eingezogen werden sollten. Für sie war die Legitimität der Razzia vollkommen unanzweifelbar, zumindest solange sie sich gegen die gemeinsamen Feinde im Westen richtete. Die Grenzkrieger waren immer noch ihre Helden, denen die Jugendlichen nacheiferten. Jedenfalls musste die Patrouille unter Bedrohung und mit leeren Händen wieder abziehen. Die Verwaltung ließ die Angelegenheit auf sich beruhen, offensichtlich weil einflussreiche Teile innerhalb der anglo-ägyptischen Verwaltung sich das Sultanat Darfur bereits als feindlich zu betrachten angewöhnt

²⁴ Beck, "Nomads of Northern Kordofan"; Beck, "Escaping from the rule".

hatten und die Kosten einer weiteren Intervention unter diesen Umständen als zu hoch eingeschätzt wurden – zwanzig Jahre später ein undenkbarer Vorgang.

Das alte Muster der Razzien an der Seite des Staats kam im Ersten Weltkrieg noch einmal zu einer späten Blüte. Der Beginn des Kriegs fand Sultan ‘Ali Dīnār von Darfur auf der Seite der panislamischen Front gegen Frankreich und England. Im Jahr 1914 proklamierte der türkische Sultan den *ḡihād*, im selben Jahr folgte ihm Sīdī Aḥmad al-Šarīf as-Sanūsī in Kufra. 1916 befand sich die ganze Zentral- und Ostsahara im Aufstand gegen die Kolonialmächte. In diesem Jahr schloss sich Sultan ‘Ali Dīnār dem Heiligen Krieg gegen die anglo-ägyptische Regierung an. Diese hatte allerdings ihre Nomaden im Grenzgebiet, Rizaiqāt, Ḥamar, Kawāhla, Kabābiš, Hawāwīr, bereits als Hilfstruppen aufgerüstet und als die darfurische Armee im Mai 1916 in der Nähe von El Fasher von einem anglo-ägyptischen Expeditionskorps besiegt wurde, waren die Nomaden des ganzen Gebiets längst dabei, Darfur zu plündern. Was beim Zusammenbruch der Mahdiya zwanzig Jahre früher geschehen war, wiederholte sich noch einmal.²⁵

Aber dies war auch für lange Zeit das letzte Mal. Die Verwaltungen auf beiden Seiten der tschadisch-sudanesischen Grenze waren zur Pazifizierung der turbulenten Grenzregion entschlossen. Das Kultivieren einer Grenzkriegerschaft lag jedenfalls nicht in ihrem Interesse. Die anglo-ägyptische Regierung erhöhte die Verwaltungsdichte in den nomadischen Gebieten des Westens und richtete Polizeiposten und Gerichte ein. Fundamental für die Errichtung einer friedlichen Ordnung war die Politik der Eingeborenenverwaltung im Geist der indirekten Herrschaft und die konsequente Implementierung intertribaler Verhandlungen in den zwanziger und dreißiger Jahren.

Um nicht missverständlich zu sein: der nomadische Westen des Sudans war auch nach den zwanziger Jahren zu keiner Zeit ein Paradies des Friedens, aber er war demilitarisiert. Grenzkrieger konnten in dieser Gesellschaft keine Karriere mehr erwarten. Nicht alle der vorkolonialen Raubkrieger stimmten der neuen Ordnung ohne weiteres zu; manche endeten in der Tat als *outlaws* außerhalb der Institutionen der Eingeborenenverwaltung und ihrer rechtlichen Ordnung. Viehraub, Totschlag, gewaltsame Konflikte über Flurschäden und Brunnenrechte hörten nicht auf, was aber zu Ende ging, das war der habituelle Rückgriff auf Gewaltausübung mit ihrer Tendenz zu Bildung von Konfliktketten und der Verselbständigung der Gewalt. Die kleine alltägliche Gewalt der nomadischen Gesellschaft hatte keinesfalls aufgehört zu existieren,²⁶ aber die

²⁵ Beck, “Nomads of Northern Kordofan”.

²⁶ Braukämper, “Management of conflicts”.

gewalteindämmenden Routinen der Verwaltung standen doch ihrer Eskalation erfolgreich entgegen. Vor allem hatte sich der Staat gewandelt; er war kein Staat mehr, der die Grenzkriegerschaft als eine militärische Institution benötigte. Die Zeit der großen Chancen für die Grenzkrieger schien für immer vorbei. Ab den dreißiger Jahren begann die Blütezeit der Institutionen der Eingeborenenverwaltung, der regulierten Stammesgerichtsbarkeit mit ihrer Eingeborenenpolizei, der Versöhnungskonferenzen, der jährlichen intertribalen Stammesführertreffen, in den vierziger Jahren sogar zwischen den tschadischen und den sudanesischen Nomaden, bei denen Konflikte beigelegt, Weide-, Brunnen- und Durchzugsrechte ausgehandelt und geraubte oder streunend aufgegriffene Tiere ausgehändigt wurden.

Wenn meine Darstellung eine Glorifizierung des Staates impliziert, dann deshalb, weil sie die große Leistung der kolonialen Ordnung würdigt, der es gelungen ist, die zentrale Anforderung an einen modernen Staat zu erfüllen: das Monopol der legitimen Ausübung physischer Gewalt in einem Ausmaß zu realisieren, wie es anderen Ordnungen nicht oder höchstens unter außerordentlichen Bedingungen gelungen ist. Wie wir wissen, ist Pazifizierung aber ein nicht abgeschlossener Prozess. Gewalt muss immer wieder in politischen Institutionen eingefangen, gebändigt und beigelegt werden.

Die Wiederkehr der Grenzritter

Vielleicht haben wir es – im Abstand betrachtet – sogar mit einem kolonialen Zwischenspiel zu tun, dem vorläufigen Ende der Razzien. Pazifizierung ist ein nicht abgeschlossener Prozess, eben weil das staatliche Gewaltmonopol ständig bedroht ist. Und genau dieses, der Schutz der Routinen der Gewaltbegrenzung, ist es, was dem unabhängigen sudanesischen Staat nicht gelungen ist. Seit mit dem Local Government Act von 1971 das System der Eingeborenenverwaltung und damit auch der intertribalen Konferenzen abgeschafft wurde, nahm die Gewaltsamkeit lokaler Konflikte zu. Dazu kommt, vielleicht noch entscheidender als die vernachlässigte Eindämmung der innerhalb der nomadischen Gesellschaft entstehenden Konflikte, dass staatliche Akteure, die zeitgenössischen Sultane und die Prätendenten auf die Sultansmacht, die Bildung einer neuen militanten Grenzkriegerschaft für ihre Ziele zu fördern begannen. Die Metamorphose des Staates ging in den achtziger Jahren so weit, dass erneut eine Situation vergleichbar der vor den zwanziger Jahren entstanden ist. In der ganzen Region, vom nomadischen Tschad bis in den Westen des Sudans

herrscht wieder die Ordnung der Razzia und der kleinen Territorialkriege unter den Nomaden. Und wieder haben wir es mit einer Situation im Vorfeld des Staates zu tun, zwar innerhalb staatlicher Grenzen, aber de facto hat der Staat seine Ordnung aufgegeben. Es ist allerdings auch nicht ein vollkommen staatsfreies Gebiet entstanden, denn hier werden wieder die kleinen Konflikte der Nomaden eingeschachtelt in die größeren staatlichen Konflikte ausgetragen.

Vor dem allgemeinen Hintergrund der Verwandlung der staatlichen Ordnung im Sudan sind vor allem zwei Entwicklungen für das Wiederaufleben der Gewalt im Westen verantwortlich, das Übergreifen des Bürgerkriegs im Tschad und die Proliferation von Stammesmilizen unter den darfurischen und südkordofanischen Nomaden als ein Echo des sudanesischen Bürgerkriegs im Süden. Die großen regionalen Konflikte haben sich lokal eingenistet. Mit ihrer Lokalisierung erwerben sie auch eine eigene Dynamik, die sie immer mehr der Kontrolle durch die staatlichen Akteure entzieht.

Bis zum Beginn der siebziger Jahre war der Westen ein befriedetes Gebiet, aber dann verlagerte sich der tschadische Krieg auf das sudanesisches Grenzland. Das darfurische Grenzland wurde zum Rückzugsgebiet der FROLINAT, also hauptsächlich der Tubu, die 1969 das Borku im Norden des Tschad erobert hatten, jedoch 1970 von der französischen Fremdenlegion vertrieben worden waren.²⁷ Ab 1970 unterstützte Oberst Gaddafi, 1969 mit einem Putsch an die Macht gekommen, die Tubu mit seinem Ziel vor Augen, den Aouzou-Streifen zu annektieren.

Vollkommen brach die staatliche Ordnung im Westen erst in den achtziger Jahren zusammen. Nachdem Hissain Habre 1980 mit Unterstützung der libyschen Armee aus dem Tschad vertrieben worden war, sammelte er seine Truppen in Darfur. Zu Beginn des Jahres 1981 bereits hatte er wie frühere Verlierer in den Konflikten der Staaten im nomadischen Grenzgebiet Darfurs begonnen, Truppen – hauptsächlich Zagāwa und Bidā'iyāt – für sich anzuwerben. Ägypten und die Vereinigten Staaten rüsteten seine nomadischen Truppen auf.²⁸ 1982 eroberte Habre den Tschad zurück, aber im sudanesischen Grenzland waren die Razzien wiederaufgelebt. Polizei und Armee zogen sich zurück, sofern sie sich nicht auf der Seite ihrer jeweiligen Leute an den Konflikten beteiligten, die Institutionen der Konfliktbewältigung versagten. Zagāwa und Bidā'iyāt unterstützten Hissain Habre und Idris Debey. Die von Gaddafi finanzierte islamische Legion des Šaiḥ Ibn Omar, seit 1984 völlig ungehindert im

²⁷ Burr/ Collins, *Africa's Thirty years war*, 50, Fuchs, "Nomadic society".

²⁸ Burr, 1999, 145.

Gebiet nördlich von Kuttum in Norddarfur operierend,²⁹ rekrutierte aus den arabischen Nomaden, und, unter den Bedingungen der sich anbahnenden großen Dürrekrise von 1985, mit großem Erfolg. Grenzkriegertum schien unter diesen Bedingungen wieder eine Karriere zu versprechen.

Während der Jahre 1982 bis 1987 herrschte ein undeklariertes, dennoch offener Krieg zwischen den Zagāwa und den Fūr in Norddarfur, der zunächst mit den üblichen kleinen Konflikten zwischen Zagāwa, die vor der Dürre mit ihren Tieren in den Süden auswichen, und Fūr, die ihre Gebiete nördlich des Jabal Marra von den Flüchtlingen überschwemmt sahen, begonnen hatte, aber nach einer blutigen Intervention der darfurischen Sicherheitskräfte auf der Seite der Fūr in den Jahren 1986 und 1987 in gezielten Blutrachemorden auf Führer der Fūr gipfelte.³⁰

Nach dem Aufstand gegen Oberst Nimairi im Sudan im April 1985 erhielt Libyen praktisch freie Hand im Westen des Sudans, dies vor allem aufgrund der Unterstützung, die es der sudanesischen Zentralregierung im Bürgerkrieg gegen die SPLA (Sudan People's Liberation Army) anbot. Mit Unterstützung der libyschen Armee konnte Šaiḥ Ibn Omar seine Islamische Legion weiter aufrüsten, allerdings nicht ungestört von der tschadischen Armee Habres, die bei ihrer Verfolgung auch die sudanesischen Grenze nicht respektierte und bei Gelegenheit mehrere hundert Kilometer östlich der darfurischen Grenze operierte. Dies, ohne dass sudanesischen Sicherheitskräfte interveniert hätten. Damit entstand wieder eine Situation des gewalttätigen Grenzlands.

Einen entscheidenden Anteil an den weiteren Entwicklungen im Grenzgebiet hatten die tribalen Milizen. Im sudanesischen Bürgerkrieg im Süden des Landes sind die Stammesmilizen ein wichtiger militärischer Faktor an der Seite der regulären Armee. Seit Mitte der achtziger Jahre operieren Milizen und paramilitärische Gruppen der Mandari, Fartit, Murle, Toposa und der Nuer in wechselnden Allianzen mit dem Militär der Zentralregierung gegen die hauptsächlich von Dinka dominierte SPLA. Auch in den nomadischen Ethnien Südkordofans und Darfurs bildeten sich solche *murāḥilīn* genannten Milizen gegen Mitte der achtziger Jahre, zunächst bei den nomadischen Rizaīqāt und Missairiya, später auch in anderen nomadischen arabischen Ethnien.³¹ Seit Mitte der achtziger Jahre begannen die Milizen eine wichtige Rolle in der Politik des *ḡihād* zu spielen, mit der die Zentralregierung den Westen zu mobilisieren trachtet. Armeeführung und Zentralregierung erkannten die Baqqāra-Milizen

²⁹ Burr/ Collins, *Africa's Thirty years war*, 195.

³⁰ Harir, "Arab Belt", 175.

³¹ De Waal, "Some comments", Johnson, *The root causes*, 67–70, 81–3.

Mitte 1985 offiziell an und bewaffneten sie mit dem erklärten Zweck, die Migrationsrouten der Herden in den Süden zu schützen. Aber tatsächlich nutzten die Milizen ihren Status und ihre Waffen auch dafür, Vieh zu rauben und einen lokalen Krieg zu führen, zunächst gegen die Dinka, dann aber auch zunehmend gegen die Nuba im südlichen Kordofan und die Für in den Ausläufern des Jabal Marra. 1987 richteten Rizaiqāt-Milizen ein Massaker unter Kriegsflüchtlingen an der Bahnlinie in dem kleinen Markttort ad-Da‘ain in Süddarfur an, dem nach unterschiedlichen Angaben zwischen 400 und 1000 Dinka zum Opfer fielen.³² Gewalt wanderte auch nach Norden, die Logik der Verschachtelung größerer regionaler Konflikte mit den kleineren lokalen Konflikten macht die Ausübung von Gewalt, im Schatten des Staats, aber mit lokal definierten Zielen, unkontrollierbar. Die Milizen richteten ihre militärischen Aktionen nicht nur gegen die Nuba, die Dinka oder die SPLA, sondern selbstverständlich auch gegen die Für. In ihrem Umkreis gedeiht das Banditentum, Viehrazzien, Sklavenraub und Überfälle auf Omnibusse und Lastwagen auf den Überlandstrecken der Savanne. Sie begnügen sich nicht damit, lediglich für ihre politischen Patrone in den Ölgesellschaften, in den Parteien und in der Armee zu kämpfen, sondern agieren in einem zunehmend gewaltbereiteren Milieu ihre eigenen lokalen Konflikte aus.

Im Jahr 1988 brach schließlich ein großer militärischer *showdown* im Westen aus, der in der Region auch unter dem Begriff „Krieg der Stämme“ bekannt geworden ist, weil allein auf der einen Seite eine Allianz aus 27 arabischen Stämmen beteiligt war. Auf staatlicher Ebene waren die Prätendenten auf die Herrschaft im Tschad beteiligt: Hissain Habre, Präsident des Rumpftschad, Idris Deby, der mit anderen ethnischen Zağāwa-Ministern des tschadischen Kabinetts im März 1989 gegen Hissain Habre revoltiert hatte und mit seinen Bidā‘iyāt und Zağāwa auf sudanisches Gebiet geflüchtet war,³³ Šaiḥ Ibn Omar und die Islamische Legion. Staatliche Akteure, welche sich mehr oder weniger im Hintergrund hielten, waren die Regierungen Frankreichs, Libyens und der antilibyschen Allianz, Ägypten und USA. Auf lokaler Ebene wurde der Krieg zwischen Banden der Tubu, tribalen Milizen der Masālīt und Für (mit Rückhalt von Habre), der Islamischen Legion und arabischen Stammesmilizen (in Allianz mit Libyen) und Zağāwa und Bidā‘iyāt (auf der Seite Idris Debys) geführt. Die Zentralregierung in Khartoum, insbesondere die Umma-Partei, die seit der Mahdiya auf einen starken Rückhalt unter den arabischen Nomaden des Westens bauen kann, favorisierte die arabischen Stammesmilizen, die darfurische

³² Mahmoud/ Baldo, *Al Diein*, Rottenburg, „Das Inferno“, 23–4.

³³ Burr/ Collins, *Africa's Thirty years war*, 239.

Regionalregierung, nach der Ausweitung des Regional Autonomy Act von 1972 auf Darfur im Jahr 1980 von ethnischen Für dominiert, und die DUP (Democratic Unionist Party), der kleinere Koalitionspartner der Umma-Partei in den Regierungen zwischen 1986 und 1989, favorisierten dagegen die Für.

Allein der Konflikt zwischen Für und arabischen Stämmen forderte 3000 Menschenleben. Er wurde als ein gnadenloser Krieg in einer Kette von Razzien und Vergeltungsaktionen ausgetragen. Für zündeten großflächig die Weiden an und blockierten Wasserstellen, um so die Nomaden zu vertreiben, die Nomaden verwüsteten Felder und Gärten der Für, um doch Zugang zu erzwingen. Die arabischen *fursān* (Ritter), hochgerüstet mit AK 47- und G 3-Sturmge- wehren, überfielen Dörfer und Marktflecken, erschossen ihre Bewohner und verbrannten die Häuser mitsamt den Verwundeten, die darin Schutz gesucht hatten. Die *milišiyāt* (Milizen) der Für ihrerseits verfuhrten mit den Lagern und Herden der Nomaden ähnlich. Über 2500 Für verloren dabei ihr Leben, 400 Dörfer wurden zerstört und 40 000 Tiere geraubt. Die Verluste der arabischen Ethnien, insbesondere der Banī Halba, wurden auf 500 Tote, 3000 Tiere und 700 Zelte und Gehöfte beziffert.³⁴

Im Mai 1989 sprach die sudanesishe Regierung von 3000 Toten, tat aber im gleichen Atemzug die Kämpfe im Westen als Stammesrivalitäten ab. Dies waren sie sicherlich, aber nicht nur. Die Stämme führten unter sich ihre Raz- zien und kämpften ihre kleinen Territorialkriege. Zagāwa zerstörten Dörfer der Masālīt und vertrieben sie von den Weiden in die Berge. Für versuchten mit Gewalt die arabischen Nomaden fernzuhalten, arabische Nomaden versuchten ebenfalls mit Gewalt die Weide freizuhalten. Tubu zerstörten Lager der Zagā- wa. Überall waren die *fursān*, die Grenzritter des 19. Jahrhunderts, wieder auf- erstanden und in die Razzia gezogen. Sie führten wieder ihre Kriege um Was- serstellen und Weiden, um Zugang zu Waffen und Märkten, um Gefangene und Tiere, um lokale Ziele also, aber auf dem großen Schauplatz.

Ende Mai 1989 begann unter Druck der Regionalregierung in El Fasher eine große Verständigungskonferenz der verfeindeten Stämme unter Beteiligung der Armee und unabhängiger Stammesführer und Honoratioren (*ağāwīd*, Schlich- ter) aus dem ganzen Sudan nach dem Muster der früheren intertribalen Konfe- renzen. Die Abgeordneten der Für sprachen bei der Konferenz von rassisti- schen Motiven („schwarzer Gürtel“ versus „arabischer Gürtel“) und von Geno- zid. Sie ordneten damit die Gewalt im Westen in den größeren Kontext des sudanesischen Bürgerkriegs und der Politik der Entmachtung und Zurück-

³⁴ Harir, „Arab Belt“, 144–5.

drängung nichtarabischer, zum Teil nichtmuslimischer Sudanesen ein. Dies ist die andere Seite der „Stammeskriege“. Am 30. Juni unterbrach der Militärputsch in Khartoum die langwierigen Verhandlungen, schließlich wurde am 8. Juli ein Friedensabkommen erreicht. Aber ein halbes Jahr später flackerten die Kämpfe bereits wieder auf³⁵ und eskalierten mit dem Beginn einer neuen Hungerkrise 1990.

Ebenfalls 1990 drang die tschadische Armee Habres mehrmals Richtung Kuttum in Norddarfur vor, um die Zaġāwa und Bidā'iyāt Idris Debys zu stellen. Diese aber zogen sich in die Tiefen der Savanne zurück, wo sich die tschadische Offensive verlief. Dagegen war die Gegenoffensive Debys, der wie die früheren Prätendenten auf die Macht in den Staaten, beispielsweise sein Gegner Habre 1982, mehrere Jahre lang seine Truppen in Darfur aufgebaut hatte, im November 1990 so erfolgreich, dass sie innerhalb von zwei Monaten zur Einnahme der tschadischen Hauptstadt Ndjamena und zur vollkommenen Niederlage der erschöpften Truppen Habres führte. Es ist als wiederhole sich die Geschichte der Musabba'āt und Abū Likayliks, die ebenfalls aus dem nomadischen Grenzgebiet im Vorfeld der Staaten kamen und mit ihren dort rekrutierten Anhängern erfolgreich die Macht in den Staaten an sich reißen konnten.

Aber zurückgelassen haben die Spieler der Staaten die Herrschaft der Gewalt. 1991 begann die Zentralregierung eine Pazifizierungskampagne unter dem Kommando der Armee. Aber trotz harter Strafen war dem „bewaffneten Banditentum“ (*naḥb al-musallaḥ*) und den „Stammeskonflikten“ nicht beizukommen. Im Jahr 1999, als arabische Milizen Dörfer der Masālīt am westlichen Jabal Marra zu überfallen begannen, rief die Regierung in Khartoum den Notstand in Darfur aus. Kurz darauf brach ein blutiger Konflikt zwischen Zaġāwa und Rizaiqāt aus und Anfang April 2001 wurde ein Dorf in der Nähe von Kabkābiya überfallen und 14 Bewohner getötet. Im April 2002 zerstörten arabische Milizen mehrere Dörfer der Fūr am Jabal Marra und töteten die Bewohner, eine Woche später überfielen arabische Milizen ein Dorf in der Nähe von Kabkābiya in Ostdarfur und töteten ebenfalls die Bewohner. Im Mai brachen Kämpfe zwischen Ma'āliya und Rizaiqāt aus.

Die Gewalt blüht wie vor der kolonialen Befriedung in der Grenzgesellschaft im Vorfeld der Staaten. Es handelt sich nicht um reine Stellvertreterkriege, aber auch nicht um autonome Kriege, sondern um Kriege, in denen der

³⁵ Harir, „Arab Belt“, 146–7.

Logik der tribalen Grenze entsprechend staatliche Interessen und lokale Interessen auf komplexe Weise ineinander verschachtelt sind.

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The Resumption of Ottoman-Safavid Border Conflict, 1603–1638: Effects of Border Destabilization on the Evolution of State-Tribe Relations

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The inner workings of tribes and of tribal confederations have – from the time of Ibn Khaldun's *Mukaddimah* onwards – been mostly understood, evaluated and appreciated (or the reverse) through the prism of the state and its priorities and objectives. When tribes are pliable and co-operative with the state as well as accepting of their state-assigned roles, they become objects of praise in standard historiography. Conversely, when their objectives are in opposition to or disassociated from the state's, they all too easily lapse into the familiar typology, reoccupying their traditional Ibn Khaldunian position as the “sowers of sedition and the ultimate source of social disorder”. Self-evidently, this idealized conception and mythology of state-tribe relations loses its explanatory value when the state itself is created as a tribal polity as happened in the 15th century with the formation of dynastic orders such as the Timurids and the Ak-Koyunlu. Later on too, even after the creation of more enduring mixed polities and centralizing states such as the Ottoman and Safavid empires, tribes continued to play a number of key roles, but their place within these imperial orders cannot be understood properly when confined to the analytical straightjacket of oppositional politics and the oversimplistic classification of tribes into two contrasting groups: the successfully subordinated (co-operative) and the incompletely subordinated (non-cooperative) tribes. As an alternative to viewing the tribes only as participants in and contributors to the fixed agendas set by their respective imperial “masters”, this paper explores the ways in which, by fulfilling primary and secondary roles ostensibly assigned to them by state authority, they retained sufficient fluidity and dynamism to defend their own interests and in exceptional circumstances, especially during wartime, even to extend their sphere of independent action and influence within those states. In the context of Safavid-Ottoman state-to-state relations, the focusing and intensification of

their imperial rivalry in key strategic zones of the frontier paradoxically created as many opportunities for enhanced independence and leadership for the tribes as it did for the extension of state authority. Examples of this phenomenon of resurgence of tribal influence drawn from the first decades of the seventeenth century will be examined with a view to reassessing the reputation of the two centralized states, as developed in their respective dynastic histories, for successful subordination of the tribes.

After an initial period of relative quiet on the north-eastern Anatolian front with Azerbaijan and on the south-eastern front with Iraq during in the 1590s, the tribal borderlands of the Ottoman- and Safavid empires became the battle ground for a renewed – and in some ways uncharacteristically determined – phase of the ongoing imperial rivalry set in motion by the Safavid re-capture of Tabriz in 1603. As a consequence of the renewal and escalation of inter-state hostilities in this period, both Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603–1617) and his successors and Shah Abbas I (r. 1587–1629) were inevitably drawn into a contest for re-establishing and ensuring the 'dependent' status of their respective subordinated and semi-subordinated tribes as both states had staked their imperial reputations on the outcome of this high stakes competition for the loyalty and co-operation of their own indigenous tribal populations. Under such politically-charged circumstances, compromises, rewards and inducements had to work hand in hand with dictates, demands and ultimatums to secure the fullest possible level of co-operation from the tribes whose loyalty and support was (as both sides fully realized) easily transferable to the opposing side in the imperial conflict. In the particular historical context of the renewal of Safavid Ottoman competition for control of the Azeri corridor vital to the interests of both states, the dictum '*divide et impera*' gained a peculiar relevance to the position of the tribes; this time not as objects of the centralizing and subordinating aims of powerful states and would-be hegemony, but as promoters of their own interests. The tribes sought and found the means to play both sides off against the middle and to capitalize on opportunities offered by the complex matrix of fluid borders, changing alliances and the heightened strategic importance that their own native and patrimonial homelands now possessed in the wartime context to renegotiate and redefine the terms of their clientship, loyalty and dependency in relation to their respective nominal overlords both sultan and shah.

The strategic importance and material value of tribal populations to both the Ottoman and Safavid states as joint possessors of a common land frontier extending over 600 miles and passing through regions inhabited overwhelmingly by pastoralists is obvious. In both war and peace both states were to varying degrees dependent on the input and co-operation of the tribes to defend their

vital interests. While the dominance of the *kizilbash* emirs in both local and central administration in the Safavid state deriving from their virtual monopoly in some periods on the provision of military services provides the more extreme example, in the Ottoman state too, long after the nominal incorporation of tribal lands in eastern Anatolia and imposition of limited taxation and service demands, tribal leaders continued to exert considerable influence, not just within their respective regions but – especially during periods of war on the eastern front – on the formulation and execution of imperial strategies as well. It would certainly be a serious mistake to assume that either state managed – irregardless of changing political circumstances or raised levels of dependency on the tribes for an expanded range of services during wartime – to gain unqualified dominance over or maintain an unchallenged upper hand in its relations with the tribes.

Maintaining good relations and close co-operation with the tribes required a good deal of give and take as well as mutual sacrifice and compromise. Since the dynamics of state-tribe relations are easier to define in the relatively static conditions characteristic of peace time and stable frontiers, we will begin our assessment of the role played by tribes in the regulating of Ottoman-Safavid relations with an account of tribal functions during peacetime. Our account will draw mostly on examples highlighting the role in inter-state relations played by the Kurdish tribes of south-eastern Anatolia and northern Iraq and in the western approaches to Azerbaijan from the east Anatolian highlands. In assessing the more fluid conditions of state-tribe relations in the context of interstate conflict it seems appropriate to focus in particular on the forty-one year reign of Abbas I (ruled October 1587 to January 1629) since there is detailed overlapping coverage for this period provided from the Safavid perspective by Iskandar Beg Munshi and in a variety of contemporary Ottoman sources.

Peacetime Functions of the Tribes

At the conclusion of war and in inter-war periods it was the tribes who acted as verifiers and enforcers of the peace agreements reached between the belligerents. The first phase of Ottoman-Safavid conflict was brought to a conclusion by the Amasya Treaty of 1555 which established the principle of a balancing of zones of influence and acknowledged Safavid control over Azerbaijan in exchange for the creation of an extended zone of Ottoman influence in the south-eastern margins of their empire to incorporate recently acquired capitals in both

southern (Baghdad) and northern (Mosul) Iraq with their hinterlands. Because of the wide distances dividing the northern and southern extremes of the extended frontier, it was both a financial and a practical impossibility for either state to garrison or defend the intermediate stretches of the vast borderland regions and both had to rely on the tribes to monitor and therefore also to manage the frontier on their behalf. Ottoman imperial administrative arrangements granted independent *hükümet* status or hereditary governorships to those tribes who accepted Ottoman suzerainty, but unlike the *kizilbash* emirs in the Safavid state, under the relatively stable conditions of peacetime, their influence remained strictly local and they were not able to claim any wider influence in the Ottoman state in recognition for their patrolling, protecting and when necessary defending the extended Ottoman frontier in the east and south-east. Neither side (state nor tribe) either attempted or desired a fuller integration within the norms, practices and traditions of the other while the functions performed for the state by the tribes tended to clear-cut and at the same time limited. The expression *mefruz al kalem ve maktu al kadem* (separated from the pen [of the revenue assessors] and cut off from the feet of the [inspectors]) summed up in graphic terms the intended separation between the two worlds.¹ In particular the tribes inhabiting the remotest regions of the border enjoyed a kind of extra-territorial status, and contact with the Ottoman administration was not only indirect but also infrequent. As we shall see later on however, this clarity of purpose and separation of jurisdictional spheres was compromised when, in wartime circumstances, the state came to rely on the tribes to perform a wider array of services. During such periods of closer collaboration state-tribe relations acquired greater depth and complexity.

In contrast to the rather one-sided portrayal of the state-tribe relationship presented in a study by Hakan Özoğlu,² which suggests that closer collaboration always resulted in the fuller subordination of tribes and increased levels of integration of tribal networks under state authority, it is clear that co-operation with Ottomans during wartime not only gave enhanced prestige and importance to tribal leaders, but also tended to put them on terms of equality, especially with the Ottoman governors of the border provinces. To describe their relationship to Ottoman provincial administration in such times of shared responsibility as one characterized by 'subordination' is altogether too simplistic and in some respects misleading. During periods of prolonged activation of the mili-

¹ The expression was universally found in the Ottoman documents of appointment and investiture. See also Ayn-i Ali's *Risale* of 1609 (Istanbul, 1280/ 1863), 30.

² H. Özoğlu, „State-Tribe Relations: Kurdish Tribalism in the 16th and 17th-century Ottoman Empire“, in: *British Journal of Middle East Studies* 23 (1996), 22 *et passim*.

tary frontier which passed through their own home territories what we observe is not: “increasing state authority” as suggested by Özoğlu,³ but rather enhanced power and extended territorial jurisdiction for the most influential and strategically located tribal confederacies who took on enhanced responsibilities far beyond their traditional peacetime role as guardians of the border. In wartime, quite apart from active participation in support of Ottoman offensives, especially in the sphere of transport and logistics, they performed services as scouts, information gathers and intelligence agents, and often also go-betweens in complex Ottoman diplomatic manoeuvres aimed at establishing links with prospective anti-Safavid allies, clients and proxies beyond the Ottoman frontier in Azerbaijan and the Caucasus. In the next part of our paper we will focus on the period of renewed hostilities between the Ottomans and Safavids after 1603 and lasting until the Ottoman recapture of Baghdad in 1638. Here we hope to demonstrate the ways in which this period of intensified strategic concern on the part of both imperial regimes led to a realignment in state-tribe power relations resulting not in acceleration of the process of state centralization, but rather an enhancement of the position of the tribes.

The Role and Agency of Tribal Groups in Defining the Context and Development of Safavid-Ottoman Conflict Between 1603–1638

Perhaps the best way for us to begin our analysis is by referring to a letter included in the Feridun collection of imperial correspondence, which describes the condition of Ottoman contacts with anti-Safavid factions in Georgia and their reliance on Kurdish intermediaries to track developments and report back to the Ottoman authorities. The specific context is the defection to the Ottomans of the Georgian rebel Giorgi Saakadze (Magrav Han in the Ottoman sources) in 1624 after the failure of his faction to gain the upper hand in the Georgian civil war.⁴ This document indicates how the Ottomans relied in the delicate task of forging new associations with rebels, malcontents and potential allies and defectors to the Ottoman cause in foreign lands on sources of independent information not specifically or explicitly linked to any local interest group. In the case of the complex world of Georgian politics, the Ottomans turned as their most reliable source of intelligence to their long-standing vas-

³ Özoğlu, *ibid.*, 23.

⁴ Feridun, *Münşeat-i Selatin* (Istanbul 1265/ 1849), II, 221. For Magrav Han's Georgian name, see Bosworth, “al-Kurdj”, in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition, 5, 493.

sals and supporters the Kurdish emirs of the Azerbaijani-Caucasian frontier and sought their advice on the reliability and sincerity of self-professed Ottoman supporters among the contenders for pre-eminence in the Georgian civil war.

Thus, in addition to being enjoined to lend their assistance to Ottoman regular army units deployed to their sector of the frontier in readiness to assist the insurgents, the Kurdish leaders (*“ümera ve hevanin-i Ekrad”*) were also called upon to make their honest appraisal of the status and true motivations of would-be Ottoman supporters and report their views to the Ottoman authorities. The implication of both the content and the wording and tone of the document is that, because of their relationship of mutual trust maintained over a prolonged period, the Ottomans felt able to turn to the Kurdish emirs to supply them with a balanced and unbiased view of the Georgian situation; acting as their fully empowered agents. This is made explicit in the text which refers in unmistakable terms to Ottoman suspicions of double dealing and duplicity among its Georgian “allies” while contrasting these reservations with their unreserved confidence in the durability and sustainability of good relations with the Kurdish tribal leadership. The relevant section of the text reads as follows:

“Since you [the Kurdish emirs] are familiar from your own bitter experience of the disastrous consequences for the state of this dynasty’s honor and reputation of believing in the false protestations of those [among the Georgian princes] who declare themselves well-wishers of the Ottoman dynasty, you are to be on your guard and report to us [fully] and [faithfully] make known to us the individual circumstances of each of them (i.e., the renegade Georgian princes) and – taking care not to place your trust in the lies and deceptions of that crew of oath-breakers of slack faith and insubstantial conviction and not allowing yourselves to be duped by their tricks and deceptions – you are to show all watchfulness and vigilance in preparing the appropriate measures, in conformity with the sovereign’s imperial wishes, for the preservation of dynastic honor and reputation; expending all energy and boundless efforts for the preservation of the country with all due zeal”.⁵

In an unstable world of shifting allegiances and transitory and self-serving alliances it is the Kurdish emirs of the frontier who are being called upon in this imperial communiqué (*name-yi hümayun*) to provide an element of stabil-

⁵ Feridun, *ibid.*: Ümera-i Gürcistan’dan izhar-i hulus edenlerin avakib-i ırz ve namusu neye müncer olduğunu defaat ile tecrübe ettiğiniz üzere her birine [müteallik] ilam ve ifham edip, ve ol ahd ve peymanı, ve yemin ve imanı süst ve na-paydar olan taifenin hile ve feribine itimad, ve hud’a ve mekrine itikad etmeyip, basiret ve intibah üzere ırz ve namus’a layik ve riza-yi hümayunuma muvaffik tedbir ve tedarik ile hıfz-i memleket ve siyanet-i gayret’de bezl-i makdur ve sai-yi na-mahsur eyesiz”.

ity and predictability for the Ottomans. Even with some allowance for rhetorical excess, the sentiments expressed ring true. It is certainly the case that given their position of relative privilege and independence under the Ottoman system, frontier populations had little incentive to defect to the enemy, and Ottoman reliance on their role as intelligence agents is also perfectly understandable since no one was better placed than they were to infiltrate or otherwise communicate with the populations in the regions with coterminous borders.

The Kurdish emirs seemingly played a key role in the identification and capture of leaders of seditious movements in the Ottoman frontier zone. The historian Selaniki provides an example in the case of the renegade *kizilbash* defector and later Ottoman governor named Kelb Ali who shortly after his ostensible defection to the Ottomans in the years immediately preceding the fall of Gandja in 1588 soon after joined forces in the bid by its former governor Ziyad-oğlu Mehmed Han to restore Gandja's independence. After being caught in an ambush by Kurdish forces near the Ottoman border, he was handed over to the Ottoman authorities in Istanbul and promptly executed.⁶ Scouting and reconnaissance function formed a principal dimension of the auxiliary military duties performed by the Kurdish tribal groups inhabiting the border districts. They were able to lend significant support to Ottoman military campaigns because of their close familiarity both with the terrain in their own home territories and with the conditions in the regions across the border acquired during the seasonal migration of their flocks.

In the diplomatic sphere too the Ottomans made regular use of Kurdish leaders whose close cross-border contacts with their counterparts – often members of the same tribal confederation – on the Safavid side of the frontier gave them an enhanced access, authority and respect. The relocation of the Safavid capital to Kazvin in the aftermath of the Treaty of Amasya and its subsequent permanent removal to Isfahan in 1598 (1006 A. H.) resulted in a partially natural and partially deliberately-encouraged depopulation of the northwest corridor in Safavid-controlled Azerbaijan. The net effect of these economically-motivated migrations and politically-inspired forced population transfers was to increase the already high profile of the remaining pastoral and tribal groups in the demographic mix of the border districts.⁷ Consequently when, for exam-

⁶ *Tarih-i Selaniki*, ed. M. İpşirli (Istanbul, 1989), I, 224: „*Memleket Kurdlan Keleb Ali'ye hab-i harguş verip ...*”

⁷ The deportations aimed at developing the potential of his new capital in the south continued well into the reign of Abbas and we find reference in the context of the 1604–1605 Ottoman counter-offensive against Tabriz alone to the transfer of 2,000–3,000 Armenian families from the region. See Iskandar Beg (Savory translation), II, 857.

ple, the Ottoman commander Cağaloğlu Sinan Pasha sought a qualified negotiator to put forward his proposals for peace to the Safavids in 1604 at the conclusion of his first season of military activity, he delegated the role to Sulaiman Beg, a Mahmudi Kurd and governor of the fortress of Hosh-ab located due south of Van whom he elevated to the rank of Han in acknowledgement of his position of enhanced responsibility.⁸ After the failure of his peace initiatives, the same Sulaiman participated in the foray organized for the following spring against the area to the north of Lake Urmiya in the vicinity of Khoy and Marand, relying to a considerable degree on the intelligence gathering and covert alliance-making gains secured during the course of his diplomatic mission the previous year.⁹

The performance of primary tasks in their standard role as skirmishers and vanguard forces for Ottoman armies during eastern campaigns was both enabled and reinforced by concurrent involvement in secondary roles in the spheres of diplomacy and intelligence gathering as well as counter-intelligence just described. The Kurdish leadership (in the given example a representative of the widely dispersed Mahmudi tribal confederation) was able to fulfil all these roles in part because of its regular cross-border contacts with groups belonging to the same or closely affiliated tribes. That the shah was sensitive to the formation of an anti-Safavid coalition among the Mahmudi Kurds in the border region near Khoy is clear from the fact that he took immediate steps to clear the area and transported tribal leaders whose loyalties he suspected, such as Masun Beg Mahmudi, to other less sensitive and militarily active sectors of the frontier.¹⁰

The delegation of political and diplomatic responsibilities to tribal leaders over and above their usual and limited role as military auxiliaries carried some risks for the state since it was the inescapable reality that both Safavids and Ottomans often targeted the same tribal groups in their attempts to create a loyal clientele for their own particular imperial cause. They also both sought to subvert the loyalty of groups who had earlier professed their allegiance to the opponent's cause. So far as the Safavids case is concerned, it is not entirely clear that the centralizing policies of Abbas I based on the recruitment of Georgian *ghulams* to offset the dominance of the Turcoman *kizilbash* tribes, created a stable enough basis for the successful assertion of central control or simply added further competitors for influence at the local level. The net effect at the local level, especially in the sensitive areas nearest to the active military fron-

⁸ *Ibid.*, 863.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 868.

tier in western Iran, was the equalization of the status of Kurdish and Turcoman tribal groups both of whom were equally important to the defence of the realm.

The longer the conflict with the Ottomans was prolonged and the wider the scope of the territory involved in the contest – extending by the mid 1620s all the way from the Caucasus range to the Iraqi desert – the greater the need to mobilize tribal manpower and retain their loyalty. Because of the proximity of both the Azerbaijani and also – to an increasing extent after Abbas' decision to transfer the capital to Isfahan – the southern sectors of the front to the centers of political power and wealth creation in the Safavid state, Abbas' strategy differed in fundamental ways from that of his counterparts on the Ottoman throne. As already mentioned in reference to the case of the Mahmudi Kurds, one method for diffusing the effect of dissident elements was deportation of chief figures to less sensitive zones of the frontier. At other times however the shah was compelled to confront non co-operative elements among the Kurdish tribes of western Iran by forceful suppression. To accomplish this he was compelled to turn to traditional sources of state military provision namely the chiefs of the *kizilbash* Turcoman tribes. This in turn upset the delicate balance between Georgian *ghulams*, Turcoman emirs and local Kurdish chiefs on whose full co-operation and complementarity the success of the Safavid imperial venture depended.

Iskandar Munshi documents in his chronicle of Shah Abbas' reign a particularly compelling example of the dilemma faced by the Safavid ruler when choosing between options for maintaining a workable balance of forces at the regional level. In response to persistent signs of insubordination bordering on outright rebellion on the part of Emir Khan, the leader of the Baradost Kurds, in the year 1609 following Emir Khan's non-participation in the defense of the frontier during Cağaloğlu Sinan Pasha's recent invasion of Azerbaijan, the shah decided to take action. Abbas' particular concern was to prevent a destabilization of a wider region of the front since he was aware, as one of the signs of the seriousness of Emir Khan's rebellion, that Emir had given asylum in his territory to Khan Abdal Muhri, the leader of another Kurdish tribe in open rebellion against the shah. Under the circumstances, the shah was forced to turn to one of his most trusted emirs among the Turcoman tribes to lead the siege against Emir Khan's stronghold, the castle of Domdom near the western shores of Lake Urmiya.¹¹ After a prolonged siege in the three months between No-

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 878.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 999.

vember 1609 and February 1610, Emir Khan was persuaded to surrender on terms. During the post-battle confusion however the distinction between those who had voluntarily surrendered and the persistent rebels was lost, resulting in an indiscriminate massacre of the Kurds of Domdom. The outcome of the confrontation was thus not greater loyalty for the shah and his dynastic cause, but a deepening of the already strongly rooted mutual suspicion that had precipitated the crisis in the first place.

In contrast to the above-described scenario, in the Ottoman case we observe that, although they were equally vulnerable to the threat posed by the untimely defection of their indigenous Kurdish populations, to forestall this eventuality they pursued a longer-term strategy aimed at winning the support and loyalty of the tribes through concessions and inducements (*istimalet*). This policy was aimed at creating strong, stable and self-sufficient allies in the border regions who, when required, could act independently from the Ottomans in the event of surprise attacks and who were fully capable of defending their own frontiers when joint operations with the Ottomans were not in prospect. The organizational task relating both to forward defence and to joint operations with Ottoman forces was left in the hands of Ottoman protégés such as the hereditary governor of Cizre Şeref Han who was elevated in the context of the early seventeenth-century Ottoman-Safavid wars to a position as tribal impresario with extensive cross-clan authority and regional influence.

The co-ordination of the Ottoman war effort across a wide and expanding zone of the active military front with Iran was unthinkable without the consistent input of a local figure who could command regional authority and respect. With the escalation of the conflict many diversionary fronts were opened simultaneously and only some of these could be presided over by a senior figure in the Ottoman administration such as the sultan himself or his chief deputy the grand vezier. As a result, mobilizers of regional forces such as Mir Şeref gained an increased importance and they were able to exploit their new-found positions of influence to redefine the terms of their subordination to the imperial will on the basis of *quid pro quo*. On occasion, this allowed them to pursue their own interests and independent agendas in the guise of participating in joint mobilizations with the Ottomans such that in effect it was they who co-opted the Ottomans into serving their purposes rather than vice versa. Several examples of this anomalous temporary reversal of roles are provided in the detailed Ottoman accounts of the three-front war of the period 1603 to 1606 during which time the Ottomans were engaged in intractable conflicts both with the Habsburgs and the Safavids while at the same time combating the Celali rebels on the home front. This splitting of Ottoman military effort between

multiple fronts continued for a time after the conclusion of peace with Austria in November 1606 and it was not until the grand vezier Kuyucu Murad Pasha's renewed attempt to capture Tabriz in the autumn of 1610 that the Ottomans were again in a position to concentrate their forces on a single front. During much of this period, the tribal leadership was called upon to deputize in full for the absent imperial masters, and thus placed in an advantageous position when negotiating the terms of their co-operation with Ottoman war aims on the eastern front with lesser-ranking and more persuadable figures such as the governors of provinces nearest the active military front.

During the course of the Grand Vezier Kuyucu Murad Pasha's deployment to Syria in 1606–07/ 1015–16 A.H. to confront the rebellion of Canbulad-oğlu Ali Pasha, he delegated responsibility for the opening of a secondary front in Iraq, aimed at quelling the simultaneous rebellion of the Baghdad garrison chief Tahvil Ahmed-oğlu Mehmed Pasha, to the governor of Diyarbekir Nasuh Pasha. In addition to his position as third-ranking vezier, Nasuh Pasha was also the son-in-law of Mir Şeref Han of Cizre and thus linked by personal and familial ties as well as strategic logic to the tribal impresario whom the Ottomans had deputized as their spokesman to the wider Kurdish community of the borderlands. In the event, while the commander-in-chief's main objective in 1606 had been an show of force against Baghdad, Mir Şeref was able to divert Nasuh Pasha's attention at the close of the campaigning season to a project of his own devising and persuaded the vezier to lend his support to an attack on the stronghold of a leader of the Ashti Kurdish tribe called Kurd Ali.¹² After fully 120 days of fruitless siege the effort, whose clear motive was territorial aggrandizement on the part of Mir Şeref at the expense of his peers among the Kurdish tribal leaders, had to be abandoned. The result of Mir Şeref's 'private war', whose execution however faulty was inconceivable without the artillery support provided by Nasuh Pasha, was that the grand vezier's plans to confront the Iraqi rebels had effectively been shelved. As a result, the mobilization destined for the Iraqi front had to be postponed to the following year (1016/ 1607–08) with the command transferred to another vezier, Cağaloğlu Mahmud Pasha.¹³

¹² The Ashti tribe according to the information supplied by the *Şeref-name* (trans. by Char-moy, St. Petersburg, 1868), I/ 1, 60 and 145, inhabited the wooded areas around Hasankeyf on the Tigris. For the name of their leader executed by Murad IV at the conclusion of the Baghdad campaign in 1638, see Katib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, II, 218 and *Tarih-i Naima*, IV, 342–343.

¹³ The ultimately successful campaign against Baghdad led by Mahmud Pasha set out from the army's winter headquarters at Aleppo at the beginning of şevval 1016 (mid January

Tribes and the Provision of Key Military Services

Tribal forces employed by the Ottomans specialized in basic services in the areas of army transport and logistical support. Thus their diversion from the timely performance of these primary tasks had a devastating effect on the efficient performance of Ottoman troops whose training and experience fitted them for offensive warfare. When, as was invariably the case in war on the eastern front, the supply lines of the Ottoman army extended beyond the usual limit of supply stations forming a permanent part of the imperial *menzil-hane* network confined to the core provinces of the empire, the Arab and Kurdish tribes of the frontier provided its only lifeline. Grain supplies delivered to the army by camel trains and pack animals in whose breeding and domestication the tribes specialized played a determining role in the success or conversely the failure of Ottoman armies in the field. Because the terrain was both hostile – alternating between high mountain peaks and blistering desert flatlands – and unfamiliar, the sustaining role of the tribal auxiliaries was essential both in advance and more particularly in retreat when whatever supplies the army had managed to carry with it had long since been exhausted. Tribal auxiliaries familiar with the terrain also ensured the safe delivery and recovery of the field artillery which formed a key dimension of Ottoman success in battle.¹⁴ The successful performance of these key and primary tasks required constant vigilance on the part of the tribes, and the effects of their withdrawal of service were both immediate and obvious. Thus we can take the evidence that – even in the event of its successive failures to recapture Baghdad dating from the mid 1620s –¹⁵ the Ottomans were repeatedly able to regroup their forces and retreat in safety as pro-

1608); see Safi, *Zübdet ul tevarih*, fol. 87b and *Tarih-i Naima*, II, 17. See also, Topçular Katibi, *Tevarih*, fol. 241b–242b. Later on in his account Topçular Kâtibi comments on the significant impact of this unplanned diversion on the delay and even prevention of Ottoman progress on primary fronts in Syria and Iraq as well as Anatolia. See Topçular Kâtibi, fol. 265a – „*Diyyarbakir’de vezir Nasuh Paşa Mir Şeref izlahı sebebi ile Nusaybin’dan yukan Vasitî nam kale’yi cebren muhasere edip, ve içerisinde Kurd [Ali] Bey muti iken, ... Diyyarbakir’dan toplar getirip, kâmil altay dövüp ...*”

¹⁴ For a detailed description of the role played by Kurdish auxiliaries in the recovery and safe delivery of Ottoman ordnance to Van during Kuyucu Murad Pasha’s retreat after his failure at Tabriz in the autumn of 1610, see Topçular Kâtibi, *Tevarih*, ff. 272b–278a.

¹⁵ Despite the ultimate failure of the sieges led by Hafız Ahmed Pasha in 1625–26 and by Hüsrev Pasha in 1630, from the point of view of logistical support both campaigns were unqualified successes. Both campaigns had required the movement and maintenance over prolonged periods of myriads of men and mounts in scattered and difficult terrain. This in itself, regardless of the outcome of battle, represented a major accomplishment.



viding a clear indication of the loyalty and efficiency of their Kurdish auxiliaries. The obstacle which the Ottomans had to overcome at Baghdad was more technical – having to do with the ingenious design of its fortifications – than organizational.

As testimony to the importance of the supply, delivery and escort functions provided by the tribes to Ottoman battle success, the converse case of campaigns in which its failure was noticeable are worthwhile examining in brief. Contemporary commentators such as Katib Çelebi and subsequently Naima, whose amplified account closely followed the story line sketched out by his predecessor, note the destructive effects of Ottoman reliance on untrustworthy collaborators and informants such as Ebu Riş-oğlu Ahmed who, while professing his intention to help Nasuh Pasha in his plan to march against the rebels in Baghdad in 1606 (1015 A.H.) and ostensibly offering his specialized knowledge of developments at the front, in fact deliberately mislead him and caused an unnecessary stalling of the Ottoman army at Mosul. When Nasuh's forces ultimately arrived in the vicinity of Baghdad in December 1606 by pre-arrangement with Ebu Riş-oğlu, the opportune moment for an effective strike against the rebels had been missed and Nasuh was forced to retreat without engaging the enemy.¹⁶ That Ottoman commanders were spared the worst effects of such double dealing at the hands of their tribal "advisers" among the Kurds is perhaps attributable to its policy of inducements, nurturing and concessions already referred to.¹⁷

Conditions in the east until the time of the Ottomans' eventual success in stabilizing the frontier with the Safavids following their recapture of Baghdad in 1638 favored the perpetuation of the state's relations of give and take with the tribes and militated against any pre-mature attempt to assert greater control over the management and administration of strategic districts near the active military frontier. During this period of uncertainty and threat, the tribesmen of the frontier were encouraged by the Ottomans to extend their zones of influence and contact across the border amongst their tribal brethren in Safavid territory and, whilst competition for regional pre-eminence and inter-tribal con-

¹⁶ *Tarih-i Naima*, I, 458–459 (*sub anno* 1015): "*La'alla ve 'asa ile Paşa kırk gün Mosul'da tavakkuf edip...*" Naima's version is in turn actually based on the more detailed account provided by Mustafa Safi who wrote at a time contemporaneous to the events; see the *Zübdet ül Tevarih*, fol. 61a–64a.

¹⁷ See the discussion above on page 12 and R. Murphey (ed. and trans.), *Kanunname-i Sultani li Aziz Efendi: Aziz Efendi's Book of Sultanic Laws and Regulations* (Cambridge, MA, 1985), 16–17.



flict sometimes resulted, the net effect was an enhancement of tribal power vis à vis state authority.

The evolution of the Ottoman-Safavid conflict over time provided opportunities for involvement of tribal military units not only in concert with Ottoman forces and in subsidiary auxiliary roles, but on terms of essential equality with their imperial masters. The opening of multiple fronts by the Ottomans always offered the possibility that in the absence of commanders of sultanic stature or vezierial rank, tribal commanders might assume a leadership position within their own particular sectors of the wider front. Thus, for example, in 1627 when the Grand Vezier Halil Pasha's forces were preoccupied with suppressing the revolt of the rebel governor of Erzerum Abaza Mehmed Pasha, and secondary fronts had been opened in both Azerbaijan and northern Iraq, fighting in the south-eastern sector was entrusted to the powerful Kurdish chieftain of the Muhri confederation Mira Beg with assistance in relatively smaller numbers provided by Ottoman governors of the nearby provinces of southern Anatolia such as Çerkes Hasan Paşa in Karaman and Hüseyin Paşa in Diyarbakir.¹⁸ In such cases we see the anomalous and temporary reversal of the usual order of precedence and hierarchical power relations resulting from the vagaries of Ottoman operational needs. The distinction between master and client, overlord and vassal was not so easy to preserve when, in the context of loosely organized border raiding activity, the participants came from so many diverse sources. Under such circumstances leadership was naturally assumed by those who knew the terrain best and had numerical predominance in the combined forces.

In the years when the outcome of the Ottoman-Safavid conflict still hung in the balance, the Ottomans and their tribal allies and proxy warriors in the east fought together on terms of rough equality. After the signing of the Treaty of Zuhab in 1639 the process of consolidating Ottoman authority in the remoter parts of eastern Anatolia was later disrupted by conditions of anarchy and ultimately state collapse in Iran during the early decades of the following century. How these conditions effected populations on the Ottoman side of the frontier during this latter period are the subject of a different paper and not a subject for speculation here. However, what we can conclude from the evidence on state-tribe relations drawn from the six decades of Ottoman-Safavid regional rivalry focused on Azerbaijan and Iraq between 1578 and 1638 is that, despite Abbas I's determined centralizing efforts aimed at modifying and controlling tribal influence in the Safavid state, the fluid state of the borders with his Ottoman

¹⁸ The details are provided in Katib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, II, 96–97 (*sub anno* 1036).

neighbors during the forty one years of his reign and the necessity for both states of maintaining good relations and close co-operation with the pastoralist inhabitants of the contested border regions meant that it was impossible for either to dictate to the tribes or impose its unilateral imperial will very effectively. The main beneficiary of the reactivation of imperial rivalry over control of the borderlands was thus ironically neither of the would-be hegemonic powers, but by default the tribes themselves. Forced by overwhelming circumstances, the tribes managed to find ways of manipulating and exploiting the vulnerabilities of both sides in the imperial contest to secure outcomes favorable to the preservation of their independence and the promotion of their own interests.

General Conclusions

During their sixty year dispute for regional control in the Irano-Anatolian – Iraqi borderlands the Ottomans and Safavids made three attempts to agree on sustainable conditions for peace in 1590, 1612 and 1618, but only the first of these treaties, signed under the temporary influence of internal structural weaknesses within the Safavid state, remained in effect for more than a few years. For virtually the whole of this extended period, corresponding to fully a quarter of the dynastic lifespan of the Safavid state itself lasting from 1501 to the late 1720s, the two polities coexisted in a state of either open warfare or heightened military alert. For the Ottomans in particular, the prolonged state of hostilities with their eastern neighbors placed very considerable strains on both the financial and the other material resources of the state, particularly in the second phase of conflict between 1603 and 1612 when they were heavily engaged on other fronts, both in Europe (until 1606) and closer to home in Syria and Anatolia (until 1609 which saw the suppression of the renegades Musli Çavuş in Adana and Yusuf Pasha in Mağnisa).¹⁹

Even without its other commitments, the concentration of Ottoman military might in the east was problematic for both politico-religious and for practical reasons and the near continuous prosecution of its anti-Safavid policy placed especially heavy and at the same time unprecedented burdens on its least economically developed provinces beyond the Euphrates. These provinces – unlike their counterparts in the Balkans – were neither accustomed to nor really

¹⁹ *Tarih-i Naima*, II, 68–70.

very well equipped to provide resources on the scale necessary to sustain the long-term presence of Ottoman armies in their midst. One essential difference between the two spheres of military activity was that because of the distances involved and the difficulty of the terrain, mobilizations for eastern campaigns were almost invariably multi-seasonal operations. This meant that an extra burden of providing winter supplies for the army fell most heavily on the already overstretched residents of the areas nearest the front. While in the first phase of its struggle with the Safavids between 1578 and 1590 the Ottoman state could rely on secure central treasury financing, by the time conflict was resumed in 1603 financial conditions had changed and the burden of supply and support for Ottoman armies in the east had to be shifted. An increasing share of the costs of the empire's "eastern" wars had to be borne by the resident tax-paying populations of the cereal-producing regions and by formerly tax-privileged and tax-exempt tribal populations whose economic mainstay was animal husbandry.

The period of shared responsibility and burden redistribution during the years of heightened tension on the eastern frontier inevitably led to a redefining of the role and status of tribal populations within the Ottoman polity. The ultimate outcome of this process in the first several decades of the seventeenth century was not a diminution of tribal power or an accelerated integration of tribal networks within existing networks of state authority and jurisdiction, but rather an elevation and extension of tribal power, respect and prestige deriving from their role as co-equal partners in the important task of defending shared strategic interests. This condition of mutual need and dependency during wartime also created opportunities for leadership elements within the tribes to reassert and renegotiate their position and status vis à vis state administrative hierarchies from a bargaining position based on strength.

The Ottomans had, acting from pragmatic motives, aligned themselves with influential tribal power brokers such as Mir Şeref Han who in addition to his hereditary status as governor of Cizre was at the same time an Ottoman provincial representative or pasha, with authority stretching over the whole region as far as Rakka on the Upper Euphrates. This delegation of authority simplified the organizational task of near continuous mobilization for war in the east by assigning responsibility to a local figure who was answerable to the Ottomans while at the same time retaining his influence and respect among the indigenous tribal populations of the frontier. This division of responsibilities allowed the state to unlock the potential, previously under-exploited and under-taxed, of the vast revenue-producing and manpower resources of the pastoral economy of the empire's south-eastern fringe without seriously altering the formal ad-

ministrative arrangements or attempting a unilateral imposition of Ottoman control that might have resulted in discontent with their rule or destabilization of the frontier regions. Instead of tampering with the existing social and political order based on the long-standing privileges of the consistently loyal tribes, or experimenting with the opportunities offered by rival interest groups such as the renegade Georgian princes and émigré aristocrats who periodically offered their services to the Ottoman cause, the Ottomans opted to place their reliance on those groups with whom they already had established relations of reciprocity and proven mutual benefit.²⁰

As a consequence of the state's increased expectations from its loyal vassals for the performance of an expanded range of services in the guise of Ottoman diplomatic representatives, go-betweens and agents for the execution of a variety of special assignments on top of its traditional reliance on their services as guardians of the frontier and auxiliaries serving Ottoman imperial troops during their deployments in the east, this expanded repertoire of services gave the tribal groups who performed them a heightened profile and influence in the Ottoman state itself and provided them with a further immunity against the encroachment of state authority on their jurisdictional sphere. Thanks in part to the good offices of the likes of Mir Şeref Han, the latent wealth which the pastoral economy represented was being channelled for state use on an unprecedented scale, but not unnaturally such co-operation raised the level of expectations and demands by tribal leaders on the state. The reward for their co-operation came in the form of Ottoman acknowledgement of their extended regional authority and a re-confirmation and of long-standing autonomous control within their own patrimonial lands designated as *hukumet*. During the course of their evolving and increasingly closer partnership formed under the crucible of wartime conditions, side by side with imposing its own demands, the state was occasionally called upon to defer to the demands and interests of the tribes. The example of Nasuh Pasha's unauthorized, but in the end tolerated, participation in the raid against the Ashti tribe already referred to is an excellent case in point.

²⁰ On the Ottoman suspicion that the offers made by Georgian asylum seekers sometimes came from mixed motives, see the passage in Naima's history which questions the sincerity of the defection of Magrav Han (Giorgi Saakadze) in 1034/ 1625. In Naima's view, Magrav had a hidden agenda and sought to embroil the Ottomans in the maelstrom of Georgian politics to his own advantage rather than from any real desire to serve Ottoman interests. *Tarih-i Naima*, II, 352: „... *hevass ve tevabiinden bir guruh Aznavurlar ile diyar-i Ruma firar edip, develet-i aliye-i Osmaniye'ye mülteci olup, serdar Hafız Ahmed Pasha'yi ol semte getirmeğe tahrir etti*”.

A further dimension of the increased Ottoman reliance on tribal financial and material resources was the protective role it played in cushioning other elements of the Ottoman polity, in particular the tax-paying *reaya* of the arable belt, from the destructive effects of an unbalanced distribution of the burden of supporting the war with the Safavids. For example, when in the context of Ottoman plans for an offensive against Tabriz in 1617–18 (1026–27 A. H.) the Ottoman commander Halil Pasha mobilized not just a sizeable Ottoman imperial force, but also a large auxiliary army consisting of thirty to forty thousand Tatar troops led by the Han of the Crimea Canikbeg Giray II,²¹ the role of hosting the Tatars together with their 60,000 to 80,000 spare mounts over the winter season fell to Mir Şeref. As a result, the tax-paying residents of other inner Anatolian districts were spared the very considerable cost of catering to this huge assemblage of forces (in effect a second army) over the extended ‘winter’ season lasting in fact for some eight months between September of 1617 and May of 1618. In the event, the military operation itself, despite the scale of vezierial preparation, ended in a decisive Ottoman defeat in September 1618 precipitated by a premature Tatar attack at the Battle of the Broken Bridge (Pul-i şikeste) near Serav.²² But at least the very real threat of military disaster compounded by tax-payer revolt had been adroitly averted.

The advantage, both in terms of quick and easy mobilization and fair allocation of resources, which the Ottomans derived from exercising the local option of using Arab and Kurdish tribal auxiliary forces had an irrefutable logic. The Ottomans invariably employed tribal groups of the border regions as transporters and provisioners, while relying on veteran Kurdish skirmishers as scouts and vanguards in advance, and flank protectors and rearguards in retreat. The Ottoman authorities thus had a vested interest in fostering a co-operative relationship with the tribes. Just like their Safavid counterparts, the Ottomans also sometimes faced disloyalty, rebellion and non co-operation among their own tribal populations whether Arab, Turkmen or Kurd, especially when unsettled conditions on the frontier seemed to offer exceptional opportunities for tribal self-assertion. In the final analysis however, their position at the center of the battle of the titans between Ottomans and Safavids for regional dominance determined that it was in the tribes’ best interest to seek to preserve the *status quo*

²¹ According to Peçevi’s history (*Tarih-i Peçevi*, II, 364) they numbered 30,000, but according to both Katib Çelebi (*Fezleke* I: 383) and Naima (*Tarih* II: 151) they numbered 40,000.

²² Iskandar Beg’s history (Savory trans. II, 1153), relates that only half of the Tatar forces still remained in the field at the time of the decisive battle; all of them itching to return to the Crimea as soon as possible after having spent more than a year in the field. In Iskandar

and prevent the skewing of the regional balance of power that would result from a clear victory by either of the imperial contenders. This combination of factors paradoxically militated against the triumph of strong centrifugal forces that would tend to seriously disrupt their respective imperial masters and force their own unconditional surrender to the demands of a clear victor.

It is worth considering whether the ultimate victor of the stalemate, compromise and balanced division of territories devised at the Treaty of Amasya in 1555 and then reconfirmed in its essential elements after more than eight decades of intermittent conflict by the terms of the Treaty of Zuhab (Kasr-i Shirin) in 1639 was neither the Ottomans nor the Safavids, but the indigenous tribes of the borderlands.

As consequence of the stand-off, the autonomous status of the buffer zone was left virtually untouched by the intrusions of either of the two would-be “superpowers”. In the absence of clear predominance by either state, the tribes of this interstitial region were able to turn the proverbial principle of imperial power based on the notion of ‘divide and rule’ to their own advantage. It was particularly during the periods of heightened dynastic tension and failed resolution of differences between the imperial giants that the tribal Davids of the frontier came into their own as independent masters of their own destinies within their respective districts of the unsettled frontier.

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Beg’s own words (*ibid.*): „the Tatar army cannot remain longer in those regions and insists on giving battle”.

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Allies or Enemies? – The Military Relations between the Yamūt Turkmen and the Nascent Qājār State in Late 18th and Early 19th Century Iran

Irene Schneider, Halle

This paper deals with the military aspect of the role played by nomadic tribes in the process of state formation, taking the example of the nomadic Turkmen Yamūt and their military and political relations to the nascent Qājār state in late 18th and early 19th century Iran. The Qājārs, originally nomads themselves, had played an important military role in the Safavid state (1502–1722), forming a part of the Qizilbāsh troops. Once spread across Iran, the part of their tribe that was to become the nucleus of the Qājār state had settled in the 17th century in Gurgān, the northeastern province of Iran, especially in the citadel of Mubārakābād and in the city of Astarābād. There they defended the borders against invasions by the Turkmen and Uzbeks. They thus lived side by side with Turkmen tribes. The nomadic Turkmen Yamūt lived in the region to the north and northeast of Astarābād, in the forests, steppe and steppe-desert of Gurgān.

Before describing the historical situation in this area and analyzing the relations between the Qājār and Yamūt, I would first like to elaborate on the concepts of tribe, nomadism and the state used in this article.

1. Concepts and Definitions

The concepts of “tribe” and “tribalism” have been the topic of serious discussion amongst historians and anthropologists.¹ Like other social identities, tribal identity has to be considered as a construct. Eickelmann distinguishes

¹ Tapper, “Anthropologists”, 48.

four constructs of tribal identity. His categorization is at least partly reflected in the sources and thus is of importance for the critical use of the information provided in those sources:²

- (1) The elaboration and use of explicit “native” ethno-political ideologies by the people themselves to explain their socio-political organization.
- (2) Concepts used by state authorities for administrative purposes.³
- (3) Implicit practical notions held by people, which are not elaborated into formal ideologies.
- (4) Anthropological concepts used by anthropologists.

Generally, tribes have been defined culturally by an ideology of common descent or structurally by chieftainship and/ or politico-territorial unity.⁴ The self-definition through genealogy common among tribes does not mean, however, that actual kinship-ties are evident. Barfield counts two different types of tribal cultural traditions: the segmentary egalitarian-lineage type, most closely associated with the Bedouins of Arabia and North Africa, and the hierarchical tribal model characteristic of the Turko-Mongolian peoples.⁵ Furthermore, Barfield distinguishes between a tribe, the largest unit of incorporation based on a genealogical model, and a tribal confederation, which combines obviously unrelated tribes to create a supra-tribal political entity.⁶ Especially in the context of Iranian history, it has to be taken into account that groups defined by a wide range of different criteria have been referred to as tribes and that large tribal confederations played an important political role in the era under discussion.

The tribal groups are also commonly comprised of several organizational levels, extending from the camp to the confederation; again, different criteria define group membership at each level, and it is not clear at which level the

² Eickelmann, *Middle East*, 127.

³ Eickelmann, *Middle East*, 127; see also Tapper, *Frontier Nomads*, 9, who deals with the problems of writing tribal history and points to the fact that government-created “tribes”, whose names may appear in the records as such, may well only exist on paper.

⁴ Tapper, “Anthropologists”, 53.

⁵ Barfield, “Turk, Persian”, 63: according to Barfield, the former had leaders (*shaykhs*) who commonly ruled as “first among equals”, over populations that rarely reached into the tens of thousands; the latter had permanent leaders (*khāns*) who commonly ruled over as many as a hundred thousand people or more.

⁶ Barfield, “Turk, Persian”, 62.

term “tribe” is appropriate.⁷ Furthermore, the Persian-Turkish terminology (*il*, ‘*ashīra*, *ṭāyifa*, *qabīla*, etc.)⁸ seems to have been used interchangeably.⁹

For this reason, it appears justified to use – as Tapper does in his book *Frontier Nomads of Iran*¹⁰ – the term “tribe” to designate a special social-political group and to refer to larger groups as “confederacies”.¹¹ The political organization, structure and size as well as the ecological environment and economical basis of both the Qājārs and the Yamūt will be described in detail below.

Concerning the definition of nomadism, it has been aptly stated that “tribalism is more necessary to nomadism than nomadism to tribalism”.¹² Pastoral nomadism is not necessarily the primary economic form in the tribal structures. Khazanow defines the economic essence of pastoral nomadism as having pastoralism as its predominant form of economic activity. However, genuine pastoral nomads are rare.¹³

Whenever other supplementary forms of economic activity are evident, he speaks of semi-nomadic pastoralism.¹⁴ Khazanow’s categories are to be discussed in more detail below, when dealing with the example of the Yamūt. We need to be aware that the category of (semi-) nomadism covers a broad range of mixed economic forms, ranging from pure (but rare) nomadism to various mixed forms of agriculture and pastoralism, even including other forms of economic activity such as trade or robbery. As we will see below, the Yamūt themselves were divided into different groups, each pursuing different forms of economic activity. One important form of economic activity was the robbery and plunder of goods and animals; but humans were also captured and then sold on the slave markets of Bukhara and Khiva.

On the working definition of a state there is more agreement. It is comprised of existing territorial frontiers (however vaguely defined), a central government (however weak and limited in its aims), and a heterogeneous population.¹⁵ The

⁷ Tapper, “Tribes”, 506.

⁸ Paul, “Nomaden”.

⁹ See for example Hidāyat, *Rawḍat aṣ-ṣafā* (cited as: RSN) IX, 4: The Qājārs are classified as: *il-i qājāriya; ṭā’ifa az ṭawāyif va-qabīla az qabāyil-i Turk* in this example *il*, *ṭāyifa* and *qabīla* are used as synonyms; see Tapper’s arguments in *Frontier Nomads*, 12–14. He points to the contextual nature of such terms.

¹⁰ Tapper, *Frontier Nomads*, 6–7, 10.

¹¹ Tapper, *Tribes*, 526–527.

¹² Tapper, “Anthropologists”, 50

¹³ Khazanow, *Nomads*, 16.

¹⁴ Khazanow, *Nomads*, 19.

¹⁵ Tapper, “Anthropologists”, 56.

Qājār state has been described as one that always had to rely on indirect rule. This means that through its history it had not been able to exercise power directly, i.e. through a closely controlled bureaucratic apparatus, but rather through a stratum of intermediaries, among them the tribal chiefs.¹⁶ Lambton characterizes the Qājār state as follows: "In general the Kādžārs were forced to administer the tribal areas through their own chiefs. The writ of the government seldom ran in the remoter districts. An *ilkhānī* and *ilbegī* were appointed over the larger tribes. The nomination of these was confined to the leading tribal families. The shah might alter the succession by placing an uncle in the place of a nephew or younger brother in the condition of an elder, but normally he had no choice but to appoint as the leader of the tribe a man belonging to the family of the chief. The *ilkhānīs* and *ilbegīs* collected the government taxes and were generally responsible for tribal affairs and administered customary law."¹⁷

It is only towards the end of the dynasty, at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, especially in the course of the Constitutional Revolution (1906–1911), that the Qājār state began to resemble a modern territorial state. Iran had at that time acquired a constitution and modern forms of government and the functions of government had been greatly extended, providing political power with a broader base.¹⁸

The tribe-state relationship has been discussed widely. The dynamic of state and tribe relations in Iran has varied, depending in particular on the power and strength of the state. Usually, as already stated, a form of indirect rule was attempted, which meant a certain degree of autonomy as long as the tribes respected, at least up to a point, the authority of the government. Furthermore, control was enacted by nominating the tribal leaders, by keeping members of the chieftain families as hostages, by establishing marriage alliances between chieftain and royal families, by executing dissidents, or by fostering dissension between rivals for leadership or between neighboring tribes. If the state possessed sufficient power, even wholesale transportation of tribes (forced migration) was practiced.¹⁹

Lambton characterizes the relationship between tribes and states as having created and maintained each other in a single system, albeit one of inherent

¹⁶ Paul, "The State", 3. For the Qājārs see: Beck, "Iran", 203; Garthwaite, "Khans", 160; Tapper, "Tribes", 508.

¹⁷ Lambton, Art. "Īlāt", 1104.

¹⁸ Lambton, Art. "Kādžār", 399.

¹⁹ Tapper, "Tribes", 508; Perry, "Forced Migration".

instability.²⁰ Tapper stresses the fact that the focus on the role of tribes in state formation in the Middle East needs to be complemented by awareness for the role states played in “tribe formation”, and, as he calls it “deformation.”²¹

According to Barfield, the impetus for forming large confederations of tribes within Iran came from outside the tribes themselves. Nomads and other tribal groups throughout the region were either surrounded by powerful states and empires or lived on their borders. The creation of a tribal confederacy was a means by which the tribes could confront the threats posed by sedentary states. In Barfield’s opinion, in general the degree of centralization of tribal confederations was correlated with the power of the states they faced.²² He distinguishes tribal confederations that used their organization to conquer sedentary states (1) from tribal confederations that used their organization to maintain autonomy from state control (2). Furthermore, tribal confederations were manipulated by sedentary governments to rule both mobile populations (3) as well as fragmented tribal groups in frontier areas that avoided state control by staying beyond the range of the Iranian powers (4).²³

The following research is a contribution to the problem of the state-tribe relationship on the micro-level. On the level of general categorization, the example of the Yamūt-Qājār relationship and the social, military and political aspects that shaped this relationship – and continued to influence the coexistence of both partners through the whole 19th and even into the early 20th century – seem to fit into Barfield’s fourth category; however, a closer inspection reveals a number of interesting unique features.

2. Historical Background

2.1. The Qājārs

The history of the Qājārs is well documented by chronicles and literary sources.²⁴ The Qājār state officially existed from 1796 (with the coronation of

²⁰ Lambton, *Society*, 6; Tapper, “Anthropologists”, 51.

²¹ Tapper, “Anthropologists”, 52.

²² Barfield, “Turk, Persian”, 65–66.

²³ Barfield, “Turk, Persian”, 66.

²⁴ To name the most important sources: Nāmi: *Tārīkh-i gītīgushā* (TG); Rustam al-Ḥukamā’: *Rustam at-tavārikh* (RT); Dumbuli: *Ma’āthir-i sulṭāniya* (MS); Sārawī: *Aḥsan at-tavārikh* (AT); Hidāyat: *Rawḍat aṣ-ṣafā* (RSN), Sipīhr: *Nāsikh at-tavārikh* (NT). For an overview see Lambton, Art. “Kādjar”. Until now, the documentary material has not been used appropriately, see Schneider: *State*.

Āghā Muḥammad Khān, who thus became Āghā Muḥammad Shāh) until 1925, when Riḍā Shāh Pahlavī took over. The Yamūt and the Qājārs were Turkmen tribes.²⁵ Unlike the Yamūt, the Qājārs had belonged to the military troops of the Qizilbāsh of the Safavids (1501–722), were of shī'ite faith, and had held different offices as governors of Ganja, Qarābāgh, Erivan, Astarābād, and Marw. Qājār historians attribute the dispersal of the Qājārs throughout the frontier areas of the empire to the deliberate policy of Shāh 'Abbās (r.1588–1629), a policy that pursued a two-fold aim, firstly to reduce their power because they had by this time become very numerous in Qarābāgh, and secondly to protect the empire against inroads made by the Uzbeks, Tatars and Turkmen.²⁶ By the end of the 17th century, the main concentration of the Qājārs appears to have been in Astarābād, and they played a prominent part in the struggles for power in northern Iran upon the fall of the Safavids. It is reported that in 1599 Shāh 'Abbās brought a group of Qājārs from Ganja to Astarābād and repaired the fortress of Mubārakābād that had been destroyed by the Turkmen. He then installed Ḥusayn Khān Qājār Ziyādoghlu in order to protect the region against the Yamūt of Sa'in Khānī.²⁷

By the end of the 18th century, the Qājārs were divided mainly into two groups: the Ashāqabāsh, the "Chiefs of below", and the Yukhāribāsh, "Chiefs of the above". The names seem to be connected to the place of residence in relation to the fortress: whereas the Ashāqabāsh lived below the Mubārakābād fortress near Astarābād, according to the historian Riḍā Qulī Khān, the Yukhāribāsh had their pastures above the fortress.²⁸ Each of these two groups was divided further into subdivisions,²⁹ the most important of which were: the Quyunlū (lit. the "flock keepers") of the Ashāqabāsh, who were later to become the royal dynasty, and the Davalū ("camel-herders"), belonging to the Yukhāribāsh.³⁰ Both subdivisions were involved in internecine strife against each other at this time.

The most important persons among the Quyunlū-Qājārs at this time were:

1) Faṭḥ 'Alī Khān, leader of the Ashāqabāsh (b. between 1685 and 1692, d. 1726). He lived in the Mubārakābād fortress. The governor of Astarābād,

²⁵ Lambton, Art. "Kādjar", 387.

²⁶ Lambton, Art. "Kādjar", 389; Perry, "Forced Migration", 205–6.

²⁷ RSN IX, 6

²⁸ RNS IX, 7–8, 49; Lambton, Art. "Kādjar", 389; Ebrahimnejad, *Pouvoir*, 16, 150. The fort had been built on the orders of Shāh 'Abbās.

²⁹ Ebrahimnejad, *Pouvoir*, 16.

³⁰ RSN IX, 7–8. According to him, the Quyunlū had more sheep and the Davalū had more camels. RSN IX, 7–8 adds that according to another tradition the origin of these terms is to be sought in the period before the Qājārs were settled in Astarābād.



Muḥammad Khān, was induced by the Yukhāribāsh to capture him. He therefore took refuge with the Yamūt of Saʿīn Khānī and in due course recovered possession of Astarābād with their help and military assistance.³¹ He seems to have supported Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn during the Afghan invasion. Later on he assumed several official titles as deputy of the kingdom (*nāʾib al-salṭana*) and representative of the state (*wakil-i dawla*) and fought on the side of Shāh Ṭahmāsp. Denounced by Nādir Khān, the later Nādir Shāh (r. 1736–1747), of plotting against Shāh Ṭahmāsp, he was put to death in 1726.³²

2) His son Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān Qājār³³ lacked in his early years sufficient manpower to challenge the hegemony of the hostile Davalū subdivision in Astarābād led by Muḥammad Ḥusayn Khān Davalū, the *baylarbay* of Astarābād, and was thus a fugitive during this period, protected by the Yamūt Turkmen.³⁴ With the help of the Yamūt Turkmen, Qājārs and others, he took Astarābād in 1744.³⁵ Later on, after Nādir Shāh's death in 1747, he appears to have joined Shāhrukh (r. 1748–1750) and subsequently been appointed *baylarbay* of Astarābād and Gurgān and leader of all the nomadic groups of Qājārs in the province by Sulaymān II (r. 1749). According to the report of Hidāyat, he summoned the chiefs from different tribes (*tawāyif*) of the Qājārs and the Turkmen and honored them, creating an alliance.³⁶ He later extended his power to Māzadarān and Gīlān and became virtually independent, even defeating Karīm Khān Zand with the help of the Turkmen Yamūt. Several victories followed at Ādharbayjān and Qarābāgh.³⁷

The internecine strife between the Ashāqabāsh and Yukhāribāsh, which temporarily ceased after Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān had established his authority and included *khāns* from both fractions among his followers, broke out again in 1758. The army dispersed. Disorder among the Turkmen and Qājārs in the

³¹ RSN IX, 8; AT, 26.

³² Hambly, "Āghā Muḥammad Khān", 108; Lambton, Art. "Kādjār", 389.

³³ RT, 139, 157, 266, 399–400: According to this source he was actually a son of Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn, who gave to Faṭḥ ʿAlī Khān a woman from the royal harem pregnant by the Shāh. See also Lambton, Art. "Kādjārs", 390, see also page XX.

³⁴ Hambly, "Āghā Muḥammad", 109; Hambly adds that these Turkmen, the Yamūt, "...pursued a policy of 'divide et impera' towards their Qājār neighbours". Rabino, *Māzandarān*, 80.

³⁵ For the report of an eyewitness see Hanvey, *Historical account*, I, 129–135; RSN IX, 13–15, for the time after Nādir Shāh's death; Lambton, Art. "Kādjārs", 390; Avery, Nādir Shāh, 59–62. Reid classifies this attack on Astarābād as a rebellion that did not seek at gaining independence from the Persian state, but to attack the state and control it: Reid, "Rebellion", 49–50.

³⁶ RSN IX, 15.

³⁷ RSN IX, 18.

neighborhood of Astarābād forced Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān to return. In the subsequent battle in 1759 with Karīm Khān Zand he was killed.³⁸

Nāmī confirms the close relations between Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān, his son, Āghā Muḥammad Khān, and other family members and the Yamūt, stating that the former used to take refuge with the Yamūt, who always protected them when they needed protection.³⁹ Some time after Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān died, several family members took refuge amongst the Yamūt of Ja‘farbāylā.⁴⁰

3) The most important personality among the early Qājārs was Āghā Muḥammad Khān, the later Shāh (1742–1797) who succeeded in uniting the two subdivisions of the Quyunlū and Davalū. Hambly characterizes him as having governed from the saddle, as having been a very gifted military leader and well versed in the “tribal arithmetic”.⁴¹ Although held hostage by Karīm Khān Zand, he managed to escape upon the latter’s death in 1779. By 1785 he had made himself master of Gurgān, Māzandarān and Gīlān and defeated a Zand army the same year. In the following years he established his authority over the greater part of Iran; he invaded Georgia and sacked Tiflis. In 1796 he was crowned in Tehran,⁴² only to be murdered in 1797 by two slaves, who, although under sentence for death for some misbehavior, had been let free overnight. His nephew Faṭḥ ‘Alī became the new ruler (1797–1834).

Āghā Muḥammad Khān had realized the weakening effect of the internecine strife and was thus very keen to heal the breach between the Quyunlū and the Davalū.⁴³ Ebrahimnejad has argued⁴⁴ that the Qājārs did not exist as a tribe in the Safavid age but first came into existence as Āghā Muḥammad Khān united the rival subdivisions and created a certain kind of feeling for tribal cohesion called *iliyat*: “L’*iliyat* était le nouveau mot d’ordre. Après avoir été un concept politique oppose à celui de l’État central Safavide et même menaçant pour celui-ci, l’*iliyat* deviendra un modèle, non seulement pour unifier les parties un chaque groupe ou *tāyefeh*, mais aussi pour amener les différentes tribus, au nom du lien tribal de par la langue, l’origine turque, l’identité Qezelbāsh etc.

³⁸ See Lambton, Art. “Kādjar”, 390; RSN IX, 58, 75.

³⁹ TG, 88.

⁴⁰ TG, 172; RSN IX, 75.

⁴¹ Hambly, “Āghā Muḥammad”, 135–136.

⁴² RSN IX, 273–4.

⁴³ Lambton, Art. “Kādjar”, 391–92.

⁴⁴ Ebrahimnejad, *Pouvoir*, 128.



(peu importe la forme) à se ranger sous une seule autorité et en un seul État. C'est le but que les Qājār se fixeront. »⁴⁵

Ebrahimnejad has pointed to the fact that Āghā Muḥammad Khān not only united the Qājār subdivisions but also invited the Kurds and Afshār to become his allies in the name of *iliyat* and accompany him in his conquests,⁴⁶ concluding that the formation of the Qājār tribe coincided with the tightening grip on power.⁴⁷

2.2. The Yamūt

The Yamūt and other Turkmen tribes were regarded in the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th centuries in Iran as a base people: characterized as possessing a barbaric severity and cruelty, they were seen as having a taste for plunder and rape, for stealing children and abducting women and men from Iranian villages. This perception of an ethnic minority was surely based on some historic truth. Information on such economic activity is found in contemporary sources, such as the chronicles and reports of European travellers who were captured by Turkmen. However, at the same time it has to be kept in mind that this perception also has to be understood as a construction of a dichotomy between the cliché of the settled urban Iranian society and the nomadic Turkish barbarians. This perception also served to enhance a political dimension: the Turkmen were seen as a seditious threat to central authority and as a danger to the Qājār state.⁴⁸ The relationship between the Yamūt and the Qājārs was, however, not that hostile in the beginning: especially the Quyunlū cooperated closely with the Yamūt, as the examples above show.

Sources on tribes are mostly written from outsiders. Only rarely⁴⁹ have tribesmen themselves written down their history. In the case of the Yamūt there are no such indigenous sources. As a consequence, the explicit “native” ideology of the Yamūt – Eickelmann’s first category in the construction of identity – is unknown. Other sources are: Persian court chronicles, manuals and local histories; reports by European travellers, as previously mentioned;⁵⁰ an

⁴⁵ Ebrahimnejad, *Pouvoir*, 129; for the notion of *iliyat* see AT, 66.

⁴⁶ Ebrahimnejad, *Pouvoir*, 128; see also Tapper, “Tribes”, 535–536. According to him, the Qājārs, apart from reviving the Safavid notion of absolute sovereignty, depended in the first place on a tribal cohesion akin to the “group feeling” of Ibn Khaldūn.

⁴⁷ Ebrahimnejad, *Pouvoir*, 305.

⁴⁸ Najmabadi, *Daughters*, 56–57.

⁴⁹ Garthwaite published documentary material from the Bakhtiari in his book: *Khans and shahs*.

⁵⁰ Hanway (1754); Morier (1810–1816), Fraser (1821–1822), Malcolm (1849), Rabino (1913). Blocquville (1860–1861); Vambéry (1860s).

ethnographic report by a Persian military man named Qŭrkhānachi who was sent by Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh in 1903 to the Yamūt and Guklān, another Turkmen tribe;⁵¹ and a modern anthropological field research on the Yamūt undertaken in the 1960s by W. Irons.⁵²

Thus, the sources are manifold, presenting different perspectives, but also covering a wide range of time. Persian chronicles from both the beginning of the Qājār rule and later do not contain much information on the nomads; the perspective of the state prevails in what is reported in these sources and often a hostile description of the Yamūt Turkmen can be found – matching the cliché quoted above. They thus reflect Eickelmann's second category of concepts⁵³ which are used by state authorities for administrative purposes. At first glance, the same might be said for Qŭrkhānachi, a state official, reporting on the Yamūt about a hundred years after the period investigated in this article. Nevertheless, it contains precious information. A member of the ruling system and a military man, Qŭrkhānachi takes the court perspective when dealing with the "Yamūt question". However, his reports reveal an accurate and detailed observation of the political, economic and social situation of the tribes and an accurate observation of the conditions the Yamūt and Guklān lived in. Qŭrkhānachi's ethnographic report is thus a valuable completion of the Persian chronicles. Reports by European travellers, some of which are quite early, reveal a variety of perceptions and descriptions, whereby their description of the nomads and especially of the Turkmen is surely tinged by their own cultural background, their political, historical and military judgement more often than not devoid of any understanding for the foreign culture or knowledge of the language. In contrast, Irons is an anthropologist who visited the Yamūt in the 1960s and based his reports on the methods of field research.⁵⁴ His approach thus contains anthropological concepts for categorizing identities, as described by Eickelmann's fourth concept; at the same time though, his research also reports on some native concepts of identity.

⁵¹ Qŭrkhānachi: *Nukhbah* (QU).

⁵² A study on the Yamūt and the Turkmen on the basis of Persian, English and French sources as well as field research by A. 'Askari Khāngāh and Sh. Kamālī from 1996 contains some new information on the situation of the Yamūt today but does not, it seems, contain other sources or/and material than the other studies cited.

⁵³ See above page XX

⁵⁴ For information on the history of the Yamūt Irons relies on Qŭrkhānachi, as he states at the beginning of his book and articles, but unfortunately he does not make clear which information he exactly uses and when.

In general, all these sources still reveal no complete picture of the history of the Yamūt, their social and political system, or their military role in the emergence of the Qājār state. However, as they represent a multiplicity of sources, it may be possible to utilize such aspects and observations offered by different perspectives to gain a relatively reliable picture of Yamūt society and its military system. At the same time though, it has to be taken into account that development cannot be reconstructed from such varying sources scattered over a century. And yet, as some of the Yamūt were still described as a nomadic people without a social hierarchy and a political hierarchical system in the middle of the 20th century, as Irons undertook his field research, at least these features seem to have prevailed throughout the 19th and the 20th centuries.

The Yamūt occupy contiguous regions in the southwestern corner of Central Asia and adjoining parts of Persia and Afghanistan. They are divided into two large geographic subdivisions, the Khiva Yamūt, who are situated to the west of the city of Khiva, and the Gurgān Yamūt, who occupy the portion of Iran known as the Gurgān Plain and immediately adjacent regions.⁵⁵ The Yamūt dealt with here are the Yamūt in Irān. The Yamūt, as well as other Turkmen tribes as the Guklān and Tekke, were in the habit of raiding deep into Persia and kept the Turkmen steppe for the most part beyond the power of the Qājār government. Furthermore, Iran lost territory to the Tsarist Russia. Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh (r. 1848–1896) signed an agreement with Russia for a new frontier along the Atrak River, which was later superceded by the Akhal-Khurāsān boundary convention of 1881.⁵⁶

In his report Qūrkhānachi characterizes the Yamūt as a *jam'iyat*, which could perhaps be translated as “confederacy”, because this group consisted of twelve tribes (*tā'ifa*).⁵⁷ Between the Guklān and Yamūt – the most important Turkmen tribes on the Iranian side of the border – raids and counter raids were common. Morier, traveling between 1810 and 1816, estimated that together the Yamūt and Guklān numbered about 8–10,000 families. He states that their submission to the government was nominal, amounting to little more than gifting a few horses annually to the Shah, “who is so careful not to give them cause for disgust that he generally returns them more than he receives”. Their border was about 8 Parsangs from Astarābād.⁵⁸ Fraser describes a visit to a

⁵⁵ For the Turkmen in Russia see Saray, *Turkmens*.

⁵⁶ Lambton, Art. “Kādjār”, 395; Saray, *Turkmens*, 217.

⁵⁷ QU 38. This reflects of course the state terminology of the Qājārs for the Yamūt, not the indigenous terminology.

⁵⁸ Lambton, Art. “Īlāt”, 1108; Morier, *Zweite Reise*, 413.



group of Guklān in the year 1883.⁵⁹ He states that the Yamūt at this time were in a state of rebellion. Abbott put the Yamūt at 59,500 tents or families on the basis of exaggerated figures.⁶⁰ Taylor Thomson, who visited the area in 1846, put the Guklān at some 5–6,000 families and the Yamūt at 20,000.⁶¹

According to Qūrkhānachi, all the tribes (*tāʿifā*) lived in the steppe in tents (*ṣahrānishīn va-dar ālāchaq zindigī mī kunand*). He counted no less than 10,000 houses (*khāna*, tents are obviously meant).⁶²

There are three ecological zones the Yamūt lived in: forest, steppe, and steppe-desert, corresponding to three ethnographically distinct regions. The forest region was inhabited by Persian-speaking and Turkic-speaking sedentary agriculturalists.⁶³ These areas were referred to by the Yumūt as *wilāyat* (lit.: province).⁶⁴ Sedentary people had always inhabited the *wilāyat* and people there had devoted themselves primarily to irrigation agriculture. These people were, as Irons points out, willing to accept political control by the Qājār dynasty.⁶⁵

Two groups⁶⁶ of the Yamūt existed: the *chumūr* and the *chārwa*.⁶⁷ The *chumūr* lived in the steppe zone immediately north of the forest region. Although the region is well suited for irrigation agriculture, until a short time before Irons visited them they had a mixed economy consisting of rainfall cultivation of wheat and barley and raising sheep and goats.⁶⁸ The *chārwa*⁶⁹ lived in the steppe-desert. Their migratory cycle was determined by the use of limited and scattered grazing resources.⁷⁰ This pattern was still found in the

⁵⁹ Fraser, quoted in Lambton, Art. "Īlāt", 1108.

⁶⁰ Lambton, Art. "Īlāt", 1108.

⁶¹ Quoted in Lambton, Art. "Īlāt", 1108.

⁶² QU, 38.

⁶³ Irons, "Nomadism", 638.

⁶⁴ QU, 38.

⁶⁵ Irons, "Nomadism", 638.

⁶⁶ QU, 34; he calls them *fāriqa* (lit. branches). For the "tribe" of the Yamūt he uses here the word *khayl* (lit. band, group).

⁶⁷ QU, 40.

⁶⁸ Irons, "Nomadism", 639.

⁶⁹ QU, 40–43; Rabino: *Māzandarān*, 97. According to him, the *chumūr* are the "cultivators" of the tribe and practically settled and move their camps but rarely in a limited circle. The *chārwa* are unattached to the soil and live for the most part at a distance and pay little, if any, tribute. Irons, "Nomadism", 639.

⁷⁰ Irons, *Yomut Turkmen*, 66–67; "Nomadism", 639. According to Irons, the Persian Government was not so much feared; the Russian though was. The Iranian government undertook nothing to stop feuds, whereas the Russian did. After Russia established control, the Iranian Turkmen also reduced slave raiding, because the markets of Khiva, Bukhara and Marv had been closed down. They took only small children; adults could not be sold and could easily run away. Adults were kept for a short time and held for ransom.

1960s by Irons.⁷¹ Qūrkhānachi⁷² describes the *chārwā* as shepherds (*shabān*), living from pastoral activities (*chūpānī*) and herding camels, living constantly as nomads (*dā'im dar gardish*), and being at another place at every season. Qūrkhānachi accuses them of being liars and plunderers, mostly from the *chumūr*. Sometimes, however, he states that they cooperate with the *chumūr*, who sell what the *chārwā* plundered. They make their living from the sale of camels and of their wool.

Thus, with relation to Khazanow's categories, the *chumūr* would have to be called semi-nomads, their economy based on a mixture of pastoral activities and agriculture, even if the ecological environment would have allowed them to focus exclusively on agriculture. On the other hand, the *chārwā* perhaps come close to falling under the category of full nomads; however, beside their pastoral activities, they also utilized another source of income, namely the plunder, robbery and sale of humans.

As a later source states, the *chārwā* observed neither obedience to or paid taxes to the governor of Astarābād. The *chumūr* were less fortunate. Whenever the *chārwā* began their seasonal migration and the *chumūr* were left without their protection, the governor of Astarābād would levy a small poll tax and demand *pishkash* from them.⁷³ Rabino states that relations between the Yamūts and the villagers were anything but friendly as a rule. The *chārwā* were normally supposed to be responsible for most of the raids; but the *chumūr* are also said to have taken part in these forays. He writes: "Not a day passes but what bloodshed occurs, or some plundering foray or retaliatory expedition is undertaken; and the reports of the British Agent at Astarābād during my six years of office at Resht were one long record of murder and robbery."⁷⁴

Furthermore, the sources state that the Yamūt had close economic ties with the urban centers of Astarābād. According to Qūrkhānachi, the Yamūt bought rice, sugar, and tobacco there. From the villages they bought, among other goods, cotton.⁷⁵ On the other hand, they are said to have taken "protection money", called *sākhilū*,⁷⁶ from the people of the *wilāyat*. Qūrkhānachi calls this

⁷¹ Irons, "Nomadism", 639.

⁷² QU, 40–42.

⁷³ Abbott, quoted in Lambton, Art. "Īlāt", 1108.

⁷⁴ Rabino, *Māzandarān*, 99.

⁷⁵ QU, 26, 39–40. Qūrkhānachi states that the Yamūt needed the villages to use the mills. QU, 49: Qūrkhānachi here also deals with the ways the Yamūt got their guns, a question which posed of course a serious security problem for the Iranian state.

⁷⁶ QU, 39. This word has become a special term for – according to Mu'ī, *Farhang* – "money the Turkmen took from the inhabitants of Gurgān to be protected from their raiding".



an income “above the normal” (*dakhl-i fauq al-‘āda*) and points to the fact that from ancient times all the inhabitants of the *wilāyat* and even of Astarābād had to pay *sākhlu* to live in safety.⁷⁷

The indigenous political organization of the Yamūt consisted of a segmentary structure that has been characterized by Irons as “ordered anarchy”.⁷⁸ In another place Irons calls it egalitarian⁷⁹ and states that the Yamūt lacked such institutions as centralized authority and specialized administrative and judicial machinery.⁸⁰ They thus do not fit into Barfield’s conceptualization of tribal political systems, consisting in a dichotomy between a segmentary egalitarian-lineage type associated with the Bedouins of Arabia and North Africa and a hierarchical tribal model characteristic of the Turko-Mongolian peoples.⁸¹

The Yamūt were organized into territorial groups which regulated their affairs on the basis of a consensus between adult male residents, or, failing consensus, on a basis of feud and intertribal warfare.⁸² In the case of war or feuds however, they elected a leader called *bayk*.⁸³

The actual degree of control the Persian government was able to exercise over the Yamūt before Pahlavī rule (1925–1979) varied from one region to another and also over time. At its height, government control was great enough to allow officials to collect a small tax from the agricultural Turkmen nearest the provincial center of the administration, the city of Astarābād (today Gurgān).⁸⁴ Even Qūrkhānachi, who, being in an official political position, describes the Yamūt as being under the sovereignty of the Iranian state,⁸⁵ admits that they were raiding and taking protection money from the sedentary population, thus damaging state interests.⁸⁶ The Turkmen took foreign travelers

According to Rabino, *Māzandarān*, 99, this arrangement, made to guard against the raids, consisted of an annual quantity of rice in turn for protection.

⁷⁷ QU, 39.

⁷⁸ Irons, “Nomadism”, 640. This seem to be true for the *chumūr* as well as the *chārwā*. See also “Variation”, 149–151; the *chumūr* near Astarābād were, according to Irons, more under governmental control later.

An egalitarian social structure is corroborated by other sources too: QU, 33–34; Rabino, *Mazandaran*, 94–95: “They have no constituted authority, although each section has an *aq-saqal* or “grey beard”.”

⁷⁹ Irons, “Variation”, 149.

⁸⁰ QU, 47.

⁸¹ Barfield, “Turk, Persian”, 63.

⁸² Irons, “Nomadism”, 640–642; Irons: *Yomut Turkmen*, 46–48.

⁸³ Irons, “Nomadism”, 645.

⁸⁴ Irons, “Nomadism”, 640.

⁸⁵ QU, 38.

⁸⁶ QU, 39.

as well as Iranian subjects as slaves and sold them on the slave markets of Bukhara and Chiva.⁸⁷

As all Turkmen, the Yamūt were considered to be fine horsemen and good cavalymen and were said to keep a gun in nearly every house.⁸⁸ They were much faster and more skilful in their tactics as the imperial Persian army, which could not cope with them.⁸⁹ If threatened by danger, the Yamūt took refuge in the desert, where the Shāh's army could not follow them.⁹⁰

Qūrkhānachi, defending his honor as a member of the royal army, felt obliged to point to the braveness of the military troops of the Qājār army in Astarābād.⁹¹

In his article "Nomadism as a political adaptation: the case of the Yumūt Turkmen" Irons challenges the common assumption that the migratory residence patterns of all Middle Eastern, North African, and Central Asian tribal peoples were purely economic in function. He argues in case of the Yamūt that an examination of their economic and political system indicates that for this group nomadism was not an adaptation to economic conditions, but rather a means of increasing their military effectiveness in resisting government control.⁹² The reason of this form of resistance lay for Irons in the hard situation facing the sedentary rural population of Iran, the heavy burden of taxation and conscription.⁹³

2.3. Relationship between the Yamūt and the Qājārs

All sources confirm a close relationship between the Yamūt in the 18th century with the Quyunlū subdivision of the Qājārs. On the social level, there seems to have been marriage alliances.⁹⁴ Rustam al-Ḥukamā', reporting the alleged

⁸⁷ AT, 232; RT 742–743, 46; RSN IX, 58; TG, 28; Vambery, *Man nannte mich*, 39, 153; Blocquville *Gefangener*, was kept in Turkmen (Tekke) captivity for fourteen months; Fraser, *Narrative*, 275–278.

⁸⁸ QU, 49–51.

⁸⁹ Blocquville, *Gefangener*, 43–66. His description of a disastrous march undertaken by the Persian army with incapable military leaders throws light on the military weakness of the royal army at this time. This march ended for Blocquville with his captivity.

⁹⁰ QU, 49–52; Irons, "Nomadism", 642–645.

⁹¹ QU, 46.

⁹² Already Qūrkhānachi realizes the fertile grounds of the Yamūt area: QU, 36. Iron, "Nomadism", 640 states even in case of the *chārwa*: "...the seasonal movements of the charwa are a necessary part of their mode of economic production, but it should be noted that their pattern of migration could easily be accommodated to a pattern of semi-sedentary residence".

⁹³ Irons, "Nomadism", 654.

⁹⁴ Hambly, "Āghā Muḥammad Khān", 107.

descent of Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān from Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn through a pregnant woman from the Shāh's harem, states that this woman was a daughter of Ḥusayn Qulī Āqā, a descendant of Ya'qūb Sulṭān Qājār, who had served Shāh 'Abbās I and whose mother was the niece of Bikanj Khān Bahādur, the leader of the Yamūt and Guklān.⁹⁵ If this information were historically accurate it would mean that there existed family connections between the Yamūt and the Qājārs. Whereas the alleged descent from the Shāh cannot be taken at face value, for it is an isolated source unconfirmed by other sources and surely aims at creating bonds of legitimacy for the Qājār dynasty, the information on familial relations between the Turkmen and the Qājārs must not necessarily be forged. Persian sources had no reason to invent such a bond. Thus, as the relations between the Quyunlū and the Yamūt were very close, as will be shown in the following, it seems possible that marriage alliances existed between the two tribal groups.

More important for the Quyunlū subdivision of the Qājārs were the close military ties which existed in the late 18th century between the Quyunlū and the Yamūt. Hidāyat stated explicitly that the Yamūt had close relations with the Quyunlū for generations, whereas the Davalū and the Guklān were allies.⁹⁶

The Yamūt-Quyunlū relationship followed a certain pattern: when the Qājārs from the Quyunlū subdivision had to flee because of strife with the Davalū subgroup, they took refuge with the Yamūt. The Yamūt not only provided them with hospitality and protection in the steppe, but also gave them military assistance. They armed their men and sent them with the Quyunlū on more than one military expedition.⁹⁷

This pattern is important because it is described in the sources repeatedly, even for example by Rustam al-Ḥukamā', a well-known sycophant of the Qājār dynasty who was certainly not interested in showing the weakness of the later ruling dynasty by describing any form of dependency of the Qājārs from other tribal groups. Thus, these reports can be considered to reflect historical conditions. This pattern contains several elements:

1) The ecological precondition of the possibility of withdrawal to the steppe and therefore to a place out of reach from the government, ruler or enemy. The Turkmen themselves normally used this tactic during the 19th century by taking

⁹⁵ Lambton, Art. "Kādjar", 389; RT, 166.

⁹⁶ RSN IX, 109. After the death of Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān Davalū, Mīrzā 'Alī Khān Davalū, his successor as a governor in Astarābād, mobilized the Guklān, whereas Ḥusayn Qulī Khān went on using the Yamūt for his campaigns: RSN IX, 108, 114, 91–92. Ebrahimnejad, *Pouvoir*, 27.

⁹⁷ Perry, "Zand Dynasty", 85, names it the "traditional Qājār refuge".

advantage of the topographical and geographical situation in their disputes with the Qājār state. This was a particularly easy tactic for them to employ, at least until the Iranian – Russian border was closed.⁹⁸

2) Furthermore, this pattern reveals the solidarity of the Yamūt with the Quyunlū subdivision and – to go one step further – their military superiority. They not only offered shelter and protection but aligned themselves with them in the strife with the Davalū, even going so far to place an armed group at their disposal. As has been stated above, this enabled Faṭḥ ‘Alī Khān to recapture Astarābād. His son, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān Qājār, spent this time as a fugitive, protected by the Yamūt Turkmen. And also Āghā Muḥammad Khān enjoyed good relations with the Turkmen. What the sources do not reveal is which groups within the Yamūt cooperated with the Quyunlū and whether it was always the same groups, etc. Only the name of the Yamūt group of Sa‘īn Khānī is sometimes mentioned.

Rustam al-Ḥukamā’ preserved an interesting report regarding relations between the Quyunlū and the Yamūt; according to this report, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān fled from Ibrāhīm Shāh (r.1748–1749) and went to his uncle, Bikanj Khān, in the steppe of Gurgān. The Shāh sent 1,000 horsemen to seize him, and Bikanj Khān found himself in a somewhat difficult situation: while his family loyalty and tribal solidarity committed him to Muḥammad Ḥasan Khan – his nephew –, on the other hand he also had to show his loyalty towards the Shāh. He is reported to have asked Muḥammad Ḥasan what to do. He replied in turn that the Shāh’s soldiers should come and try to capture him, if they thought they could. In a glamorous fight he then managed to escape.⁹⁹ This report on Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān, who fought 1,000 horsemen of the Shāh single-handedly, bears of course legendary aspects. However, this does not discredit the existence of bonds of loyalty between the Yamūt and the Quyunlū, bonds, not only based on strategic considerations or military tactics but also on a mutual consent, or perhaps a confluence of varying factors, such as family connections combined with political and military necessity.

With the help of the Yamūt Turkmen, the Qājārs, and others, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān took Astarābād in 1744.¹⁰⁰ He defeated with the help of the Turkmen Yamūt Karīm Khān Zand.¹⁰¹ However, disorder among the Turkmen and Qājārs forced Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān to return to Gurgān. According to

⁹⁸ Kazemzadeh, “Relations”, 341: In December 1869 the Russian government recognized the Persian dominion up to the Atrak.

⁹⁹ RT, 429–432.

¹⁰⁰ Hanvey, *Historical Account* I, 129–135; Lambton, Art. “Kādjārs”, 390.

¹⁰¹ RSN IX, 17–20; TG 28–29.

Hidāyat,¹⁰² the Yamūt – “whose nature is revolt (*fitna*), corruption (*fisād*) and not loyalty and obedience but who had been forced to serve Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān” –, had plundered and robbed Sārī and returned to Gurgān. Hidāyat adds that Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān could neither trust the Turkmen anymore, nor the Qājārs among his followers.¹⁰³

However, this fact does not seem to have hampered the good relations, which prevailed well into the time of Āghā Muḥammad Khān.¹⁰⁴ Still in 1784 the Yamūt seem to have been his allies. Rustam al-Ḥukamāʾ reported that in 1784 Agha Muḥammad Khān was attacked in Astarābād by a Zand army, which was defeated, and the Yamūt Turkmen, among others, took all the commanders and officers of the army into captivity. Muḥammad Zāhir Khān (Zand) fled but was captured by the Yamūt and handed over to Āghā Muḥammad Khān.¹⁰⁵ Rabino reports that Āghā Muḥammad Khān rewarded the Yamūt with land (*tuyūl*).¹⁰⁶

However, in 1792, only six years later, we read in the chronicles¹⁰⁷ that Āghā Muḥammad Khān decided to launch an attack – according to Rustam al-Ḥukamāʾ even a “holy war” (*jihād*) – against the Yamūt because of their plundering all over the country.¹⁰⁸ The classification as “holy war” is surely an exaggeration of Rustam al-Ḥukamāʾ. However, this time the expedition against the former allies gained a new dimension. Rustam al-Ḥukamāʾ reports that Āghā Muḥammad Khān sent four commanders selected from the noblemen of the Qājār tribe to the steppe of Gurgān. The Turkmen were defeated and treated brutally. They behaved “like asses fleeing before a lion” (Koran 74:50). Whoever could escape the “swords of the Qizilbāsh”, as Rustam al-Ḥukamāʾ names Āghā Muḥammad Khān’s troops, went to the region of Turkestan. The

¹⁰² RSN IX, 58.

¹⁰³ RSN IX, 58. For a similar characterization of the Yamūt as being only interested in robbing and plundering, see TG, 28.

¹⁰⁴ TG, 250. RT, 730. Rustam al-Ḥukamāʾ states, 611–13, 826, that Āghā Muḥammad Khān’s brother Ḥusayn Qulī Khān was murdered by Yamūt Turkmen in 1774/75 on the orders of Karīm Khān, see also: Hambly, “Āghā Muḥammad Khān”, 113.

¹⁰⁵ RSN IX, 185.

¹⁰⁶ Rabino, *Māzandarān*, 80, only talks of Turkmen (not naming a special tribe) who helped Āghā Muḥammad Khān’s father, but the Yamūt are clearly meant: “As a reward for the assistance they (the Turkmen) had always given him and his father, Agha Muhammad Khan allowed the Turcomans to remove from the barren banks of the Atrak to the rich plain of Gurgan and gave them as tuyul the villages on the banks.”

¹⁰⁷ RT, 742–743, 746; NT, 65; AT, 235; RSN IX, 253.

¹⁰⁸ RT, 742–743, 746; again the cliché of the Turkmen as robbing, plundering, and taking prisoners can be found. Hambly, “Āghā Muḥammad Khān”, 137; RSN IX, 253 gives the date of 1793. As a reason, the Turkmen’s refusal of a new Qājār governor is given. See also Malcolm, *History*, 2, 278–279.

Qājārs killed many people, men and women, old and young; they burnt down their houses and tents, and at the gateways of Astarābād minarets were made out of Turkmen skulls. Turkmen possessions were confiscated; whatever could not be taken was burnt down. Rustam al-Ḥukamā' justifies the necessity of this brutal military expedition by pointing to the Yamūt's constant robbing and hostage-taking. Sārawī¹⁰⁹ and Sipihr¹¹⁰ corroborate this campaign against the former allies. Sārawī reports these events in the form of a direct communication between Āghā Muḥammad Khān and the Yamūt, which is certainly not historical. Like Rustam al-Ḥukamā', he lists as reasons the Yamūt's plundering, their abduction and selling of people on the slave market, and their looting of caravans, which made the whole area unsafe for trade.¹¹¹ Āghā Muḥammad Khān is reported to have given them an ultimatum: either they migrate (*kūch*), hand over their hostages to him (*giraw*), and supply soldiers (horsemen) for the army or they prepare for war (*jang*). Interestingly, another reason he gives for issuing this threat was that they were unbelievers, i. e. Sunnis.¹¹²

In this alleged dialogue the Yamūt are said to have answered that they are inhabitants of the steppe of Gurgān and the Turks of Atrak, comparing themselves to watchdogs for Āghā Muḥammad Khān and displaying a proud independence that they combined with a willingness to cooperate given acceptable terms. However, they explicitly refused to accept migration,¹¹³ which would have been a submittal to a well-known demonstration of political power, the forced migration of nomadic tribes. According to Sārawī, Āghā Muḥammad Khān replied that a watchdog not kept on a chain would rebel, and so he fought them. Like Rustam al-Ḥukamā', Sārawī¹¹⁴ and Sipihr¹¹⁵ also report that Āghā Muḥammad Khān took severe revenge.

Sipihr's report dates from the year 1793 and differs regarding the end of the story. After the defeat of the Yamūt, Āghā Muḥammad Khān is said to have gone to Sārī, from where the Turkmen came; there they gifted him the best horses and forty boys as hostages as well as 500 cavalymen to serve him. They even promised to hand over some wives of noblemen as hostages and

¹⁰⁹ AT, 230–238.

¹¹⁰ NT, 65–67 for the year 1793.

¹¹¹ AT, 232.

¹¹² AT, 232.

¹¹³ AT, 233, *kūch* must have the meaning not of migration (the Yamūt were nomads and migrated), but of forced migration by the state: see Perry, "Forced Migration", 204. Āghā Muḥammad Khān obviously wanted to force them to move to a different place.

¹¹⁴ AT, 235.

¹¹⁵ NT, 65–67.

promised to be loyal. Āghā Muḥammad Khān returned the prisoners to their land and went to Tehran.¹¹⁶ Thus, according to Sipīhr, the Yamūt decided in the end to surrender and to fulfill Āghā Muḥammad Khān's demands, obviously opting for integration into the emergent state structure. However, even if this was true, the integration was not to last. From now on, Qājār rulers regularly launched punitive expeditions against the Turkmen and especially against the Yamūt.¹¹⁷

We can conclude that a profound change in the relations between Quyunlū-Qājārs and Yamūt had taken place, namely from alliance to enmity. The Quyunlū and the Yamūt were now no longer allies but enemies. The relationship between the Yamūt and the Qājārs was to remain hostile for the rest of the 19th century and even into the beginning of the 20th century. This hostility even produced the aforementioned cliché of the brutal and barbarian Turkmen. In contrast to this cliché, Rabino, living in Iran at the beginning of the 20th century, has preserved some interesting information. Inhabitants of Astarābād admitted to him that the Turkmen were subjected to great provocation from the villagers, who often stole their horses and cattle, whilst the governors of Astarābād used their so-called punitive expeditions as an excuse for imposing heavy fines on the tribesmen, enriching themselves at their expense.¹¹⁸ Rabino even quotes a letter addressed by a certain Iḥtishām al-Wizāra, a former Persian Commissioner at Gunbad-i Qābūs, to the Persian government in which he informed the Persian government about the loyalty of the Yamūt and Guklān, stating that their bad reputation was due to the fact that they have never had a representative at Court to remove misunderstandings.¹¹⁹ Rabino furthermore writes:

It would be easy for the Persian Government to pacify this province, as the Turcoman of to-day is much more inclined to agriculture and to settle down than was his father, whilst by the conversion of many of his camping sites...into permanent settlements...he has rendered himself far more liable to punishment than when he lived under tents, which at the first sign of danger could be removed northwards towards the Atrak.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ NT, 65–67.

¹¹⁷ Tapper, "Tribes", 520.

¹¹⁸ Rabino, *Māzandarān*, 99–100.

¹¹⁹ Rabino, *Māzandarān*, 96.

¹²⁰ Rabino, *Māzandarān*, 100.

3. Analysis

Focusing on the military aspect of the role of a nomadic tribe – the Yamūt – in the process of state formation of the Qājārs in late 18th and early 19th century Iran, it has to be stated that relations between the Yamūt and the Quyunlū changed dramatically at some point. Partners and allies at the beginning, the Yamūt turned into enemies of the nascent Qājār state. Āghā Muḥammad Khān certainly tried to integrate the Yamūt; he failed however, not even managing to set up cooperative structures which would have enabled the Qājārs to control Gurgān on the basis of indirect rule. The northeastern corner of Iran was to remain through the whole 19th and even into the beginning of the 20th century a region mainly beyond Tehran's control. Āghā Muḥammad Khān's attack in 1792 clearly indicates that his intended policy of integrating the Yamūt, following a pattern that had been successful with other tribes, had failed. For a final analysis of the relations between the Yamūt and the Qājār state the following questions have to be answered:

1. What were the reasons for this break between the Quyunlū-Qājārs and the Yamūt at this specific point in time, between 1784 and 1792?
2. What were the military and political consequences for both sides, the Yamūt and the Qājārs?

Re 1) The reasons could perhaps be sought in the social connections between the Qājārs and the Yamūt: the Qājārs (Quyunlū) and Yamūt were tied together by marriage alliances, which easily might also serve as reasons for feuds. Information on this dimension of the Yamūt-Quyunlū relationship is extremely rare in the sources and thus this aspect cannot be further investigated. However, certain events had placed an enormous strain on social relations between the Yamūt and the Quyunlū. The brother of Āghā Muḥammad Khān had been murdered by Turkmen as early as 1774/75.¹²¹ This incident does not seem to have led to a breakdown in relations. The sources indicate that Āghā Muḥammad Khān still enjoyed reliable cooperation with the Yamūt after this.

Thus, if we are not to agree with Nāmī, Hidāyat and Rustam at-Ḥukamā' and others¹²² on the unreliable, brutal and savage "nature" of the Turkmen, the reason for Turkmen disobedience and their fading loyalty has to be sought in the prevailing political circumstances.

We could ask whether the reason for this break was somehow connected to the creation of the Qājār state. This question, however, has to be rejected, for a

¹²¹ TG, 174; RT 172.

¹²² Even Hambly writes: "Unpredictable as the Türkmens might be...": in: "Āghā Muḥammad Khān", 137.

Qājār state was yet to exist in 1792. Hence, no territorial frontiers (however vaguely defined) were in place, nor a central government (however weak and limited in its aims), and no heterogeneous population existed. Āghā Muḥammad Khān governed from the saddle, as Hambly put it.¹²³ He succeeded in reconciling the different subdivisions of the Qājārs (the Davalū and Quyunlū). This happened as early as 1779, as he escaped from Shīrāz and met the leading Davalū Khāns in Varāmīn.¹²⁴ And he was building up a strong tribal confederacy in a territory without secure borders¹²⁵ and without signs of an institutional structure.

A more promising paradigm seems to be the observation given by Ebrahimnejad. The Qājārs' grasp for power and the building up of a political and tribal organization were, according to him, two parallel processes. Sovereignty and authority did not rest on one person but on the tribe, which had begun a process of political and social integration.¹²⁶

The notion of *ilīyat*, which he translated with "tribalité" or "tribalism", played an important role in this context.¹²⁷ During attempts to win over the Qājār dignitaries in 1779, this term seems to have played an important role in their decision.¹²⁸ Āghā Muḥammad Khān also invited other tribes, such as the Kurds and the Afshār, to be his allies in the name of *ilīyat*.¹²⁹ In other words: with the end of the feud between the Quyunlū and Davalū and the establishment of the tribal solidarity (*ilīyat*) of the Qājārs, an organized and unified tribe of the Qājārs emerged along with or side by side with a confederacy of different tribes.

As a consequence, the power relations between the Yamūt and the Quyunlū clearly shifted. The Yamūt, originally only allies of the Quyunlū subdivision, now had to deal with a united strong tribe consisting of their old friends (Quyunlū) as well as their old enemies, the Davalū, against whom they had fought several times when assisting the Quyunlū. Allies in the beginning, at this early time the Yamūt had not only been partners but surely have to be considered the stronger partner in this relationship: they provided protection and military aid, they helped Quyunlū leaders to survive, and they provided

¹²³ Hambly, "Āghā Muḥammad Khān", 135.

¹²⁴ Hambly, "Āghā Muḥammad Khān", 114.

¹²⁵ Hambly, "Āghā Muḥammad Khān", 139. Furthermore, a system of administration was only in its very beginnings; Āghā Muḥammad Khān took special care in building up of a strong army, but not so much a civil service.

¹²⁶ Ebrahimnejad, *Pouvoir*, 127–129, 147; see also Tapper, "Tribes", 535–536 for the Qājārs.

¹²⁷ Ebrahimnejad, *Pouvoir*, 128.

¹²⁸ Ebrahimnejad, *Pouvoir*, 129.

¹²⁹ Ebrahimnejad, *Pouvoir*, 128.

troops to launch military attacks. Military strength and flexibility, the topographical advantages of a vast steppe desert so familiar to the Yamūt, one into which they always could withdraw, and a political independence – all these factors enabled them to fight on the side of the Quyunlū whenever it seemed convenient or appropriate. In this situation, a long partnership with the Quyunlū based on solidarity surely played just as an important role as any hope for economic advantages, i.e. plundering and robbery, to be gained from launching military attacks together with the Quyunlū.

In the new tribal constellation however, the Yamūt were obviously in an inferior position. Hence our hypothesis is that the new tribal organization and cohesion created by Āghā Muḥammad Khān could well be the reason for losing the Yamūt Turkmen as allies.

But why was Āghā Muḥammad Khān, well versed in “tribal arithmetic”, unable to perceive this dangerous development, which was to alienate one of his most important partners, a partner that had even once been his protector as he had sought power? If Rabino’s report is correct, he tried to reward them not only with booty but also with land. As the Turkmen – at least according to the sources – obviously continued robbing and plundering, thus endangering the newly created political structures, the answer cannot be found in an improvement of the economic situation. This would confirm Iron’s argument: the nomadism of the Yamūt is not to be considered solely an adaptation to economic conditions, but rather as a means of increasing military effectiveness.¹³⁰ In short: nomadism was preserved as a means of maintaining political independence from the Qājār state.

The reasons for the break might thus lie in the inferior position the Yamūt were suddenly allotted in the new constellation and the loss of the special role the Yamūt had always played for the Quyunlū: no longer the stronger partner who could give refuge to the Quyunlū leaders, they were now merely one tribe among many, all of which were to be integrated into a network that was to form a Qājār state based on indirect rule in the territory. Perhaps the reason why the Yamūt did not become integrated into this “tribal arithmetic” is not to be seen in the fact that they turned enemies *although* they had been strong allies, but precisely *because* they had been strong allies, and not because they were *forced* to be an instrument of indirect Qājār rule but because they *did not wish* to be such an instrument. The changing context and the shifting parameters made it impossible for them to preserve their independent position; any integration into the political and economic system of Qājār Iran would

¹³⁰ Irons, “Nomadism”.



have necessarily entailed an abandonment of independence. Thus, from the Yamūt perspective, it seems plausible to argue that integration first into a huge tribal confederation and then into a nascent Qājār state was of no interest; they valued their political independence more highly. Realizing this estrangement, Āghā Muḥammad Khān was surely aware of the danger an independent Turkmen tribe, living under conditions he was familiar with, posed to his ideal of a united kingdom. In the end he decided to subdue them by force. What were the consequences for both sides in the political arena of 19th century Iran?

Re 2) For the Yamūt, the political, economical and military consequences are obvious: the Yamūt basically remained politically independent, even if the relationship to the later Qājār state was ambivalent and occasionally subjected to shifts, and they preserved the segmentary structure of their tribal system. Economically the situation benefited the Yamūt: they did not pay taxes while still profiting from trade with the urban centers – such as Astarābād – and their extortion of protection money in the “*wilāyat*”. Raids on livestock and humans remained a further source of income. Until the Russian Empire took over control of Bukhara and Chiva as well as the border region of Iran in the 1870s, the sale of abducted people on the slave markets of those cities remained profitable. Even after the Russian presence was established, abductions were still reported. In terms of the military aspect, they were now free from sending recruits but could act with a high ratio of military participation¹³¹ against the state or other tribes in a manner typical for tribes – whenever they wished or needed to.

The consequences for the Qājār state were less advantageous. On the military level they do not seem to have been able to put an end to Turkmen raids. This meant not only a loss of recruits, fine horsemen, tax income, and an unsafe area in the northeastern corner of Iran, but also loss of prestige. The dynasty was blamed for its inability to guarantee stability and peace in northeastern Iran. For in the Persian – as well as Islamic – constitutional literature, it was considered the task of the ruler to protect his territory and its inhabitants, to rule with justice and guarantee the safety of his subjects. In Gurgān the Imperial government was still unable to meet these basic demands at the end of the 19th century. The creation of the aforementioned cliché of the Turkmen had far-reaching political consequences. In the end, Āghā Muḥammad Khān may have won a battle in 1792 and succeeded in demonstrating his power to the Turkmen; in the long run however, the construction of an “enemy” developed into one of the factors contributing to an

¹³¹ Gellner, “Tribalism”, 109.

atmosphere of criticism and public unrest amongst the population of Iran, a development that culminated in the 1906 Constitutional Revolution and an exertion of pressure on the Qājār ruler. This example neatly demonstrates the close interaction between political reality, perception of this reality, its articulation in the form of clichés and “images of an enemy”, and their political effects. As this concerns a later development in the interaction between the state and nomads, it is however of no immediate concern for the present topic.

According to Barfield, the impetus for forming large confederations within Iran came from outside the tribes, from the states. This may be true in the Qājār case insofar as the Qājārs had experience with state structures as a part of the Qizilbāsh troops. In late 18th century Iran, however, when the tribal *iliyat* created a Qājār tribe, no state existed. There are manifold reasons for the Qājārs being successful in erecting state structures. One of them surely has to be seen in the person of Āghā Muḥammad Khān, who acted with political and tactical prudence. And yet, the military success of the Qājās in the early phase greatly depended on the assistance of the Yamūt. This relationship developed into a coexistence which corresponds to Barfield’s fourth category: fragmented tribal groups in frontier areas that avoided state control by staying beyond the range of Iranian power.¹³²

This might be surprising in the case of the Yamūt, who were after all one of the first allies of the Qūyunlū. The reason though is not to be sought in the egalitarian structure of the Yamūt tribe or tribes, for the Qājārs themselves display similar structures before their unification under Āghā Muḥammad Khān.¹³³ Other factors such as the topography (refuge to the steppe and desert) and a raid-and-trade lifestyle were also important factors creating an environment and economical situation that allowed the Yamūt to coexist and even profit from the state without needing to be integrated (and thus having to pay taxes or provide soldiers).

The power relations between the two tribal groups changed significantly the moment Āghā Muḥammad Khān succeeded in uniting the whole tribe by reconciling the strife between the various subgroups. The Yamūt preferred to live with the “lesser evil”, as Caton has called it in the case of Yemeni tribes, the tribal anarchy in spite of loss of the political autonomy in the form of state intervention.¹³⁴ However, in the Yamūt case this did not turn out to be an evil; for a long time it was a profitable situation in which the Yamūt were better off

¹³² Barfield, “Turk, Persian”, 66.

¹³³ Ebrahimnejad, *Pouvoir*, 141–146 and passim.

¹³⁴ Caton, “Theories”, 95.

than their peasant neighbors. Perhaps we have to conclude that what made the Qājār subdivisions into a tribe, i.e. the feeling of *ilīyat*, cohesion, did not exist amongst the Turkmen people; rather, amongst the Yamūt the prevailing equilibrium of subdivisions cooperating with and fighting against each other was stronger.

At the same time, the pattern of a nomadic people operating in close military interaction with another tribal unity, and thus helping them to gain power and erect a tribal network that ultimately leads to the organization of state structures, is not rare. I would like to call this role of the Yamūt the “holder of the stirrup”. That this assistance did not necessarily lead to integration is also not a rare pattern. Nomadic groups who helped to create state structures can be observed in several historical situations. What makes the difference in the Yamūt case is that the nomadic entity itself obviously decided to retain their political, economic, and even religious independence (the Turkmen were Sunnies whereas the Qājārs were Shiites). Thus, the relationship between the Yamūt and the Qājār state can be described not so much as a relation of inherent instability, but as a symbiosis that was of military, economic and political advantage for the nomadic tribe, one that proved highly effective in saving this people from “state deformation”.

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Arab Nomads and the Seljūq Military

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1. Introduction

The medieval state was basically a military state. The present study investigates nomadic tribes and their political organisation as a reflection of the political conditions as well as the economic development of sedentary states. What is the setting?

- The region: I will focus on northern Syria and northern Mesopotamia (al-Jazīra).

- The period: I will cover the breakdown of the early ‘Abbāsīd empire and its transition from the 4th/ 10th century to the Mongol invasion in the 7th/ 13th century.

- The Arab nomads: A second wave of nomads – after the early Islamic conquest – immigrated from the Arab peninsula during the 4th/ 10th century. A third wave arrived later during the Ayyūbīd period about 600/ 1200.

- Which sedentary military states are concerned: There is first the pre-Seljūq period, when Būyids from Iraq, Byzantines from Anatolia, and the Fāṭimids from Egypt, each tried to thwart the regional supremacy of the others. The second phase is the period of the conquering Seljūqs proper; while in the third, we find the successor states of the Seljūq empire, the Zangīds and Ayyūbīds.

¹ I would like to express my gratitude to Katrin Gutberlet, Berlin, and Rudi Matthee, Newark/ Delaware, for the thorough reading of the English manuscript. I am very grateful to Ricardo Eichmann, German Archaeological Institute, for the kind permission to use the map prepared by Rosemarie Mendler.

Back to the main thesis: The organisation and strength of a nomadic tribe reflects the level of organisation and strength of the sedentary military power that confronts it. This hypothesis will be tested in three instances: first, Bedouin political and military domination in the region; second, neutralisation of the nomads and finally a kind of integration of the nomads into the fabric of a sedentary state. In every section I will pose the following questions:

- First: What was the general political context?
- Second: What kinds of revenues were at hand for the sedentary powers to spend on their military? This question concerns economic development.
- And third, the outcome of the answers to the two preceding questions: How are nomads integrated into or excluded from the sedentary military machine?²

2. The Bedouin Domination

2.1 The Political Context

The first period concerns the Arab nomad domination from the late 4th/ 10th to the 5th/ 11th century. After its political and financial collapse, the ‘Abbāsid administration left northern Syria and northern Mesopotamia to the powerful clan of the Ḥamdānids. They served them as a buffer against the hostile Egyptian governor-dynasty of the Ikhshīds in the south and the pressing Byzantines in the north. The Ḥamdānids from the Banū Taghlib belonged to old Arab nomad stock and formed a kind of nobility. At this point however, the Banū Taghlib were quite well adapted to the sedentary structure of the ‘Abbāsid empire, but still kept their ties to the nomads in the pasture.

The Ḥamdānids faced a new wave of Arab nomad immigration. These tribes were the Banū Kilāb, the Banū ‘Uqail and the Banū Numair. The Banū Kilāb acquired pasture lands in northern Syria, roaming as far as al-Raḥba. The Banū ‘Uqail were centred in the region of northern Iraq and the Diyār Rabī‘a. The

² Most of the references and source work for this contribution can be found in *Die Renaissance der Städte in Nordsyrien und Nordmesopotamien* by the author. In addition some of the basic research literature is cited here for further reading.

tribe of the Numair roamed between the region of Ḥarrān and the middle Euphrates area.

Between 380/ 990–1 and 401/ 1010–1 the Ḥamdānids lost their control over the tribes. These in turn got sway over the cities in various degrees. The Bedouin amīr himself remained usually most of his time in the *hilla*, the Bedouin camp, while having a military representative in the city extracting tax monies. The military power of the tribes – as reflected in the sources – consisted only of the tribe itself. These nomad principalities succeeded the Ḥamdānids. Although they were almost autonomous, the great regional powers, the Fāṭimids, the Būyids and the Byzantines, used them as buffer between each other. And the nomads, in turn, were able to engage the great powers for their own purposes.

Each of these powers integrated some tribes formally into its hierarchy of state. Some Mirdāsīd and Numairīd amīrs as well as the Marwānids even received Byzantine titles like *patrikios*, *magistros*, *vestarches* and *dux*.³ For some of the Arab amīrs lead seals of Byzantine style are known, with a saint on one side, the protocol in Arabic on the other. In the year 422/ 1031 Mirdāsīds, Numairīds as well as Kurdish Marwānids took part in a kind of conference of all Islamic allies in Constantinople. All the amīrs of the tribes involved, however, derived their Islamic legitimation to rule formally from either the Fāṭimid or the ‘Abbāsīd caliph. This is evident from the coin protocol (*sikka*) of the nomad amīrs who always acknowledged one of the two caliphs, although some of them were practically vassals of the Byzantines.⁴

2.2 The Financial Situation

Like the ‘Abbāsīds, the Ḥamdānids were permanently short of cash. They exploited their territory for short term benefit with unprecedented measures. For example they stripped the Diyār Muḍar of all available iron including the fa-

³ Cappel, „Response“, 123–126; Felix, *Byzanz*, 113, 134; Ripper, *Marwāniden*, 34. cp. for example Ibn al-‘Adīm, *Zubda* I, 262–264; Yaḥyā, *Tārīkh*, ed. Cheikho, 184.

⁴ See for the Arab principalities: Ḥamdānids (Bikhazi, *Ḥamdānīd Dynasty*), the Banū Kilāb (Zakkar, *Emirate*), the Banū Numair (Rice, „Harran“; Heidemann, *Renaissance*), the ‘Uqail (Kennedy, „Uqailids“; Degener, *Banū ‘Uqail*), the Marwānids (Ripper, *Marwāniden*). For the surrounding sedentary powers: Byzantium (Felix, *Byzanz*; Cappel, „Response“), Būyids (Busse, *Chalif*), Fāṭimids (Bianquis, *Damas*). For the lead seals see Heidemann – Sode, „Metallsiegel“. For the nomad-sedentary relation the works of Rowton, „Autonomy“, „Urban Autonomy“, „Enclosed Nomadism“ as well as Lindner, „Nomadic Tribe“ were most influential.

mous iron gates of al-Raqqā in order to repay the Qarmāṭians in southern Iraq.⁵ In particular, the contemporary geographer Ibn Ḥauqal accused the Ḥamdānīd amīr Saif al-Daula (d. 356/ 967) for ruining the formerly rich region of the Di-yār Muḍar.⁶ Due to the shortage of money the armies of the Ḥamdānīds consisted mostly of recruited nomads and a few military slaves (pl. *ghilmān*).⁷

These newly, only superficially Islamised tribes constituted a perpetual threat to settled life, agriculture, and the roads used for long distance trade. Agricultural lands contracted and pasturelands grew.⁸

2.3 The Integration of the Nomads

How were nomads integrated into the military machinery? This is the point to consider the incentives for the Bedouins to join an expedition of an amīr who did not belong to their own tribe. The economic advantage of using nomads as warriors lies in the low cost involved. Bedouin armies do not need regular payments. Their incentive to take part in wars is mainly booty or a kind of tribute by the employing amīr. Their loyalty was thus limited to this flow of income and was based on the ability of the amīr to guarantee victory, booty or tribute. This economic logic lies behind the frequent complaints about nomadic unreliability in the field. The Banū Kilāb, Numair and ‘Uqail were mentioned in various changing coalitions with military expeditions and raids of the sedentary powers. The strength of each tribe as well as their ability and will to form a nomadic-sedentary state was

- first, a function of the particular interest which one of the three great sedentary powers put on them and
- second, a function of the wealth of urban resources the Bedouin rulers could draw on.

The Mirdāsids in northern Syria were generally protected by the Byzantine garrison in Antioch. They had the trade city of Aleppo as a source of cash revenues. This resulted in a form of state that Michael Rowton has called „dimor-

⁵ Bikhazi, *Ḥamdānīd Dynasty*, 899–902.

⁶ Cp. Ibn Ḥauqal, *Ṣūra*, 225f.

⁷ For the Ḥamdānīd military see Bikhazi, *Ḥamdānīd Dynasty*, and McGeer, *Dragon’s Teeth*.

⁸ Cp. Ibn Ḥauqal, *Ṣūra*, 228; Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan*, 141. For the archaeological evidence of this situation see Bartl, *Frühislamische Besiedlung*, esp. 116, 186–194.

phic“: a nomadic state where the ruler tried to present himself as urban, while having his military power in the pasture.⁹

The ʿUqailids were protected by the Būyids in Iraq and had a source of revenue in the trade city of Mosul and a couple of minor cities in the neighbouring region. When the Seljūqs began to extend their power into the West, they at first strongly supported the ʿUqailid amir Muslim ibn Quraish (d. 478/ 1085), so that he was able to extend the ʿUqailid emirate over much of the former Ḥamdānid territory, namely northern Syria, the Diyār Muḍar and the Diyār Rabīʿa.

The Numairids are the best proof of the afore-mentioned principle, since they enjoyed the favour to be protégé of one of the great powers only during two brief periods. Living in the pasture of the Diyār Muḍar, they had no major city to exploit except decaying mid-size towns such as al-Raqqa and Ḥarrān. Both were only temporarily under their control. The Numairids rose to regional importance for the first time after the afore-mentioned treaty with Byzantium in 422/ 1031. Their importance and their sway over both cities lasted almost only until the death of their tribe leader Shabīb ibn Waththāb in 431/ 1039–40. The second time the Numairids gained prestige and power happened during the pro-Fātimid rebellion of the former Būyid-general Arslān al-Basāsīrī in Iraq between 447/ 1055 and 452/ 1060. The Fātimids took a vital interest in the security of the middle Euphrates region as a deployment zone and lifeline of the rebellion. They therefore supported the Numairids against the Mirdāsids. In those years the amir of the Banū Numair Manīʿ ibn Shabīb (d. 454/ 1062) represented himself as ruler of a „dimorphic state“, as it is most visible in the Numairid gate of the citadel in Ḥarrān. It is the first known representative building in the region in decades.¹⁰

⁹ Rowton, „Urban Autonomy“.

¹⁰ For the Numairid gate in Ḥarran see Rice, „Harran“, for a further suggested representative building activity of Manīʿ in al-Raqqa see Heidemann, „Schatzfund“.



3. Arab Nomads and the Seljūqs

3.1 The Political Context

At the end of the 5th/ 11th century, the Seljūq conquest reversed the general situation. The Seljūq state was a military state. The Seljūqs started their conquests early in the 5th/ 11th century in the east of the Islamic world, in Central Asia, as nomadic Turkomans. But when they arrived in Syria, the character of the state had fundamentally changed. Now the main body of the army was a well-trained core of professional horsemen backed by an administration in the Persian tradition of the Sāmānids and Ghaznawids. Nizām al-Mulk (d. 485/ 1092), the famous vizier of the Sultan Malikshāh (d. 485/ 1092), explains the ideal structure of the Seljūq military state in his *Sīyāsat-nāme*.

In 479/ 1086 the Seljūq Sultan Malikshāh completed the conquest of the Jazīra and Syria with the seizure of Aleppo. For the first time since the collapse of the ‘Abbāsid state, northern Syria and northern Mesopotamia were reintegrated into a greater empire. The Seljūq rule was definitely regarded as foreign, in language, culture and in some regards also in religious belief. As a professional military minority, the Seljūqs and their successors based their rule on fortifications and fortified cities.

The Seljūqs enforced imperial order against nomadic domination. Before the conquest and in the very early days of their rule the Seljūqs supported some of the local and regional influential tribe leaders, first of all the ‘Uqailid amīr Muslim ibn Quraish, in order to hold sway over the region at low cost. The clan of Malikshāh married into the Bedouin, namely the ‘Uqailid, nobility. Malikshāh’s aunt (‘*amma*’), Ṣafiya Khātūn, was married to Muslim ibn Quraish and later to his brother Ibrāhīm ibn Quraish.¹¹ Malikshāh’s foster-sister (*ukhtuhū min al-raḍā’*) Zalikhā was given to Muslim ibn Quraish’s son.¹²

The spread of Seljūq rule over northern Iraq, northern Mesopotamia and northern Syria followed a certain model. First, they tried to secure their rule over the great fortified cities, Mosul, al-Ruhā, Aleppo and Antioch, thus leaving mid-size towns like Ḥarrān, al-Raqqā, Naṣībīn and smaller locations to be governed by local amīrs mainly with nomadic background. Arab nomads

¹¹ Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil* X, 150. Degener, *Banū ‘Uqail*, 93f.

¹² Sibṭ ibn al-Jauzī, *Mir‘āt*, ed. Sevim, 238; Dhahabī, *Tārikh* 471–480, 32f.



served as auxiliaries within the armies of various Seljūq commanders. However, their loyalty extended only as far as their own interest was concerned.

In the second phase, after the death of Malikshāh in 485/ 1092, Seljūq rule extended from the great to the mid-size cities and to the countryside, and thus came at the expense of the Arab nomads. The following twenty years saw the ousting and extinction of the Arab nomad groups. The indigenous Kilāb, Numair and 'Uqail-Bedouins perished within the power struggle of the various pretenders to the sultanate. They were one by one expelled from the rule over the mid-size towns and fortresses. The peak of this development was the massacre of some ten to thirteen thousand 'Uqailid nomads at Dārā/ al-Muḍayyā' in the Khābūr area in the year 486/ 1093. Thousands of the Banū 'Uqail were killed and their cattle – their livelihood – were driven away. The final stage was the seizing of their last cities Naṣībīn and Mosul, which they governed as *iqṭā'* by the high-ranging Seljūq amīr Karbughā (d. 495/ 1192) in 489/ 1096. Whether or not this policy was deliberate cannot be answered. None of these events and massacres was reported as taking place in the context of war against the Arab nomads; the sources just mention them as episodes in the internal Seljūq power struggle.¹³

3.2 Financing the Army

The Seljūq army consisted of professional horsemen, most of whom were only seasonally available. The centrepiece for their financial support was the *iqṭā'*, the Islamic fief. Although this institution had been known before, it became now the major concept for payments. In a simplified model the land-taxes of *'ushr* and *kharāj*, the agricultural surplus, were now sent directly to the respective army unit and not re-distributed by the sultan's administration.

The level of the cash-based fiscal-system and economy shrunk dramatically in the west from the 4th/ 10th century onward. Money as medium for the fiscal redistribution became scarce. Under Nizām al-Mulk the *iqṭā'* became the rule. The amīr would receive a certain agricultural region for fiscal exploitation so as to be able to pay and feed his troops. This might have been cash or more likely natural products for the consumption of the military. Theoretically, fiscal exploitation and political rule should have been in different hands. This was only

¹³ About the Seljūq conquest of Syria see Bianquis, *Damas I*, 639–652, El-Azhari, *Saljūqs*, and Heidemann, *Renaissance*, 145–174.

feasible in the better developed east of the empire, where the cash-based economy and tax-system continued to operate at a much higher level than in the west. As a consequence fiscal and military rule became synonymous in the west. In order to forestall the centrifugal powers inherent in this kind of system Nizām al-Mulk advised the ruler to build up centrally paid elite troops.

The Seljūq army was in need of agricultural land. The old nomad elite and the Seljūqs competed in the use of land. One of the first orders given after a conquest of an area was to reorganise all financial matters within a city and to distribute the districts available as *iqṭāʿ* to the Seljūq officers. The Arab nobility had little military value and were soon ousted from their *iqṭāʿ*s. They were regarded as a threat for the agricultural base of sedentary society, and thus to the financial resources of the Seljūq military.

The outcome of Seljūq *iqṭāʿ* in the economically weak west was different from that of the *iqṭāʿ* in the Būyid times, when its effect had been devastating. The Seljūq amīr and eventually his heirs had to rely on their *iqṭāʿ* as their only permanent financial resource. This became even truer in the process of fragmentation of the western Seljūq Empire. The amīr could increase his income and his military power only through land cultivation. As a consequence military personal became seasonal warriors. During the autumn and winter they had to go home for the supervision of the harvest.

Not only agriculture was important for the support of the Seljūq army. The slave elite troops needed cash, to be purchased and to be paid. Therefore the long distance trade – which always operated with cash¹⁴ – was burdened with special tolls, called *mukūs*. The autonomous Seljūq amīrs did everything to establish peace in the land in order to make the roads safe for this purpose. An awareness of the link between security and revenue can be found in the contemporary sources as well.¹⁵

¹⁴ Also the derivatives the *ḥawāla* und the *sufṭāja* can be regarded here as cash in opposition to barter exchange.

¹⁵ About the destructive consequences of the Būyid *iqṭāʿ* cp. for example Bosworth, „Military Organisation“, 159–166; Satō, *State*, 20f. About the ideal structure of the Seljūq *iqṭāʿ*-based system and a cash-based army as counterweight see Nizām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāme*, esp. ed. Darke, 131, 299; trans. Schabinger, 306, 499. About the positive results of the Seljūq *iqṭāʿ*, cp. Becker, „Steuerpacht“, 243. About the relation of peace in the land and the increase of tax monies in contemporary sources, cp. for example Ibn al-ʿAdīm, *Zubda* II, 104, 179, 181.



3.3 Nomads and the Seljūq Military

Turkoman nomads played only a minor role in the Seljūq army during the conquest of Syria and northern Mesopotamia. Arab nomads – except for the ‘Uqailid „dimorphic state“ under Muslim ibn Quraish – were only temporary allies, changing sides whenever it suited them. The structure and way of payment of the Seljūq army affected them in substantial ways. Arab nomads and Seljūq military were competitors in land use. After the extinction and ousting of the great tribal groups the remnants disintegrated further, sometimes changing names or merging with other tribes.¹⁶ The Arab nomads had perished or been marginalized, and no longer played a significant role in the Seljūq army. Ibn al-‘Adīm spoke of this period as the „*zawāl mulk al-‘arab*“, the disappearance of the Arab-Bedouin reign.¹⁷

Later in the Seljūq period, nomads were mentioned occasionally, and then – with exceptions under particular political conditions – only in the *bādiya*, pasture lands, south of the Euphrates at Šiffin, the Jabal al-Bishr or in the region of Palmyra.¹⁸ As a consequence nomads almost disappear from the literary sources.

3.4 The Role of the ‘Uqailids of Qal‘at Ja‘bar

Although the tribes disappeared as an important factor in military and political life, some of the Arab amīrs with tribal background adapted themselves fully to the Seljūq style of government. They survived as rulers of autonomous principalities within the heterogeneous patchwork of Seljūq rule in the western part of the western Seljūq Empire. These included the ‘Uqailids of Qal‘at Ja‘bar, but also the Munqidhids of Shaizar and to a lesser extent the Banū Mulā‘ib of Afāmiya. Let us take a closer look at the „dimorphic state“ of the ‘Uqailids.

Qal‘at Ja‘bar and al-Raqqa remained under the sway of Arab ‘Uqailid amīrs. They were not mentioned in the reports about the ousting and extinction of the nomads. The sources hardly mention that these ‘Uqailid amīrs had tribal ‘Uqailid followers. The extent of the tribal following must therefore have been

¹⁶ For this phenomenon cp. Lindner, „Nomadic Tribe“.

¹⁷ Ibn al-‘Adīm, *Zubda* II, 58, cites a letter by Sābiq ibn Maḥmūd, the Kilābī-Mirdāsīd amīr of Aleppo (471/ 1078–9).

¹⁸ Heidemann, *Renaissance*, 272f.

rather limited. It should also be noted that the middle Euphrates region did not belong to the traditional roaming region of the Banū ʿUqail.

The power of the latter lay probably in their fortresses, in addition to their diplomacy, which led them to establish marriage ties to the neighbouring Arab tribes, the Numairids, the Munqidhids, the Mazyadids in Iraq and probably to the other tribes and Turkomans as well. The military weakness of the ʿUqailids is most visible during a rebellion of a tribal Numairid group against the ʿUqailid governor of al-Raqqā in the year 501–2/ 1108. No tribal ʿUqailids were mentioned in this conflict. The indigenous ʿUqail amīr of Qalʿat Jaʿbar was compelled to call the Seljūq governor of Mosul for help – an unprecedented incident.

The ʿUqailids of Qalʿat Jaʿbar controlled an important crossing of the Euphrates between Syria and Iraq. The sources never mention any conflict with any of the rival Seljūq armies passing frequently through their territory. The ʿUqailids and the Munqidhids took a neutral role in all the inner-Seljūq power struggles and later also in the wars between the Seljūqs and the Crusaders. In some instances they served as mediators – or they sheltered high-ranging refugees from Seljūq areas.¹⁹ All of this shows how far they had become assimilated to the Seljūq state. At this point the ʿUqailid emirate hardly qualifies as nomadic any more.²⁰

It seems that the ʿUqailids with their various ties to the pasture served the Seljūqs by controlling the remaining Arab and Turkoman nomads in the region and by securing crossing of the Euphrates – something that the „sedentary“ Seljūqs may not have been able to achieve by themselves.

4. *The Nomads in the Ayyūbid Period*

4.1 The Political Situation

I will only briefly mention the next phase in developments under the Ayyūbids: the formal integration of the Arab nomads into a basically Seljūq state. In the course of the first half of the 6th/ 12th century, the western Seljūq Empire dis-

¹⁹ Köhler, *Allianzen*, 146–148.

²⁰ Heidemann, *Renaissance*, 260–289.

tegrated into a number of autonomous principalities. Most of these became hereditary. Most prominent among them was the governor dynasty of the Zangīds. From 521/ 1127 onwards Zangī ibn Āqsunqur (d. 541/ 1146), later his son Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd (d. 569/ 1174) and finally Saladin (d. 589/ 1193) formed a viable powerful autonomous province, almost a state of its own. Put simply, the Jazīra had to provide land based seasonal warriors and supply of cereals; Egypt served the Ayyūbids as source of cash revenue, soldiers and cereals as well. Those were needed for the Syrian and Palestinian battlefields.²¹

Zangī and Nūr al-Dīn did everything to support agriculture in the region. Archaeology corroborates this impression.²² The Zangīds and the Ayyūbids enforced public peace on the roads to foster long-distance trade with the ultimate aim to generate tax monies through custom tolls, the *mukūs*. But over time Nūr al-Dīn and his successors gradually began to remove tolls on long distance trade within their territories in favour of intra urban market taxes (i.e. *ḥaqq al-baiʿ*), perhaps regarding custom tolls now as impediments for trade. This development has much to do with the agricultural growth and overall positive economic developments following the Seljūq conquest.²³

Nūr al-Dīn's rule saw a large rebuilding program of the cities, which included even mid-size cities like al-Raqqā and Ḥarrān.²⁴ The Zangīd state became even more powerful when Saladin and the Ayyūbids took over. Trade and agriculture flourished. The monetary economy grew enormously as compared with the period of the Bedouin domination and the early Seljūq rule. The autonomous remnants of the Arab principalities like the ʿUqailids of Qalʿat Jaʿbar were removed and the territory came firmly under Ayyūbid sway.

4.2 The Payment of the Army

The principles of financing the military underwent little change from the Seljūq period. Economic growth enabled the establishment and maintenance of a much stronger army than before. However the problem of the seasonal availability of warriors from the Jazīra who had their base in the agricultural lands continued to make it felt, most visibly during the yearlong siege of Akkon from

²¹ Cp. N. Elisséeff, „Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd“, in: EI², 132 left; Gibb, „Armies“.

²² Cp. Bartl, *Frühislamische Besiedlung*, 186–194, for the Balīkh-valley.

²³ See in detail Heidemann, *Renaissance*, 297–353.

²⁴ Cp. Tabbā, *Patronage*.

584/ 1188 to 588/ 1191. The Jazīran troops of Saladin went home for harvest every autumn, but the siege and war with the crusaders continued. This accounts mainly for Saladin's capitulation.²⁵ Hence the later Ayyūbid ruler al-Šāliḥ Ayyūb (d. 647/ 1249) decided to rely mainly on a cash-based garrisoned elite-army consisting of Turkish and Circassian slaves (*mamlūks*) who served as professional full-time soldiers. For example in 647–648/ 1249–1250 they decided the victorious battle of al-Manšūra against an equally professional Crusader army.²⁶ Cash-based Mamlūk elite-corps had been a centrepiece of the military concept since the early Seljūq armies, but under the Ayyūbids they became gradually the predominant force.²⁷

4.3. The Relation Between the Nomads and the Zangid-Ayyūbid State

Under the Zangids und Ayyūbids nomads did not constitute any major military challenge and were gradually integrated into the fabric of state. Abū Shāma, for instance, tells us that, as for the reign of Nūr al-Dīn about 552/ 1157, nomadic tribes had to pay a tax called *ʿidād*. For the Ayyūbid period we have more information on this *ʿidād*, which was counted in money and live stock.²⁸

Under the early Ayyūbids, a decade after the death of Saladin, about 600/ 1200, a third wave of immigration of tribal groups reached northern Syria and northern Mesopotamia. Groups of the Ṭayyʾ confederation extended their roaming region from the Arab peninsular into Syria and northern Mesopotamia. In northern Syria and the Diyār Muḍar we find the Āl Faḍl, a subgroup of the

²⁵ See Möhring, *Saladin*; Gibb, „Armies“, 75.

²⁶ Thorau, *Baibars*, 43–54; Gibb „Armies“, 77. About the professionalisation of the European knights and their organisation into orders see Thorau, „Ritterorden“. Cp. about the strength and deficiencies of Crusader armies Smail, *Crusading Warfare*, 97–100.

²⁷ Ayalon, „From Ayyubids“.

²⁸ Abū Shāma, *Rauḍatain*, ed. Kairo I, 16; ed. Muḥammad Aḥmad I/ 1, 38–40 (552 h.). *ʿIdād* is the plural form *fīʿāl* of *ʿadad* or estimation; cp. for the general meaning of „estimation“ de Goeje, *Indices*, 296, and Eddé, *Principauté*, 333, 498. Iṣfahānī, *al-Barq al-shāmī*, cited in: Hiyārī, „Origins“, 514, mentions *ʿidād* in a diploma for the new governor of Damascus in 578/ 1182. The plural *ʿidād* can be found several times with the meaning of tax-estimations or better payments of nomads during the Ayyūbid period in the tax lists provided by Ibn Shaddād: Ibn Shaddād, *Aʿlāq I* 1, 152 (Aleppo: „*ʿidād at-turkmān* in Aleppo 150.000 dirham and sheep 30.000 heads with a value of 600.000 dirham“); I/ 2, 396 (Bālis: „*al-ʿidād* 20.000 dirham“); III, 66 (Ḥarrān: „*al-ʿidād* 50.000 dirham“), 99f. (al-Ruhā: „*ʿidād al-ghanam* [of the sheep] 60.000 dirham“). Cp. to a parallel financial right over Bedouins in the Crusader states Smail *Crusading Warfare*, 59.

Ṭayy'. Their region lay between Ḥimṣ, in northern Syria, up to Qal'at Ja'bar and al-Raḥba. In the east the Khafāja, a branch of the 'Uqailids, grew in importance, with their main roaming region situated between al-Kūfa and Hīt up to al-Raḥba. This new expansion occurred not without conflicts with the Ayyūbid principalities.

The Ayyūbid states which were much dependent on the security of the overland routes tried to integrate the nomads by offering them a legitimate place within the hierarchy of state. The brother of Saladin al-Malik al-ʿĀdil Abū Bakr (d. 615/ 1218) and his nephew al-Zāhir Ghāzī (d. 613/ 616) reacted to this new wave of Bedouins by the formalisation of the *imārat al-ʿarab*, the Bedouin emirate. The *amīr al-ʿarab*, the prince of the Bedouins, was an institution already known before in Syria and the Jazīra.²⁹ He was probably the most powerful or most dignified chief among the tribal leaders in the pasture and therefore served as their representative towards the sedentary powers. The invention lay in the appointment of the *amīr al-ʿarab* now by representatives of sedentary powers themselves. Al-Zāhir Ghāzī took the leadership in the northern Syrian pasture from a member of the old Banū Kilāb and bestowed this title officially to a member of the Banū Ṭayy' and especially to one of the groups of the Āl Faḍl. They received an *iqṭāʿ* or *khubz*. Salamiya near Ḥimṣ was usually the *iqṭāʿ* of the *amīr al-ʿarab* in Syria. In exchange for these benefits they had to bring their tribal following in line with the Ayyūbid state. Although we have no information about it, the *amīr al-ʿarab* might be considered as an important agent for the collection of *ʿidād*, the nomad tribute, which is mentioned in Ayyūbid tax lists of some cities in the region. The institutionalised leadership in the pasture served probably both sides.³⁰

²⁹ ʿAzīmī, *Tārīkh*, ed. Za'rūr, 376, reports in 520/ 1126–7 about an *amīr ʿarab al-Jazīra*. In Iraq there is an earlier example for the appointment of an *amīr al-ʿarab* by the caliph in 396/ 1005–6; Heidemann, *Renaissance*, 271.

³⁰ About the third wave of nomad immigration and the institution of the *amīr al-ʿarab* see Hi-yari, „Origins“, esp. 514f.; Eddé, *Principauté*, 506f. Cp. Ibn al-ʿAdīm, *Bughya* I, 545 (al-Zāhir Ghāzī); Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ* IV, 205f. (al-ʿĀdil Abū Bakr), referring to Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-Umarī (d. 749/ 1349) as his source.

5. Summary

Let me summarise the changing relation between the successive military states and the Arab nomads. It is my contention that the strength and political organisation of the tribal groups were direct reflections of the military and economical strength of the sedentary powers.

The first period is characterised by a new wave of tribal immigration and their domination of the region, which is linked to the surrounding political situation. They grew in power and developed a kind of „dimorphic state“ – a Bedouin ruler who presented himself as urban but had his men in the pasture – whenever they were under special support of one of the surrounding sedentary powers.

In the second phase, the Seljūq period, the tribes competed in land use with the Seljūq military state. The Seljūqs needed land in order to distribute it to the army and to develop it as *iqṭāʿ*. The power struggles of the various Seljūq pretenders which began in this period ended with the tribal groups being ousted or exterminated as further result. Only some amirs with tribal background survived this situation owing to their neutral political position and the possession of fortified locations.

The third phase witnessed the formal integration of newly arrived nomadic groups into the framework of the Zangīd-Ayyūbid state. Operating at a much higher economic and military level the Zangīds were able to tax the nomads, while the Ayyūbids were in a position to nominate the *amīr al-ʿarab*, the chief of the Bedouins.

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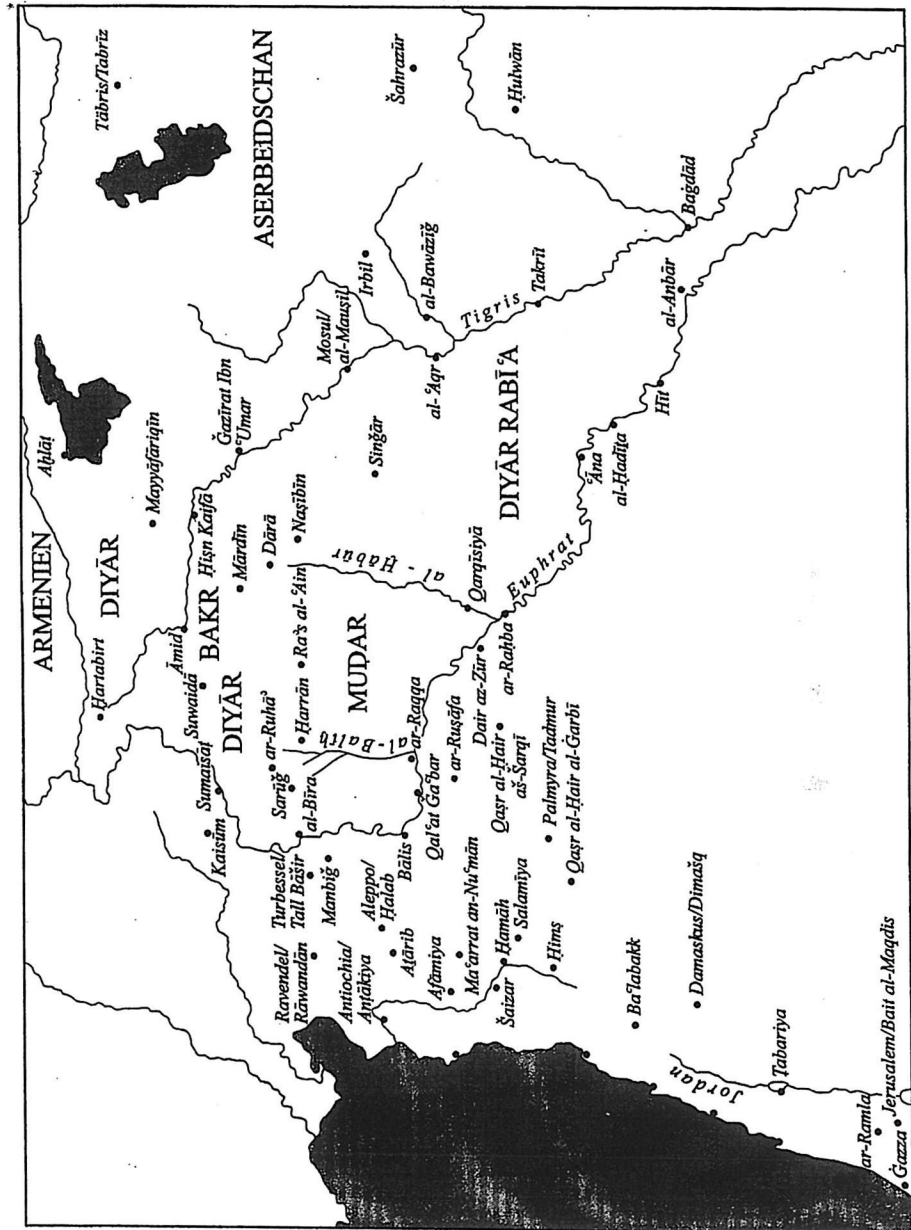
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Weidegebiete und Kriegsdienste. Mongolische Pastoralnomaden im Russischen Reich

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I. Einleitung

Die Begegnung der Nomaden mit dem Staat erscheint oft als das Aufeinandertreffen zweier Welten, deren Verfassung unterschiedlicher kaum sein könnte. Diese Sicht vermittelt nicht nur der Blick aus zentralstaatlicher Höhe, der die Grenzsäume der Peripherie mit der Elle von Städtebau, Schrift und Monotheismus skeptisch mustert. Auch Berichte der Steppe reflektieren, neben dem Erstaunen über die Künste der sesshaften Welt, eine ebenso grundsätzliche Abneigung gegen erfahrene Zwänge, die selten als Voraussetzung staatlicher Ordnung erkannt wurden. Da solch oberflächliche Perzeptionen so verschieden sind wie beide Sphären, rufen die Metropolen zumeist unwidersprochen die Errungenschaften ihrer Zivilisation in der Regel als allein maßgebliche Kulturleistung aus. Dabei lassen sie außer Acht, dass ihnen die Innovationen – etwa der Domestikation, der Kriegskunst oder Territorialverwaltung – häufig im Zuge der Auseinandersetzung mit der fremden und antipodisch wahrgenommenen Welt nomadisch verfasster Gesellschaften erst vermittelt wurden.¹

Rückblickend stellt sich die bipolare Beziehung – deren Grundmuster man nicht als archaisches, sondern als strukturelles zu interpretieren hat – als ein dynamischer Prozess dar. Dessen Bedeutung ermisst sich daran, dass es den Gesellschaften mit Staat – trotz häufiger Rückschläge – zunehmend gelang, die Gemeinschaften und die Lebenswelt der Nomaden zu absorbieren. Dass wir es dabei mit interkulturellen Vorgängen zu tun haben, die jedoch der Rever-

¹ Erweiterte Fassung eines Vortrags, gehalten im Colloquium „Militär und Staatlichkeit“ beim Sonderforschungsbereich (586) *Differenz und Integration. Wechselwirkungen zwischen nomadischen und sesshaften Lebensformen in Zivilisationen der Alten Welt* an der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg am 29. April 2002.

sibilität unterliegen könnten, legen nomadische Phänomene in sogenannten *weak* bzw. *failed states* des Nahen Ostens und Afrikas sowie in verschiedenen postsozialistischen Ländern nahe, in denen sich das Gewaltmonopol des Staates in Märkte ethnisierter Gewalt umwandelt hat oder wo die ökonomische Transformation auf nomadische Vorlagen zurückgreift, wie etwa in der Mongolei. Nicht von der Hand zu weisen ist, dass die postkoloniale Schwächung von Staaten – Stichwort *state desertion* – auch in Osteuropa, in Zentralasien wie im Kaukasus eine erhebliche Völkerbewegung hervorgebracht hat.² Unfreiwillige Arbeitsmigration und Menschenhandel, *ethnic cleansing* und *forced migration* der Gegenwart lassen dabei nur erahnen, welche Anstrengung den Großreichen in alter Zeit abverlangt wurde, wollten sie bei der Abwehr von Nomaden erfolgreich sein.

Bekanntlich jedoch baute das Römische Reich seinen Limes vergeblich in Germania, an der Donau, bis in die oströmischen Provinzen Dakien und Thrakien aus, um Alteuropa mit seinem Bollwerk gegen den Norden und Osten zu schützen. Jahrhunderte zuvor schon hatte Kaiser Shi Huang-ti am anderen Ende der eurasischen Landmasse beschlossen, derselben Bedrohung durch den Ausbau der Großen Mauer in ähnlicher Weise zu begegnen. Vor den Einfällen der „Barbaren“ des Nordens und Westens aber hat sie das Chinesische Reich ebenso wenig geschützt wie ihre abendländische Entsprechung.³

Ein alternatives Modell im Umgang mit der nomadischen Herausforderung lieferte die byzantinische Bündnispolitik. Im nördlichen Schwarzmeergebiet brachte sie einen Wall kontrollierbarer Konföderierter gegen Stammesverbände der Völkerwanderung in Stellung, womit Ostrom ein frühes Beispiel für die Oszillation von Koexistenz und Konfrontation an der Schnittstelle zwischen Europa und Asien liefert. Zudem hat das ‚Hilfsvölker‘-Modell der Kiever Rus' und dem Moskauer Staat als Vorlage gedient, was nahe lag in Anbetracht des byzantinisch-slavisches Kulturtransfers.

Denn nach Zerschlagung des Chazaren-Chanates errichteten die frühen Rjurikiden, die man ihrer varägisches-wikingischen Herkunft wegen den see- und flussfahrenden Nomaden zurechnen möchte, zwar eine lockere Kette von Befestigungsanlagen. Mit den nun benachbarten Pečenegen, Polovcern und Wolga-Bulgaren aber führten sie eine Politik wechselnder Bündnisse. Dabei formierte sich ein Staat, der den natürlichen Grenzzaum (frontier) zwischen Wald und offenem Feld (дикое поле) gegen Ende des 9. Jahrhunderts überschritt und

² Müller, „System- und Sozialintegration“, 11, 23. Schorkowitz, „Explaining Destabilization“, 57–59. Halbach, *Migration*.

³ Herrmann, „Urheimat“, 15. Schmidt-Glintzer, *China*, Karte im hinteren Klappeneinband.

ambitioniert in die Steppe ausgriff. Den aus der Weite auftauchenden Gefahren aber vermochte die Kiever Rus' wenig entgegenzusetzen, wie die lange Herrschaft der Goldenen Horde zeigt.⁴

Erst ein Vergleich verdeutlicht, dass die zu frühneuzeitlichen Vielvölkerstaaten entwickelten Reiche der Osmanen, Romanovs und Mandschus diverse Techniken zur Eingliederung nichtkonformer Gesellschaftsverbände im Zuge langer Auseinandersetzung erfanden. Eine allseits genutzte Strategie sah die militärische Indienstellung der Nomaden vor. Dem Staat galt sie als Königsweg der Integration, weil er sich militärische und ökonomische Funktionen nomadischer Gruppen so nutzbar machen konnte, ohne in deren Struktur eingreifen zu müssen, und während der Adaption Bedingungen für sesshafte Habitate schuf. Für Russland entstanden dabei jene typischen Wehrsiedlungen der Kosaken, die sich über viele hundert Kilometer hin zu Verteidigungslinien reihten.⁵ An der Peripherie des expandierenden Reiches dem Zugriff der Metropole entrückt, begünstigte nämlich die freie Verfassung der Kosakenheere und deren multiethnische Zusammensetzung slavischer, turk-tatarischer und mongolischer Elemente die Annäherung der inkorporierten Gruppen. In homogenen Gemeinschaften lebend, konnten sie ihre divergenten Traditionen lange bewahren und sich an die Welt des Moskauer Staates gewöhnen. Wie sich dieser schwierige Prozess für die Russlandmongolen historisch fassen lässt, soll im folgenden dargelegt werden.

Dabei kann der Integrationsverlauf der in der Dzungarei beheimateten Kalmycken-Ojraten und der am Bajkal-See lebenden Burjaten *cum grano salis* für die Pastoralnomaden am Kaspischen Meer, in Südsibirien und Mittelasien als typisch gelten – nicht dagegen für die tungusisch- oder finno-ugrischsprachigen Rentier-Nomaden Zentral- und Ostsibiriens. Denn was die Mongolen von den Nomaden der nördlichen Tajga über die ökonomische Spezialisierung hinaus unterscheidet und sie beziehungs geschichtlich hervorhebt, ist ihre intensive Erfahrung mit dem Staat, an dessen Formierung sie vielfach Anteil nahmen. Nicht nur waren die Ojraten als Verbündete Tschingis Chans an der Staatsbildung im frühen 13. Jahrhundert beteiligt. Mit dem Dzungaren-Reich und den Folge-Chanaten (Wolga, Kuku-Nor) formierten sie im 15.–18. Jahrhundert einen Staat, der seiner ephemeren Struktur wegen in der Literatur als *Early State* behandelt wurde.

Dass solche Zivilisationsleistungen nicht von ungefähr kommen, sondern auf gefestigten Konzeptionen zur Gliederung von Raum und Territorium, zur

⁴ *Rußland*, 66. Göckenjan, „Forschungsberichte“. Khodarkovsky, „From Frontier to Empire“, 116–117.

Ordnung von Gesellschaft und Sukzession beruhen, liegt auf der Hand. Man wird daher den hier wirksamen Prinzipien insoweit nachzugehen haben, um das Souveränitätsverständnis und die Klientelverhältnisse der Kalmücken-Ojraten zu erklären, als jene begannen, sich an der südöstlichen Peripherie Russlands dauerhaft einzurichten. Denn hier setzte, nur 120 Jahre nachdem sich der Moskauer Staat 1480 durch „das Stehen an der Ugra“ vom „Joch der Tataren-Herrschaft“ befreite, unter Zar Vasilij Šujskij (reg. 1606–10) eine neue Annäherung auf Grundlage einer zunächst unverfänglichen Abmachung ein. Gemeint ist die zarische Zusage, das Erscheinen mongolischer Verbände im Weichbild des Russischen Reiches zu dulden – eine Alternative gab es ohnehin nicht – und Weidegebiete an der Peripherie gegen die Ableistung von Grenzschutz und Kriegsdiensten bei Anerkennung der Moskauer Oberhoheit zu überlassen.

Dass dies eine Absprache unter Vorbehalt war, zeigte sich, als der junge Staat über die unsicheren Steppensäume von einst hinaustrat, um neuen Grenzen und Ländern entgegenzustreben. Integration bedeutete nun: Festigung des Erreichten, Nutzbarmachung und Vereinheitlichung des in Besitz Genommenen. Damit aber sind unterschiedliche Phasen einer sich wandelnden Herrschaft angesprochen, die vor der Aufgabe stand, eine wachsende Zahl von Völkern auf verschiedene Weise zu integrieren: durch Toleranz, Assimilation oder Subordination. Aus der Fülle von Untersuchungsfeldern, an denen dieser Angleichungsprozess von Peter I. bis Nikolaus II. beobachtet werden kann, habe ich hier den militärisch-ökonomischen Aspekt gewählt, um der Frage nachzugehen, in welcher Form und für welchen Zeitraum das Axiom „Weidegebiete gegen Kriegsdienste“ Gültigkeit besaß.

II. Kalmückische Steppe und Russisches Reich: Landnahme, Tribut, Souveränität

Als die Eroberung Westsibiriens⁶ durch Kosaken des Atamans Ermak Timofeevič gegen Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts mit der Zerschlagung des Chanates Sibir' ihren Höhepunkt fand, kam es in den nördlichen Steppen Zentralasiens

⁵ Rostankowski, *Siedlungsentwicklung*, Karte im hinteren Klappeneinband.

⁶ Im Jahre 1579 begonnen, führte der Heereszug 1582 zur Vertreibung von Kučum Chan (+1600). Das eroberte Gebiet wurde durch die Anlage von Stützpunkten bei Tjumen' (1585), Tobol'sk (1587), Berezov (1593), Surgut/ Tara (1594) und Narym (1598) zügig abgesichert, deren Besatzungen teils mit Feuerwaffen ausgerüstet waren.

zu einer letzten großen Völkerwanderung, die etwa zwei Generationen lang währte und 150.000 bis 200.000 Menschen umfasste. Es waren zunächst die Derbet und Torgout, die westwärts zogen. Sie verließen die Konföderation der Ojraten, weil der Krieg mit den Chalcha- und Tumet-Mongolen an Schärfe zugenommen und die Chošout sowie Coros ihre Herrschaft in der Dzungarei durchgesetzt hatten.

Der historische Augenblick war doppelt günstig. Denn der Zug führte die Westmongolen durch Südsibirien und Nordkasachstan an die Peripherie des Russischen Reiches, an den Jaik, das Kaspische Meer, an die Wolga und somit in ein Gebiet „politischen Vakuums“⁷, das durch den russisch-tatarischen Konflikt seit der Unterwerfung der Chanate von Kazan' (1552) und Astrachan' (1556) entstanden war. Und durch ihre ‚Abstammung‘ von Dschotschi, dem ältesten Sohne Tschingis Chans, konnten sie einen berechtigten Anspruch auf das politische Erbe des Schaibaniden-Chanates von Sibir' anmelden. Hinzu kam, dass diese Legitimation durch Allianzheiraten mit den Deszendenten des vertriebenen Kučum Chan erneuert wurde,⁸ so dass die Torgout hieraus ihre Souveränität auch über jene Tataren ableiten konnten, die den Schaibaniden zuvor tributpflichtig waren, wodurch sich in wenigen Jahren eine Bündnisgrundlage gegen die Expansion der Moskauer ergab.

Während sich Kučum Chan in seine Festung Kular am linksufrigen Irtyš zurückzog und 1598 an den See Saizan Nor zu den Kalmücken floh, überschritten diese unter Cho Orlek und Dalaj Taiši 1608 die Emba und 1613 die Flüsse Ilek, Irgiz, Jaik.⁹ Dabei verdrängten sie die Nogaj, die 1601 noch die Steppen am Jaik in Besitz hatten. Sie unterwarfen die Kypčak- und Edisan-Tataren sowie jenen Teil der Baschkiren unter ihr Tribut- und Klientelsystem *Kyšтым*¹⁰, der zuvor den Nogaj botmäßig war. In den Jahren 1630–34 zogen die Kalmücken weiter an die Wolga, gelangten 1642 an die Flüsse Sal' und Manyč, so dass sich ihre Weidegebiete nun von der Emba bis an den Don und von Astrachan'

⁷ Krader, *Social Organization*, 117.

⁸ *Abulgasi Bagadur Khan's Geschlechtbuch*, 181.

⁹ Khodarkovsky, *Where Two Worlds Met*, 6, 19. Katušov, „Rossija“, 34.

¹⁰ Der Begriff ist am ehesten mit „tributgebender Schutzbefohlener“ wiederzugeben. Eine *Kyšтым*-Gruppe hatte den Tribut in Naturalien oder durch Arbeit zu erbringen, womit sie Anspruch auf militärischen Schutz erwirkte. Wurde ein Tribut nicht geleistet, wurde er zwangsweise eingezogen. Gewährte der Tributnehmer keinen Schutz mehr, konnte sich die *Kyšтым*-Gruppe einem anderen Souverän zuwenden. Das Klientelverhältnis griff jedoch nicht in politische, soziale oder religiöse Belange ein. So stand es den *Kyšтым* frei, selbst Tributnehmer einer schwächeren Gruppe zu sein und sie war nicht generell verpflichtet, in den Kriegen des Tributnehmers Truppen zu stellen. Schorkowitz, „The Ranked Tributary Client System“, 464. *Istorija Burjat-Mongol'skoj ASSR*, 73–74.

bis nach Samara erstreckten, womit diese dem ehemaligen Herrschaftsbereich der Goldenen Horde¹¹ in etwa entsprachen.

Die Landnahme hatte sie zu unmittelbaren Nachbarn Russlands werden lassen und bildete die Voraussetzung für die Formierung des kalmückischen Chanates an der Wolga – ein Prozess, der sich unter Kämpfen auch mit russischen Truppen vollzog. Zwar entwickelte sich mit den jungen Siedlungszentren Südsibiriens ein lebhafter Tausch- und Warenhandel, gefördert durch die Kontrolle der Transitwege in die Dzungarei, nach Ostturkestan und Mittelasien. Zudem bot die an Wasserläufen reiche Steppe den Pastoralnomaden beste Bedingungen bei der Aufzucht von Kamelen und Pferden, Rindern und Schafen, die den Kosaken, Neusiedlern und Stadtverwaltungen als Schlacht-, Reit- oder Arbeitsvieh sehr willkommen waren. Gleichzeitig aber war der Handelsverkehr durch konkurrierende Souveränitätsansprüche gegenüber dritten Ethnien ständig in Frage gestellt.

Denn Russlands Expansion in Sibirien traf keineswegs auf tributfreie Räume, auch wenn die Voevoden den Zaren dies glauben machten. Den Kommandeuren war die Widersprüchlichkeit ihres Handelns scheinbar nicht einsichtig, wenn sie den Ausbau ihrer Festungen (ostrogi) wohl mit mongolischen Überfällen rechtfertigten, aber die unter Schutz der Chalcha stehenden *Kyšty* zur Tributzahlung zwangen und nach Moskau schrieben, diese hätten sich freiwillig zu russischen Untertanen erklärt.¹² Tatsächlich bestanden unter den turk-mongolischen Völkerschaften aber historisch gewachsene Klientelverhältnisse. Hierarchisch in der Struktur, wurden sie von dem Machtzentrum gehalten, das aktuell Stärke über die Peripherie besaß. Also trieben nicht nur die miteinander rivalisierenden Chalcha und Ojraten von ihren *Kyšty* den *Alban* ein. Auch der Zar forderte von seiner Klientel nun den *Jasak*, was zur Mehrfachbesteuerung (*dvoedancy*, *troedancy*) und – weil China und Russland ihre Grenzen nicht festgelegt hatten – zur Flucht komplexer ethnischer Gruppen zu *einem* der Machtzentren führte, was militärische Reaktionen der geschädigten Seite hervorrufen musste. Die Chinareisenden¹³ Ides und Lange berichteten bspw., dass die Barabinsk-Tataren von Tobol'sk und Tara den Zobel noch zu Beginn

¹¹ Verwaltungszentrum und Winterlager der Goldenen Horde befanden sich in Alt Sarai, beim heutigen Dorf Selitrennyj Gorodok an der mittleren Achtuba, westlich der Kreisstadt Enotavsk im Gebiet Astrachan'. Hier nahm später die Aristokratie des kalmückischen Chanates ihren Hauptsitz. Fedorov-Davydov, *Städte der Goldenen Horde*, 18–20. Nebol'sin, *Očerki*, 103–104, 121, 136, 162.

¹² Čimitdoržiev, *Vzaimootnošenija*, 78.

¹³ Ides, *Driejaarige Reize*, 124. Lange, „Journal“, 75. Ides trat seine Reise 1692 und Lange im August 1715 an. Vgl. bei Lewicki, *La langue mongole*, 8.

des 18. Jahrhunderts als Pelztiersteuer an die Ojraten des Zoriktu Chuntajčži (*1665 †1727) und an Zar Peter (*1672 †1725) entrichten mussten.

Indem nun das *Kyšty*-System und ein gegen die Expansion gerichtetes Bündnis sich gegenseitig verstärkten, entstand im Raum zwischen Bajkal und Don eine Dynamik, die das Verhältnis der Mongolen zum russischen Staat im 17. Jahrhundert bestimmte. Hierin liegt die eigentliche Bedeutung beider Phänomene, auf die im folgenden einzugehen ist.

Aus Moskauer Perspektive handelte es sich bei den Völkern des 1582 unterworfenen Chanates Sibir' um hinzugewonnene Reichsuntertanen, die den Jasak an die Staatskasse zu leisten hatten und dafür Schutz besonders bei Überfällen genossen, die ihre Loslösung aus der Zarenherrschaft bezweckten. Bald aber stießen die Kosaken südlich von Tara auf sogenannte „schwarze Kolmacken“¹⁴, wobei es sich um Barabinsk-Tataren, Telengut und Chakassen vom Oberlauf des Irtyš handelte, die den Ojraten den Alban von alters her zahlten. Für die Kosaken war die Lage unübersichtlich und sie erkannten die Gebiete am Oberlauf des Tobol und Ob als ojratiches Territorium an, solange ihnen die Wehrkraft ein Ausgreifen nicht erlaubte. Doch zur Jahrhundertmitte hatte das Reich seine Position am Bajkal soweit ausgebaut, dass es die Anerkennung der Oberhoheit auch von den Chalcha forderte. Dabei kam es zu heftigen Kämpfen, weil die Mongolen den Abzug der Russen aus dem Bajkalgebiet und die Rückgabe der Burjaten verlangten, die von den Chalcha – welche nun chinesischer Hegemonie unterstanden – als ihre *Kyšty* bezeichnet wurden.

Die Expansion der Romanovs nach Sibirien und die beginnende Kolonialherrschaft der Mandschu in der Mongolei verschärfte die Konkurrenz um tributzahlende Ethnien. Auf die Unterwerfung burjatischer sowie kirgisischer Gruppen durch kosakische Verbände reagierten die Chalcha 1652 mit Überfällen auf Siedlungen in den Gouvernements Tomsk und Enisejsk. Später verließ ein Großteil der Burjaten den Cisbajkal mit mongolischen Abgesandten, die sich als Händler getarnt hatten, und zogen nach Süden. Gegen den Exodus konnte die sibirische Verwaltung nur wenig ausrichten und erst nach dem Sieg der Ojraten über die Chalcha im Jahre 1688 hörten die Angriffe auf. Noch 1684 hatten jene gedroht, auch die Burjaten des Transbajkal mit chinesischer Waffenhilfe zurückzuholen, sollte der Zar sie nicht freiwillig herausgeben.

Doch stritten nicht nur China, Russland und die Mongolen (Chalcha, Ojraten, Kalmücken) um tributär Abhängige. Auch die *Kyšty* ersten Grades bekriegten einander um Abhängige zweiten Grades, worin sich die konische

¹⁴ Anonymus, „Eigentliche und richtige Beschreibung“, 94–95.

Struktur des Klientelsystems zeigt.¹⁵ Mehrfachansprüche bestanden – wie die folgende Graphik illustriert – bei Burjaten und Tuvinen bezüglich der Kotoven oder bei Kalmücken und Ojraten auf die Barabinsker Tataren. Die Konkurrenz der Metropolen blieb dabei keineswegs auf die Absicherung von Territorialbesitz¹⁶ und Tribut beschränkt, der – zumeist in Pelzen erbracht – über den Fernhandel nach China und Europa gelangte. Es ging um die Wirtschaftskraft der Nomaden, die den expandierenden Machtzentren als Viehproduzenten sowie als Heereslieferanten und als Verbündete gegen die Feinde des Reiches nützlich sein sollten.

Unter diesen Bedingungen formierte sich eine lockere Allianz aus Kučum-Deszendenten und schlagkräftigen Verbänden der Kalmücken-Ojraten, die den unter Moskauer Tribut gebrachten Völkerschaften Gelegenheit zu effektiver Gegenwehr gab. Die aus der Steppe geführten Überraschungsangriffe auf Siedlungen bei Kuzneck, Tomsk, Krasnojarsk, Enisejsk und Tjumen' fanden meist zur Herbst- und Erntezeit statt, kurz bevor die Nomaden die südliche Winterweide aufsuchten, die für die Kosaken unerreichbar blieb.¹⁷

¹⁵ Schorkowitz, *Die soziale und politische Organisation*, 128, 148–150, 607–609. Georgi, *Beschreibung*, 240.

¹⁶ Zur Konfrontation mit den Nomaden kam es vor allem bei der Sicherung von Ressourcen und Bodenschätzen, wie im Fall der Salzseen von Jamyšev. Für den Abbau des Salzes, das den Hauptlohn der Kosaken in Südsibirien ausmachte, sandte der Befehlshaber der Grenzstadt Tara jährlich an die 20 bis 25 Fahrzeuge den Irtyš aufwärts nach Jamyšev. In Begleitung von bis zu 2.500 Kosaken zog der Tross durch die Steppe, die von kalmückisch-ojratischen Gruppen kontrolliert und ggfs. blockiert wurde, so dass sich die Truppen den Zugang gegen deren Widerstand und trotz der Überfälle verschaffen mussten. Unter Peter I. war Jamyšev zweimal das Ziel spektakulärer Expeditionen. Eine ging 1714 unter Leitung von Oberstleutnant Ivan Dmitrievič Bucholtz aus Tobol'sk mit „drey Regimentern Dragoner ... unter die Calmucken ..., um von den Orten, wo der Salt wächst, possession nehmen, und eine Festung anlegen zu lassen, auch diese Völcker im Zaum zu halten“, Weber, *Das veränderte Rußland*, I, 154–155. Bucholtz sollte auch nach den bei Jarkend vermuteten Goldlagerstätten forschen und unterwegs Befestigungen anlegen. Als er trotz eines Verbotes der Ojraten 1716 bei Jamyšev eine Festung bauen ließ, wurden seine Truppen überfallen, geplündert und vertrieben. Die nicht in Kriegsgefangenschaft gerieten, zogen sich 650 km nach Norden zurück und gründeten die Festung Omsk. Der zweiten Expedition gelang es, dank der vorverlegten Festungen von Ust'-Kamenogorsk und Semipalatinsk (Darchan Zordži Kit), 1720 unter Generalmajor Ivan Licharëv bis an den See Zajsan Nor vorzustoßen, wo sie wegen starker ojratischer Verbände umkehren musste. Vgl. bei Donnert, *Russland*, 98.

¹⁷ Müller, *Sammlung*, insbesondere IV und V. Fischer, *Sibirische Geschichte*, passim. Gmelin, *Reise durch Sibirien*, I, 294; III, 285–286; IV, 293–294, 328–329. Alekseev, „Neizvestnoe opisanie“, 128–129, 190–191 (Fn. 51).

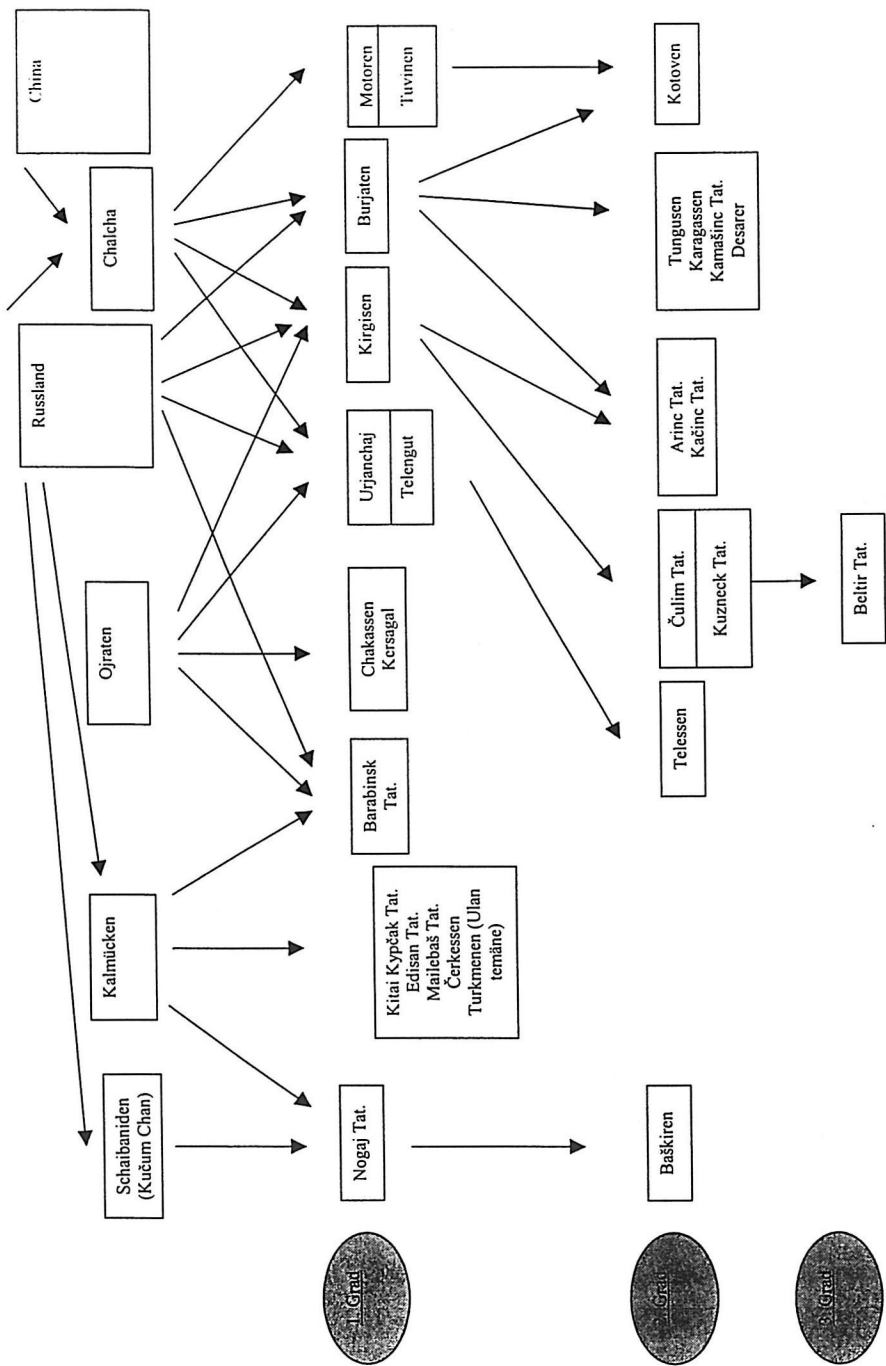


Abb. 1: Schematisierte Darstellung des Kyšym-Systems zur Mitte des 17. Jhs

Der Kriegszustand, dessen Verlauf hier nicht nachgezeichnet werden kann, wurde viele Male durch Gesandtschaften unterbrochen, die mongolischerseits Bündnis- und Handelsbeziehungen, russischerseits den Treueeid auf den Zaren beabsichtigten.¹⁸ Die Brüchigkeit erzielter Vereinbarungen erklärt sich aus der Interessensdivergenz und den unterschiedlichen Souveränitätskonzepten von Steppe und Staat. Waren die militärischen Kräfte geschwächt oder hatten sich die Herden derart vermehrt, dass sie verkauft werden mussten, bemühten sich die Westmongolen um Koexistenz.¹⁹ Denn als klassische Pastoralnomaden mit Bodenbau nicht befasst, waren sie auf den Austausch mit Produkten sesshafter Gesellschaften weit stärker angewiesen als bspw. seminomadische Gruppen der Cisbajkal-Burjaten.²⁰ Bestehende Ansprüche auf tributäre Ethnien wurden dabei keineswegs aufgegeben. Im Gegenteil: mit den militärischen Erfolgen wandelte sich auch die Einsicht in die Notwendigkeit einer Reichsuntertanenschaft, die ohnehin nur als Schutzbündnis auf Zeit verstanden wurde.²¹ Nicht weniger ambivalent lavierte Russland zwischen dem Öffnen und Schließen der Handelsmärkte, der Huldigungsforderung an die Krone und kosakischen Strafexpeditionen.²² Verhandlungen über die Oberhoheit Moskaus führ-

¹⁸ So suchten die zarischen Gesandten Vasilij Tjumenec und Ivan Petrov die Chalcha vergeblich, zur Anerkennung der russischen Oberhoheit zu bewegen. Ihre Botschafter gaben dem Zaren zu verstehen, dass man an Handelsbeziehungen wohl interessiert sei, eine russische Schutzherrschaft aber nur im Rahmen eines Bündnisses in Betracht käme. Das Gesuch einer anderen Gesandtschaft um Waffenhilfe gegen die Ojraten lehnte man in Moskau 1619 mit der Erklärung ab, dass diese nur bei Annahme russischer Untertanenschaft gewährt würde. Die gleiche Antwort erhielt auch Altyn Chan Ombo Erdeni, als er 1631/34 um Unterstützung gegen die Čachar der Südmongolei bat.

¹⁹ Die Kämpfe mit den Chalcha, Kasachen und Nogaj verschärften sich 1607–08 so sehr, dass sich Teile der Kalmücken aus den bei Tomsk eingenommenen Weidegebieten in die Dzungarei zurückziehen mussten. Andere Gruppen (Derbet) erklärten sich zur Zahlung des Jasak an Russland bereit, wenn ihnen ein Siedlungsgebiet oberhalb des Irtyš und der Zugang an die Salzseen garantiert würde. Zar Vasilij Šujskij sicherte ihren Gesandten 1609 urkundlich Schutz und Militärhilfe zu. Die Landnahme der Ojraten-Kalmücken und die Formierung ihrer Chanate in der Dzungarei wie im Kuku Nor führte zu heftigen Kämpfen mit den Kasachen (1620/24/35/43). Bei ihren aus Ostturkestan gegen Buchara geführten Raubzügen gelang es den Ojraten unter Batur Chuntajčži, bis 1653 den größten Teil des Semireč zu erobern. Die Kalmücken konnten ihren Einflussbereich bis auf die östliche Seite des Kaspiischen Meeres ausdehnen.

²⁰ Krader, "Cultural and Historical Position", 169, 171–172. Id., "Kalmuck", 246. Khodarkovsky, "Kalmyk–Russian Relations", 25. Id., "From Frontier to Empire", 118–119.

²¹ So legte eine Gesandtschaft des Cho Orlek 1632 in Tjumen' einen Eid über die friedliche Gesinnung gegenüber dem Reich mit dem Zweck ab, den ausgesetzten Handel wiederherzustellen. Doch schon 1634, als Kujši tajši mit 2.000 Reitern am Irtyš stand, schlug sich das Wiedererstarken ojratischer Truppen in heftigen Angriffen auf die russischen Siedlungen nieder.

²² Auf Widerstand stieß auch die Einschränkung der Botschaftsreisen an den Zarenhof, da dies einem Handelsboykott für exklusive Waren gleichkam. Zwar war die Regierung am

ten daher nicht zum Erfolg. Vom Zaren ständig gefordert und von bedrängten Gruppen verschiedentlich in Aussicht gestellt, zogen die Nomaden die Anerkennung russischer Souveränität nur in schwierigen Zeiten in Erwägung, blieb sie Fiktion und Mittel der Steppendiplomatie.

Eine friedvolle Beziehung stand damit nicht zu erwarten. Nach dem Muster 'Verdrängung oder Unterwerfung' eskalierte der Konflikt 1623, als der Zar ein Handelsverbot erließ und die Kalmücken des Cho Orlek gegen die unter russischer Herrschaft stehenden Baschkiren zogen. Binnen weniger Jahre lösten sie Teile der Nogaj aus der schwachen Bindung zu Moskau, denen sie Hilfstruppen zu einem Zug gegen Astrachan' gewährten.²³ Der Schaden war groß für Moskau, das sich seines tatarischen Schutzwalls beraubt sah. Ein Ukas des Zaren hob zwar das Handelsverbot 1632 für die Kalmücken auf, die – wie so oft in der mongolischen Wirtschaftsgeschichte – eine Öffnung der Märkte erzwungen hatten. Damit aber ließ sich die Abwerbungsdynamik tatarischer Gruppen, deren Chanate wenige Jahrzehnte zuvor erst angegliedert worden waren, nicht mehr zurückschrauben. Als Cho Orlek im Winter 1643 am oberen Tobol ein Heer von 70.000 Mann versammelte und sich anschickte, die vereiste Wolga bei Caricyn zu überqueren, wuchs sich der militärische Druck zu einer Bedrohung für das Reich aus. Zar Michail Fëdorovič schickte „russische Kriegsvölker gegen ihn aus..., die sein Hoflager überraschten und ihn mit einigen seiner Söhne und Enkel im Gefecht tödteten“²⁴, nachdem sie über den Terrek bis in die Kabardei vorgedrungen waren.

III. Pax Mongolia – Gemeinschaft, Gesellschaft, Herrschaft

Der hier implizierten Vorstellung eines dynamischen Herrschaftsausbaus im 17. Jahrhundert drängt sich als Vergleichsebene die Formierung des mongo-

Handel mit den Märkten Mittelasiens interessiert, weshalb sie 1596 für Sibirien die Zollfreiheit anordnete. Die Koexistenz wurde durch die ökonomisch motivierte Vorwärtsverteidigung der Kosaken jedoch ständig hintertrieben, die – neben der Teilhabe an der Pelztiersteuer (ясак) und dem lukrativen Salzabbau – auf Verdienstgeldern (послужные деньги) an jene beruhte, die sich bei der Unterwerfung neuer Völkerschaften hervorgetan hatten und die darüber hinaus das Beutemachen an Vieh und Mensch umfasste, die als Kriegsgefangene ausgetauscht oder als Sklaven verkauft werden konnten.

²³ Bičurin, „Istoričeskoe obozrenie Volžskich Kalmykov“, 282–284. Bronevskij, *Istorija Donskogo Vojska*, III, 49–52.

²⁴ Pallas, *Sam[m]lungen*, I, 58.

lischen Staates geradezu auf. Diese an sich nicht neue Beobachtung²⁵ führt uns zu der Annahme, dass schriftlich bezeugte Prozesse der frühen Neuzeit auch Vorgänge der Staatsformation erklären könnten und dass tradierte Strukturen des 12.–13. Jahrhunderts mit Erscheinen der Kalmücken-Ojraten erneut wirksam wurden. Zwar liegen zwischen der Erhebung Temudschins zum Tschingis Chan der Mangchol a. 1196 und der kalmückischen Landnahme rund 400 Jahre.²⁶ Doch lässt sich die Kontinuität an Prinzipien der sozialen Organisation aufzeigen, so dass der Analogieschluss plausibel wird.

Aus mongolischer Perspektive präsentierte sich die Ordnung der Welt als eine Extrapolierung von Regeln, die den Alltag in der Steppe bestimmten. Universelle Gestaltungskraft kam den Bestimmungen über Abstammung und Vererbung zu, deren Gültigkeit sich in der Hierarchie unilinearer Deszendenzgruppen ausdrückte. Das bedeutet, dass die nomadischen Gemeinschaften durch Prinzipien patrilinearer Deszendenz strukturiert waren, dass für Kollaterallinien das Senioritätsprinzip und bei der Vererbung nichtmaterieller Güter die Primogenitur galt. Bezeichnend ist, dass die agnatische Verwandtschaft der dominanten Patriline symbolischen Ausdruck in der Konzeption des Knochens (*jasun*) fand – in der Regel Rückgrat und Rippen des Schafes – die Verwandtschaft über die mütterliche Linie in der des Fleisches (*mjachan*).²⁷ Vom selben Knochen abzustammen, hieß, dem gleichen Clan (*obog*, *otog*) oder Stamm (*ulus*) anzugehören, die Reziprozität von Pflichten und Rechten anzuerkennen. Die verschiedenen Linien gemeinsamer Deszendenz formierten dabei Einheiten analog körperschaftlicher Strukturen, die zentrale Aufgaben der Gemeinschaften übernahmen: bei der Heirat (Exogamieregeln), der Erbschaftspraxis, der Unterstützung von Waisen und Armen, aber auch bei der Umverteilung von Steuern, Arbeits- oder Wehrdiensten und bei der Verrichtung spiritueller Zusammenkünfte.²⁸

Es bestand eine enge Beziehung zwischen den gestaffelten Deszendenzgruppen und den administrativen Einheiten (*ulus*, *ajmak*, *obog*, *choton*). Die territoriale Gliederung war Ausdruck der Konvergenz konsanguinaler und administrativer Prinzipien, weshalb von territorialer Verwandtschaft gesprochen werden kann. Eine Verstärkung fand diese Ordnung in der pastoralnomadischen Siedlungsform. Schon Georgi war aufgefallen, dass die räumliche

²⁵ Siehe bspw. Bičurin, „Istoričeskoe obozrenie Ojratov“, No 8, 412–413. Grousset, *Die Steppenvölker*, 724.

²⁶ Haenisch, *Die Geheime Geschichte*, 33, 153, 171.

²⁷ Pallas, *Sam[m]lungen*, I, 24. Ramstedt, *Kalmückisches Wörterbuch*, 224b, 225a. Čeremissof, *Burjaad-Orod slovar'* 348, 802. Hesse, *Abstammung*, 51, 64–67. Vjatkina, „Perežitki“, 137–138.

²⁸ Krader, *Social Organization*, 60–62, 81, 122.

Verteilung und die Anzahl der Filzzelte bei den Burjaten davon abhing, wie umfangreich die Verwandtschaft der Großfamilien eines Ail oder Choton war und wie groß ihre Herden: „Jedes Geschlecht“, notierte er, „hat sein angewiesenes Revier“²⁹, in dem saisonal zwischen Winter- und Sommerweide gewechselt wurde.

Man kann daher sagen, dass die Struktur der Deszendenzgruppen der territorial-administrativen Ordnung als Modell diente, welche ihrerseits in Wechselwirkung für eine stringendere Stratifikation des Gruppensystems sorgte. Das so gestrickte Gewebe der kalmückischen und burjatischen Gesellschaft war nicht nur durch den Gegensatz von schwarzen (*chara jasun*) und weißen Knochen (*cagan jasun*), von Abhängigen (*chariatu*, *albatu*) und einer Stammes-Aristokratie gemustert, deren Stellung und Titel erblich waren. Elitäre Besitz- und Verteilungsrechte an den Weidegebieten (*nutuk*), die Einziehung des Alban und die Organisation der Kriegsdienste hatten vielmehr eine differenzierte Schichtung hervorgebracht, so dass wir eine autoritäre Gesellschaft vor uns haben, deren Segmente zugleich militärische und zivile Funktionen erfüllten. Zur Absicherung der Herrschaft waren Agenturen formiert worden, die zur Klärung von Beziehungen innerhalb der Aristokratie und zur Regelung der Verhältnisse mit China wie Russland beitrugen.³⁰

²⁹ Georgi, *Bemerkungen*, I, 298, 300. Vgl. bei Pjurveev, *Architektura*, 77.

³⁰ Schorkowitz, *Die soziale und politische Organisation*, 272–286.

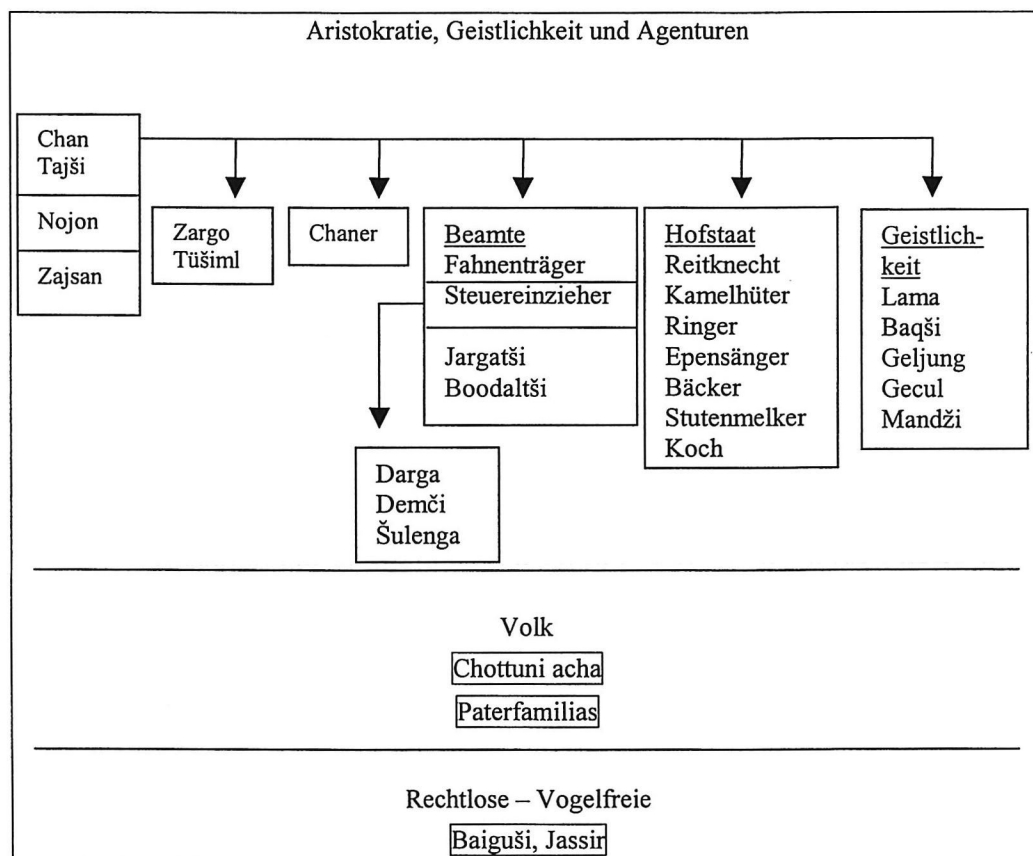


Abb. 2

Auf verwandtschaftlicher Ebene lassen sich drei Prinzipien benennen, die das Gerüst unilinearer Deszendenz erweitern und dem Gruppensystem damit hohe Flexibilität verleihen. Signifikant sind die Institutionen von Heirat, Adoption und Fusion, die dem Knüpfen kommunaler Verbindungen dienen, in der politischen Anwendung jedoch entfremdet wurden. Den Bedürfnissen der Elite angepasst, setzte etwa die Allianzheirat elitäre Rechtsnormen³¹ und folgte dem Kalkül, dass ein Bündnis zwischen Gruppen umso fester sei, je enger die verwandtschaftlichen Bande geknüpft sind. Tatsächlich lässt sich auch eine Korrelation zwischen der Häufigkeit von Allianzen und politischer Macht feststellen. Das Zentrum war in der Regel Frauengeber, womit eine Einflussnahme sichtbar wird, die eine Kontrolle der männlichen Nachkommen bezweckte.

³¹ Aberle, *The Kinship System*, 41–42. Bergmann, *Nomadische Streifereien*, III, 146. MacLennan, *Primitive Marriage*, 98.

Wie aber die Sukzessionskrisen zeigen, führten politisch motivierte Eheschließungen oder Adoptionen oft geradewegs zu Konflikten und zur Destabilisierung der Gesellschaft.³²

Denn in der Vererbungspraxis wurden Weide und Volk, Vieh und Waffen nach dem Senioritätsprinzip an alle Söhne ungleich verteilt, so dass die Zentralgewalt ständiger Fragmentierung unterlag. Die Ojraten waren sich dieser Schwäche bewusst und beklagten, „dass ihrem und dem mongolischen Volk von jeher nichts so sehr, als innere Zwietracht und die eingeführte Zertheilung der Ulussen unter fürstlichen Erben, die nachmals mit einander zerfallen und sich aufreiben, geschadet habe.“³³ Nur Autorität, Rang und Würde vererbte sich in Primogenitur. Doch wurde von dieser Regel abgewichen, wenn die Herkunft der zweiten oder dritten Frau bedeutender war, so dass Erbfolgekämpfe mit den Stiefsöhnen leicht ausbrachen. Und da Würde wie Titel in abgeminderter Form auch auf männliche Nachkommen (*zē*) in weiblicher Deszendenz übergehen konnten – und dies war ein wesentlicher Aspekt der Allianzheirat – wurde die affine Gruppe in den Erbfolgestreit einbezogen.³⁴

Auch die Polygynie erhielt im politischen Gebrauch eine Doppelfunktion. Als notwendiger Behelf bei Kinderlosigkeit gedacht, gab sie der Elite gleichsam ein Mittel zur Allianzheirat an die Hand. Gleiches galt für das Juniorlevirat, das in der Regel die Witwe des älteren Bruders absichern sollte. War es politisch jedoch erwünscht, so reichte eine entfernte Abstammung von Senior- und Juniorlinie völlig aus. Der taktische Spielraum zeigt sich eindrucksvoll bei der Adoption. Zwar bestand ihr Zweck in der Aufrechterhaltung der Patriline. Zudem konnten durch die Aufnahme von Waisen und Söhnen – präferentiell der Brudersohn – verarmte Verwandten entlastet oder Kinderlosigkeit kompensiert werden.³⁵ Häufig beobachtet man jedoch Adoptionen *ad personam et communem*, bei der selbst Einheiten in Clan-Größe ohne weiteres Schutz und neue Weidegebiete finden konnten, so dass man einen wirkungsvollen Fusi-

³² Von der Strategie des chinesischen Kaiserhauses bei „königlichen Allianzheiraten“ mit den Hsiung-nu im 2. Jh. v. Chr. berichtet Jagčid, „Patterns“, 190: „... to plan for the future and to make his son and grandsons our vassals ... give him the Elder Princess to be his wife, also give him rich presents. When the barbarians realize that ..., they will admire [us]... If she gives birth to a son he will be established as the crown prince and will succeed [his father] as Shan-yü... and when he dies [your] grandson will become the Shan-yü. Who has heard of a grandson who dares to disobey his grandfather?“. Siehe dazu Barfield, „Explaining Crisis and Collapse“.

³³ Pallas, *Sam[m]lungen*, I, 46. Siehe auch Pallas, *Reise*, I, 329. *Kalmyckie istoriko-literaturnye pamjatniki*, 155. Aberle, *The Kinship System*, 37. Krader, *Social Organization*, 130.

³⁴ Sagang Sečen, *Geschichte*, 181. Nebol'sin, *Očerki*, 192. Meyer, *Briefe*, II, 61.

³⁵ Changalov, *Nekotorye normy*, 202. Vjatkina, *Perežitki*, 143–144.

onsmechanismus vor sich hat, der indes auch die Fission entfremdeter Gruppen (*charë*) voraussetzt.³⁶

Die Geschichte der Mongolen und Ojraten kennt viele Beispiele für Adoptionen, die auf Familienebene geschlossen wurden, ihre Rechtsgrundlage in der erweiterten Genealogie fanden, zwecks Regulierung der Erbfolge rituell bekräftigt werden konnten und ihrer politischen Funktion nach Fusionen waren. Durch Einsetzung des Adoptierten als jüngeren Kollateralverwandten wurde eine Beziehung formalisiert, die den realen Verhältnissen entsprechen konnte oder auch nicht. Sozial anerkannt, ermöglichten die Konzeptionen von fiktiver und territorialer Verwandtschaft zudem ein Asyl gegenüber exogenen Gruppen. Ein solches Bündnis konnte durch Heirat bekräftigt werden, doch drückte es ungleiche Verhältnisse aus: nämlich eines von Vater zu Sohn oder von älterem zu jüngerem Bruder, auch Schwur- oder Wahlbruder (*anda*)³⁷ genannt. Weil aber Fusion und Fission wesentliche Aspekte der Souveränität darstellten, findet hiermit auch der flexible Einbindungsmechanismus der oben behandelten Klientelgruppen seine Erklärung.³⁸

Über Politik mit Verwandtschaft erzählen die Chroniken in epischer Breite. Die Geheime Geschichte bspw. berichtet von den Kereit und dem mächtigen Togoril Chan³⁹, der mit seinem jüngeren *Wahlbruder* Dschamucha – wohl ein Bündnisaristokrat aus den Reihen der Najman – ein Heer von 40.000 Mann aufstellen konnte. Auch zu Yesugai Bagatur von den Bordschigin bestand ein *anda*-Verhältnis⁴⁰, seit ihn dieser vor der Verfolgung des Gurchan der Chara Khitan gerettet hatte. Die Allianz ging später auf Temudschin über und als dieser volljährig wurde, bot Togoril Chan ihm ein Vater-Sohn-Bündnis zur Klärung der Erbnachfolge an. Durch die Adoption erhob er Tschingis Chan zum fiktiven älteren Bruder und Vormund seines einzigen Sohnes Nilcha Sanggum, den er für unfähig hielt, die Herrschaft zu übernehmen. Verstärkt wurde die

³⁶ Petri, *Territorial'noe rodstvo*, 5. Krader, *Social Organization*, 93–95. Ramstedt, *Kalmückisches Wörterbuch*, 177b. Čeremisov, *Burjaad-Orod slovar'*, 555a. Bogdanov, *Očerki*, 93.

³⁷ Krueger, *Materials*, 2–3. Muniev, *Chal'mg-Ors Tol'*, 43.

³⁸ Schorkowitz, *Konsanguinal-politische Organisation*, 230. Krader, *Social Organization*, 171. Šalchakov, *Sem'ja i brak*, 66. Id., *O nekotorych osobennostjach*, 129.

³⁹ (= To'oril Chan, Toghrul Chan, Ong Chan, Van Chan, Weng Chan, Wang Chan). Den Titel Ong Chan erhielt Togoril, nachdem er und Tschingis Chan unter dem chinesischen Heerführer Ongging die fliehenden Tataren des Megužin Segultu besiegt hatten. In der Literatur wird Ong Chan mit dem Priesterkönig Johannes identifiziert. Siehe Hunter, "The Conversion", 148–150. Haenisch, *Die Geheime Geschichte*, 1–75, 183.

⁴⁰ Bawden, *The Mongol Chronicle*, 128.

Allianz schließlich durch die Heirat Tschingis Chans und seiner Söhne mit den Töchtern des Dschachagambu, eines jüngeren Bruders des Togoril Chan.⁴¹

Das Bündnis der Mangchol mit Chuducha Beki von den Ojraten, die mit ihren 10.000 Mann anfangs zu den schwächeren Partnern zählten, war ähnlich konstruiert. Aufgrund erwiesener Kriegsdienste gegen die Kereit und Waldvölker a. 1207 aber band Tschingis Chan ihn und seine Söhne eng an seine Deszendenzlinie. Unter den *Kyšty* seines Reiches nahmen die Ojraten somit eine privilegierte Stellung ein, die ihnen Souveränität über andere Gruppen (Chori Tumat u. a.) verschaffte.⁴²

Es lässt sich bilanzieren, dass die verwandtschaftliche Organisation der politischen als Modell diente, dass Politik und Herrschaft auf einem Regelwerk transformierter Prinzipien des Verwandtschaftssystems ruhten. Dabei reichte die Kontinuität von Allianzheirat, Fusion und Adoption bei den Kalmücken nachweislich bis weit in das 18. Jahrhundert.⁴³ Wertet man diese Substitution als Antwort einer konsanguinal verfassten Gesellschaft auf die Bedürfnisse einer sich komplex entwickelnden politischen Organisation, so wird in der Übertragung der Prinzipien zugleich die strukturelle Instabilität sichtbar. Denn auf der Allgemeingültigkeit und Flexibilität beruhten zwar Stärke wie militärische Schlagkraft des mongolischen Staatswesens, auf dem Mangel an Kohärenz und politischen Institutionen aber seine Begrenztheit und ephemere Form. Im Kampf um die Macht hatte das fatale Folgen. Die Divergenz erforderte ständige Kontrolle der aufstrebenden Juniorlinien. Trotzdem waren Bündnisse gegen das Zentrum rasch geknüpft. Weil die Erbfolge kritisch und politische Autorität anfechtbar blieben⁴⁴, war immer Grund für Zwist gegeben, besonders bei der Aufteilung von Weidegebieten und Herrschaftsbereichen, da dies oft eine Umverteilung der steuerpflichtigen Gemeinschaften nach sich zog.

Dass also die Dynamik der Landnahme durch die räumliche Anwendung des Senioritätsprinzips gewissermaßen vorgezeichnet war, zeigt die duale Gliederung der Gemeinschaften. Zu Grunde lagen dabei Orientierungsmaßstäbe der Kernfamilie, die ihren Ausdruck in der Ordnung der Filzjurte fanden – dem

⁴¹ Haenisch, *Die Geheime Geschichte*, 50–69. *Abulgasi Bagadur Khan's Geschlechtbuch*, 77–78, 85–86, 89–90, 99. Ch'i-yü Wu, „Who Were the Oirats“, 188–191.

⁴² Sagang Sečen, *Geschichte*, 114. Sančirov, „Ėtničeskij sostav“, 25–27.

⁴³ Ein Beispiel fiktiver Verwandtschaft bei den Ojraten bietet 1644 etwa die Adoption des kasachischen Jangir Sultan durch Durgeči Ubaši (Kundelen Taischa). Siehe bei Zlatkin, *Istorija*, 131.

⁴⁴ Überliefert ist, dass der von Tschingis Chan zum Nachfolger ernannte Ogodai die Herrschaft erst nach längerem Zögern antrat, wobei „der älteste Bruder ihn bey dem rechten, der jüngste bey dem linken Arme“ fasste und sie ihn auf den Thron setzten. *Abulgasi Bagadur Khan's Geschlechtbuch*, 141. Haenisch, *Die Geheime Geschichte*, 136.

Lebensmittelpunkt der Nomaden. Hierzu muss man wissen, dass der Eingang der Jurte stets nach Süden gerichtet war, als vordere Seite galt und sich ihm gegenüber der Sitzplatz (*dundu*) des Paterfamilias befand, zu dessen rechter und vornehmer Seite (*barun gar*) die älteren Söhne Platz nahmen, während die jüngeren auf der linken (*zjun gar*) saßen.⁴⁵ Unter den Agnaten erhielt sich die Hierarchie von Seniorat und Juniorat über viele Generationen bis auf Clan-Ebene als Gegensatzpaar von *ike* (groß, alt, senior) und *baga* (klein, jung, junior). Wurden die Söhne selbständig, gründeten sie demgemäß ihren Haushalt in unmittelbarer Nähe der väterlichen Jurte. Als Erbteil konnte der Älteste den rechten, westlichen Teil und der Jüngste den linken, östlichen Teil der Wiedergebiete erwarten.⁴⁶

Die Ordnung galt entsprechend für die gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse mit dem Unterschied, dass dem Zentrum nun größeres Gewicht zukam. Die Dreigliederung umfasste die fiktive und reale Verwandtschaft, freie wie unfreie Gruppen. Eroberte oder tributäre Ethnien wurden in die Juniorlinien integriert und dem linken Flügel (*zjun gar*) zugeordnet. Privilegierte Individuen oder Gruppen, die spezielle Herrschaftsdienste leisteten, unterstanden dem territorial-administrativen Zentrum (*dundu*). Bei der Verteilung des Patrimoniums führten die Söhne die Ordnung der Flügel fort, indem sie Volk und Weidegebiete erhielten, erweiterten und im Idealfall gedrittelt den Agnaten übergaben.

Auch die räumlich-politische Stellung der Ojraten war auf diese Weise festgelegt. In der *Pax Mongolia* bildeten sie den linken östlichen Flügel der Westmongolen des Dschotschi und seines Sohnes Schaibani. Denn als Dschotschis „Erbteil des Turgai, der Emba und des Ural“⁴⁷ aufgeteilt wurde, ging der rechte Teil an Batu Chan, der mit der *Goldenen Horde*⁴⁸ ein neues Zentrum bildete, und der linke Teil an den jüngeren Schaibani Chan. Darüber hinaus hatte Batu „von seinen Erbländern die Kuszi, Naimannen, Karlicken und Buiräten“ an Schaibani abgetreten wegen im Kampf gegen Kiev und Ungarn erworbener Verdienste, unter der Bedingung, dass „er selbst allda bleiben, und in den Län-

⁴⁵ Pjurveev, *Architektura*, 12. Ramstedt, *Kalmückisches Wörterbuch*, 102a, 35b, 485b, 205b, 28a. Lewicki, *La langue mongole*, 17, 30, 36, 87.

⁴⁶ Žukovskaja, „Čislo“, 245. Karagodin, „Dual'naja organizacija“, 26–29. Stratanovič, „Voen'naja organizacija“, 220–230. Pjurveev, *Architektura*, 14–15. Pallas, *Sam[m]lungen*, I, 221–222.

⁴⁷ Grousset, *Die Steppenvölker*, 539.

⁴⁸ Die mongolische Symbolfarbe für die Mitte war golden. Rot stand für die rechte (schöne, westliche), weiß für die linke (östliche) Seite, gelb für den Süden und blau für den Norden. Pallas, *Sam[m]lungen*, II, 187.

dern, die zwischen Batu und den Ordaizen wären, leben sollte“⁴⁹. Dabei war die Herrschaft der *Weißten Horde* des Orda Izen auf den Raum östlich und nördlich des Aralsees eingeschränkt worden, denn Schaibani hatte „die Steppen von dem Uralischen Gebürge längst dem Jaik bis an den Sirt“ bekommen und seine „Nachkommen haben sich in ihrem Erbteil erhalten bis zu Kutschums Zeiten“⁵⁰, dessen Chanat sich – wie gesagt – über weite Teile Westsibiriens erstreckte.

⁴⁹ *Abulgasi Bagadur Khan's Geschlechtbuch*, 185. Vgl. bei Grekov/ Jakubovskij, *Zolotaja orda*, 104, 302.

⁵⁰ Fischer, *Sibirische Geschichte*, I, 351–352, Anm. 13. Dass eine tatarische Gruppe namens *Schebiny* noch 1770 bei Tjumen' an der linksufrigen Tura siedelte, die sich als Kučum-Deszendenten betrachteten, berichtete Lepëchin, *Tagebuch der Reise*, III, 6.

Räumliche Gliederung der Tschingisiden-Herrschaft

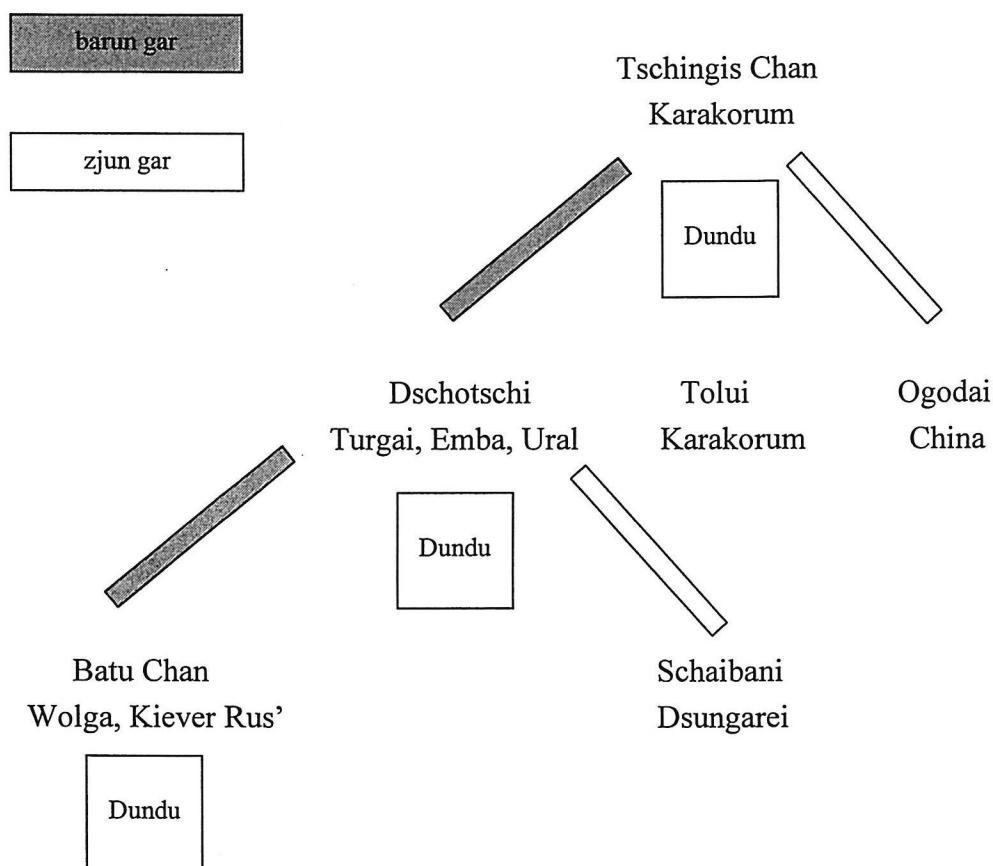


Abb. 3

Es liegt auf der Hand, dass die operativen Möglichkeiten dieses Systems im Felde enorm waren, wirkte sich doch die Dynamik der territorial-sozialen Ordnung direkt im Herdenmanagement⁵¹ wie bei der Heeresorganisation aus. In Kriegszeiten ordneten sich die Linien gemeinschaftlicher Deszendenz un-

⁵¹ Der Migrationszyklus zwischen Winter- und Sommerweide, den jeder Choton für sich, jedoch als Teil eines Ganzen (Ajmak, Ulus), unternahm, war eben kein planloses Umherziehen und folgte keinem *jus primi occupantis*. Es wurden immer die gleichen Weidegebiete durch dieselben Gruppen eingenommen, die ihren Landbesitz nach konsanguinalen Richtlinien in Streifen aufteilten und kennzeichneten. Bergmann, *Nomadische Streifereien*, II, 104–115. Nebol'sin, *Očerki*, 177–182. Ramstedt, *Kalmückisches Wörterbuch*, 352a–b. Krader, *Social Organization*, 122. Chazanov, "Sarmato-kalmyckie paralleli", 213–219.

mittelbar in Flügeln an, während auf Reichsebene staatliche Institutionen hinzutraten, insbesondere das Zentrum als Sitz von Professionalität, individualisierter Führerschaft und persönlichem Gefolge (*nöküt*). Insofern kann die Formierung des mongolischen Staates unter Tschingis Chan als periodische Erstarkung einer bestehenden Kriegerelite interpretiert werden.⁵²

Die Kurzlebigkeit militärischer Stärke kann aber nicht darüber hinwegtäuschen, dass die für den Kriegsdienst nötige Matrix jederzeit abrufbar war. Sie war auf Clan-Ebene angelegt, wurde in Friedenszeiten ständig reproduziert und fand ihren Ausdruck in der jährlichen Treibjagd, bei den Burjaten *zègètè-aba* (bzw. *aba chajdak*) genannt. Hierbei ordneten sich die Jäger in Gruppen mit ihren Führern (*malgaj, zachul*) zwei Flügel-Vorstehern (*gazarša*) unter, die auf ein Kommando (*tobšo*) hörten. Geleitet wurde die Jagd- und Heeresordnung in alter Zeit noch durch starke Schamanen (*galša*). Die Erinnerung daran ist durch eine Fülle von Kriegsritualen und durch die Verehrung der schamanistischen Kriegsgottheit *Dajči Tengri* bei den Westmongolen bis ins 18. Jahrhundert bewahrt worden.⁵³

IV. Weidegebiete gegen Kriegsdienste: Koexistenz unter Vorbehalt

Kehren wir nun – durch ethnologische Einblicke gestärkt – an das frühneuzeitliche Konfliktfeld zurück, so wird man durch den Wandel überrascht, der sich für die Kalmücken nach der Niederlage von 1644 abzeichnete. Da Tributansprüche in Südsibirien kaum mehr durchsetzbar waren, hatten sie sich gegen tatarische Gruppen des Nordkavkasus gewandt, dabei die Schutzwall-Funktion der Nogaj übernommen und sich im Steppenraum des Kaspischen Meeres als eine militärisch schlagkräftige Ordnungsmacht etabliert. Zwischen Moskau und den Deszendenten des Cho Orlek begann eine ausgesprochen konstruktive Phase, die in dem oft erwähnten Vertrag Peters des Großen und Ajukas von

⁵² Haenisch, *Die Geheime Geschichte*, 77–79, 91, 104–111, 136. Krader, *Formation*, 90–98. Id., “The Origin”, 100–101. Kradin, “The Origins”, 173. Id., “The Transformation”, 137–138. Lewicki, *La langue mongole*, 66.

⁵³ Ides, *Driejaarige Reize*, 42. Witsen, *Noord en Oost Tartaryen*, 103, 187–189, 659. D’Orléans, *Histoire*, 80–82, 139–140. Kazanin, *Izbrant Ides*. Changelov, *Zègètè-aba*, 11–32. Id., “Obščestvennye ochoty”, 60–61. Id.: “Zègètè-aba u kudinskich burjat”, 96–100. Bogdanov, *Očerki*, 10–16. Manžigeev, *Burjatskie šamanističeskie*, 38, 52, 71. Batyreva, *Starokalmuckoe iskusstvo*, Abb. 31, 39.

1697 gipfelte, in welchem der Zar den Chan vor seiner Europareise zur Wacht am Don bestellte.⁵⁴

Beidseitige Nützlichkeitserwägungen bildeten die Grundlage für eine über hundert Jahre währende Kooperation. Dem Anspruch der kalmückischen Elite auf eine Klientel, die dem Reich noch nicht tributpflichtig war, auf freien Handelsverkehr und vor allem auf ergiebige Weidegebiete stand ein gewachsenes Schutzbedürfnis des Staates gegenüber. Mit der Überwachung der offenen Steppe beauftragt, waren die Kalmücken zu Verbündeten der Kosaken geworden – eine Funktion, die am fernen Bajkal auch von den Burjaten eingenommen wurde, als es nach den Verträgen von Nerčinsk (1689) und Kjachta (1727) darum ging, die russisch-chinesische Grenze zu überwachen.

Die Annäherung fand Niederschlag in bilateralen Beistandsverträgen, die mit Auszeichnungen und Geldzuweisungen an die Elite verbunden waren, aber auch zur Beschränkung in den außenpolitischen Beziehungen und zur Ausweitung der Kriegsdienste führten. Den Beziehungen der Nomaden mit dem Staat verliehen die Verträge von 1655, 1657, 1661, 1673, 1677 und 1683 nicht nur einen rechtlichen und ökonomischen Rahmen. Indem sie bestehende Hierarchien normierten, schufen sie eine Grundlage zur Stabilisierung von Herrschaftsstrukturen im neuen Chanat. Brauchte der Zar Hilfe, erging die Anordnung des Chans, eine berittene Truppe aufzustellen. Nach dem Grundsatz: »Weidegebiete und Koexistenz gegen Jasak, Beistand und Kriegsdienste«, war hier eine Abhängigkeit angelegt worden, die sich vertiefte, als die Regierung Steuererlass bei regulärem Wehrdienst anbot und Untertaneneide (шерстная запись) einzufordern begann.⁵⁵

Allerdings hatten die Nojone weder mit der Kriegsfreudigkeit der russischen Generalität noch mit Russlands Eintritt in das Konzert der Großen Mächte Europas gerechnet. Krimfeldzüge (1687–89), Nordischer (1700–21) oder Siebenjähriger Krieg (1756–63) – es gab kein Schlachtfeld, dessen Kommandeure

⁵⁴ In Anerkennung der Kriegsdienste Ajuka Chans gegenüber der Pforte gewährte der Zar in dem durch Fürst Boris Alekseevič Golycyn überbrachten Vertrag vom 20.7.1697 das Recht, Beutezüge gegen die Kuban- und Krim-Tataren zum eigenen Nutzen auszuführen. Außerdem wurden Ausrüstung und eine jährliche Versorgung mit Schusswaffen, Pulver und Blei in Aussicht gestellt, sollten die Kalmücken gegen die Kasachen, Karakalpaken und Bucharen ziehen wollen. Zu den Punkten des Vertrags siehe Bičurin, *Istoričeskoe obozrenie Volžskich Kalmykov*, No 9, 311–312. Vgl. bei Gučinov, „Ob otnošenijach kalmykov“, 86. Khodarkovsky, „Kalmyk-Russian Relations“, 23–24.

⁵⁵ Haven, *Reise in Rußland*, 175–185. Perry, *The State of Russia*, 85, 276–277. Bičurin, „Istoričeskoe obozrenie Volžskich Kalmykov“, 297–299, 307. Bronevskij, *Istorija Donskogo Vojska*, III, 56–59. Burdukov, *Mitrič'in Kristen*, 2. Gučinov, „Ob otnošenijach kalmykov“, 47–54.

sich nicht die Unterstützung der kalmückischen Reiterei gewünscht hätten. Deren Verwegenheit war ebenso legendär wie der Schrecken, der ihren beweglichen Regimentern gerüchtehalber vorauseilte. Beinahe jährlich nahmen sie deshalb im Verbund mit regulären oder kosakischen Abteilungen an Kriegszügen gegen die Vasallen des Osmanischen Reiches teil.⁵⁶

Eine solche Indienstellung aber blieb nicht ohne Folgen für die innere Verfassung der nomadischen Gemeinschaften. Die Gewöhnung an Profite aus umfangreichen Heeresviehkäufen und an leicht gemachte Beute führte zu erhöhter Kriegsbereitschaft, die in Kämpfen auch um Führungspositionen resultierten. Es kam zur Unbotmäßigkeit der überlasteten Großfamilien, zur Abwanderung übervorteilter Juniorlinien und ganzer Clan-Verbände, die sich an den Aufständen von Stepan Razin (1667–71), Kondratij Bulavin (1707–09) und Emeljan Pugačëv (1773–75) beteiligten.⁵⁷ Die Regierung nutzte die Chance und mischte sich nach dem Tode Ajuka Chans (1724) nachhaltig in den Erbfolgestreit ein, was neue Fissionen und Migrationen hervorrief. Weil man glaubte, die Kontrollschwäche des kalmückischen Zentrums und den Mangel an Institutionen durch staatliche Einflussnahme ausgleichen zu können, setzte man das zwischen Reich und Steppe gewachsene Equilibrium aufs Spiel. Das Resultat ist so bekannt wie tragisch: Die Gegensätze spitzten sich derart zu, dass zwei Drittel des Volkes Russland fluchtartig verließen und in die Dsungarei, unter chinesische Oberhoheit zurückkehrten.

Mit dem Exodus von 1771, den viele nicht überlebten, ging eine Epoche zu Ende. Denn aus Peters Zeit trat eine Autokratie hervor, die von Katharina der Großen (1762–96) unter Anlehnung an den aufgeklärten Absolutismus Europas zu einer Herrschaft ausgestaltet wurde, die Russland bis ins 20. Jahrhundert prägte. Souveränitäten an der Peripherie standen dem zentralstaatlichen Ausbau dabei nur im Wege. Und da die Zarin sich in der Orientalischen Frage mit Erfolg gegen das Osmanische Reich hatte behaupten können, fiel mit dem Gebietszugewinn auch das Bedrohungspotential am Schwarzen Meer wie im

⁵⁶ Khodarkovsky, "Kalmyk-Russian Relations", 10–11, 18–20, 28–29. Gučinov, "Ob otnošenijach kalmykov", 67, 77–80. Burdukov, *Mitrič'in Kristen*, 3. *Očerki istorii*, 157, 159. Meyer, *Briefe*, II, 63. Pallas, *Sam[m]lungen*, I, 222–223. Bronevskij, *Istorija Donskogo Vojska*, II, S. 6.

⁵⁷ Khodarkovsky, "Kalmyk-Russian Relations", 11–13, 15–17, 20–21. *Manifesty i ukazy*, 43–44, 57, 66–67. Belikov, „Učastie kalmykov“, 116, 128. Andruščenko, *Krest'janskaja vojna*, 118. Gučinov, „Ob otnošenijach kalmykov“, 62–63. Bronevskij, *Istorija Donskogo Vojska*, I, 256, 261; III, 70. Struyss, *Denkwürdige Reisen*, 103. Pallas, *Sam[m]lungen*, I, 86–87, 90. Bergmann, *Nomadische Streifereien*, I, 179–246. Bičurin, „Istoričeskoe obozrenie Volžskich Kalmykov“, 424, 431–434. Michajlov, *Adventures*, 6–7, 14. Pelliot, *Notes critiques*, 37–38, 94. Mish, "The Return", 81–82.

Nordkaukasus weg und damit die Schutzwall-Funktion nomadischer Verbände. Deren Vertragsbedingungen hatten sich im Grundsatz verschoben, was für zusätzliche Entfremdung sorgte. Zwar nahmen die Kriegsdienste ständig zu. Dem stand jedoch keine Sicherung der Lebenswelt mehr, sondern eine Beschneidung der Weidegebiete gegenüber, als die Regierung begann, Bauern und Kosaken im fruchtbaren Flussland der Steppenrandgebiete anzusiedeln. Die Kolonisierung wirkte sich verheerend aus. Einmal, weil die ökonomische Grundlage der Großherdenbesitzer gefährdet wurde. Zum anderen erschwerten die Kolonisten den einst ungehinderten Zugang an die Wasserstellen und verdrängten die Pastoralnomaden in das Innere der wasserarmen Steppe.⁵⁸

V. Marginalisierung und Transformation

Mit Auflösung des Wolga-Chanates und dem Souveränitätsverlust der verbliebenen Gruppen büßten die Mongolen ihre politische Stellung in Russland ein. Zwar dienten ihre Kosaken den Romanovs bis ans Ende der Dynastie. Doch besaßen ihre Dienste weit weniger Gewicht. Den Kalmücken blieben nur wenige Regimenter, die nicht mehr eigenständig, sondern unter russischem Oberkommando kämpften, das sie 1814 in Verfolgung der *Grande Armée* immerhin bis auf die Élyséeschen Felder nach Paris führte.⁵⁹ Die Nomaden wurden durch die koloniale Expansion überholt und durch die waffentechnische Entwicklung. Ihr Verbleib im Reich stellte sie in eine Reihe mit den anderen Völkern Russlands, deren wachsende Zahl den Druck zur Vereinheitlichung staatlicher Herrschaftszusammenhänge erhöhte. Die Regierung begegnete den Russlandmongolen nun als Integrationsproblem, für die eine Subordination unter die Sachzwänge einer fremden Lebenswelt einsetzte.⁶⁰

Damit begann ein völlig neues Kapitel der interkulturellen Beziehungen, aus denen drei Aspekte besondere Beachtung verdienen. Um die Lage der Burjaten und Kalmücken im Wandel dieser Zeit zu beurteilen, hat man erstens jene Vorstellungen zu hinterfragen, die den Staat bei seinem Integrationsvorhaben anleiteten. Dabei gilt es, die Effektivität von Methoden zu bewerten, mit denen Staatsbürgerlichkeit (гражданственность) eingepflanzt werden sollte. Über die soziale-ökonomische Marginalisierung der Nomaden geben zweitens ihre

⁵⁸ Bičurin, "Istoričeskoe obozrenie Volžskich Kalmykov", 424–425. Pelliot, *Notes critiques*, 29, 34–35, 88–89. Čužginov, "Politika carisma", 136–141.

⁵⁹ Borisenko, *Kalmyki*, 64–65.

⁶⁰ Busse, "Zabajkal'skoe inorodčeskoe vojsko", 5–64. Šovunov, *Kalmyki*. Id., *Političeskaja*.

geplante Umwandlung zu Kosaken und Bauern sowie schließlich die Peripetien in der für sie existentiellen Landfrage Aufschluss.

Was die Leitideen betrifft, so sind weder ihre westeuropäischen Wurzeln noch ihr assimilatorisches Anliegen zu verkennen. Denn die Öffnung Russlands durch Peter I. brachte auch einen Eurozentrismus, der bei der kolonialen Durchdringung Sibiriens und Mittelasiens schon unter Katharina II. den Anspruch russischer Kulturvermittlung erhob.⁶¹ Einen wichtigen Niederschlag fand der Ideenimport in dem berühmten Statut des Grafen Speranskij, mit dem die sibirischen Nationalitäten (*inorodcy*) seit 1822 in Wildbeuter, Nomaden und Sesshafte (*бродячие, кочевые и оседлые народы*) klassifiziert wurden. Ausschlaggebend für die Einstufung waren soziale wie ökonomische Kriterien, der Grad der Sesshaftigkeit und das kulturelle Entwicklungsniveau. In dieser auf Katharinas Gesetzgebende Kommission (1767) zurückgehenden Dreigliederung, die den von ihr rezipierten und auf Sibirien übertragenen Zivilisationsgedanken der Aufklärung ausdrückte, war die Transformation der Völker aus einer Kategorie in die nächsthöhere impliziert und damit das Stadiali-tätsprinzip eingeführt.⁶²

Mit Eintritt in die imperiale Epoche staffierte Russland die Kulturträgerrolle allerdings zu einer *mission civilisatrice* aus, die es auf die Grenzräume des Reiches projizierte. Ihre Fortsetzung in sowjetischer Zeit überwog die antikolonialen Versprechungen des Roten Oktobers bei weitem. In der Leninschen Adaption des Evolutionsschemas von Morgan, Engels und Marx trat die Kontinuität deutlich zu Tage.⁶³ Doch zielte der auf viele asiatische Völker übertragene Barbareiverdacht nicht einfach darauf ab, Bastionen des Traditionellen zu schleifen. Mit der Umwandlung nationaler Identitäten in soziale (Arbeiter, Bauer, Kosake, Beamter) führte der Kampf gegen die Traditionalismen die zarische Methode ständischer Integration fort.

Die prägende Phase für die Russlandmongolen setzte ein, als die Toleranz des aufgeklärten Absolutismus einem Russozentrismus wich und die Regierung begann, herrschaftliche Mittel zur Homogenisierung des expandierenden Reiches zu bündeln. Mit der Etablierung eines „offiziellen Nationalismus“ unter Nikolaus I. (1825–55) entwickelte der Staat Strategien, die erst nur die Ein-

⁶¹ Baberowski, „Auf der Suche“, 482–504. Khodarkovsky, „Ignoble Savages“, 10, 20. Slezkine, „Naturalists versus Nations“, 29. Riasanovsky, „Asia“, 7–9, 16–17, 25. Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture*.

⁶² Raeff, *Sibiria*, 116–117. Id., *Michael Speransky*. Id., „Patterns“, 126–140. Hundley, *Speransky*, 3, 22–24, 28–34. Yaroshevski, „Empire and Citizenship“, 65–66.

⁶³ Jakovlev, „Die Entwicklung“, 473–491. Krader, *Ethnologie und Anthropologie bei Marx*. Id., *The Ethnological Notebooks*.

ebnung kulturell-ethnischer Besonderheiten beabsichtigten. Doch schon in der zweiten Jahrhunderthälfte entstand hieraus ein Prozess, dem es einzig um die Durchsetzung russischer Normen, Werte und Interessen ging.⁶⁴ Verwaltung, Wirtschaft und Landbesitz, Bildung, Religions- und Sprachpraxis waren davon gleichermaßen betroffen, im europäischen Russland wie in Russisch-Asien. Allerdings lassen die Nationalbewegungen des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts und das Ringen der Bolschewiki um den Zusammenhalt der Völker Russlands an der integrativen Wirkung dieser Vorgehensweise erheblich zweifeln.

Denn um der Vereinheitlichung allogener Strukturen willen wurden die Selbstverwaltungen der Nomaden ausgehöhlt oder so transformiert, dass sie der Assimilationserwartung entsprachen. Damit einher ging die Angleichung ihrer Rechtssysteme, da erst mit Einführung russischer Jurisdiktion verfahrensrechtliche Kontrolle errichtet und in abweichendes Erbrecht der Nobilität eingegriffen werden konnte. Im Kern ging es um die Ökonomie und die Staatsfinanzen. Die Interdependenz zur Administration liegt dabei auf der Hand: der Staat wollte aus Nomaden und Jägern sesshafte Ackerbauern machen, um das gesunkene Pelztieraufkommen fiskalisch zu kompensieren und weil Sibirien in der Getreideversorgung autark werden sollte.⁶⁵ Durch Steuererleichterungen motiviert, traten viele in den Sozialstand der Kronbauern oder Kosaken über, was zur Ersetzung der traditionellen Pelztiersteuer (*jasak*) durch eine Landpacht (*obrok*), aber auch zur Auflösung nationaler Verwaltungsautonomie führte, die gegen Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts einer Bauernverwaltung (*volost*) Platz machte.

Damit den Selbstverwaltungen alte und durch die Zaren bekräftigte Landbesitzrechte entzogen und deren Ländereien den Bauern zur Ansiedlung übergeben werden konnten, mussten die nutzbaren Weidegebiete parzelliert und die Nomaden zur Sesshaftigkeit gebracht werden. Die erzwungene Transformierung drückte sich durch hohe Besteuerung, Verwaltungsfinanzierung, Dienstverpflichtung, Konvertierung zum russisch-orthodoxen Glauben aus sowie durch eine räumliche Verdrängung seitens der Bauern und Kosaken, deren Landnahme auf zentraler wie lokaler Ebene koordiniert war. Der Druck führte *de facto* zur territorialen und ökonomischen Marginalisierung, nicht aber zur Sesshaftigkeit. Er beseitigte die indigenen Wirtschaftsgrundlagen und be-

⁶⁴ Riasanovsky, *Nicholas I*, 226. Thaden [u. a.], *Russification*. Id., *Interpreting History*.

⁶⁵ Schorkowitz, *Staat und Nationalitäten*, 14–15. Martin, *Law and Custom in the Steppe*. Brower, "Kyrgyz Nomads", 41, 47–49. Girčenko, "Chozjajstvo Kudinskich burjat", 73–77. Id., "Stranica iz istorii", 98–107. Asalchanov, "O social'no-ekonomičeskom razvitii", 62–80. Komandžae, "Kapitalističeskie tendencii", 90–116. Badmaev, *Ėkonomičeskoe razvitie*. Karagodin, "Razvitie zemledelija", 101–121.

schleunigte den Niedergang der pastoralnomadischen Wirtschaft, der die Regierung eben nur insoweit Beachtung schenkte, als sie den Steuerfluss der Herdenbesitzer an die Staatskasse garantierte und dem Heer das nötige Reit- und Transportvieh sicherte.

Die historische Geographie russlandmongolischer Territorien entlarvt denn auch die Siedlungspolitik als einen allseits betriebenen Landraub, der in der Sprachregelung zarischer wie sowjetischer Verwaltungen als *Landfrage* kodiert, von den Bauern hingegen ungeschminkt artikuliert wurde: Wie das Land in Besitz nehmen (как её взять)? Das war die Kernfrage, die man sich in den Ministerien, Heer und Kirche, bei Kosaken wie Bauern gleichermaßen stellte. Dabei unterlag die Enteignung unterschiedlichen Voraussetzungen – entsprechend dem Klima und der Bodenbeschaffenheit, aber auch der rechtlich-administrativen Rahmenbedingungen – bis die *Landfrage* gegen Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts durch die *Bauernfrage* überlagert wurde.

Ökonomische Konkurrenz und nationale Konfrontation wurden nun zu synonymen Begriffen an der Peripherie, wo der Landnahmeprozess anderen Gesetzmäßigkeiten folgte. Die Dinge nahmen ihren eigenen Lauf in der Provinz, wo Partikularinteressen von Lokalbehörden im Vordergrund standen, die mit ihren Resolutionen nicht nur die Umsetzung von Regierungsbeschlüssen beabsichtigten. Präentionen konkurrierender Ministerialabteilungen und karriereflossener Dienstleister führten zu einer Stimulierung bei der Ausführung dessen, was in der Zentrale oft nur angedacht war. Dabei fiel den Bauern und Kosaken im Zusammenspiel mit der örtlichen Bürokratie die Rolle des anstoßenden Elements einer Entwicklung zu, die durchweg zuungunsten der Burjaten und Kalmücken ausging, trotz unzähliger Bittschreiben und Rechtsbeschwerden.⁶⁶

Die Schärfe des Landstreites und die Rücksichtslosigkeit angewandter Mittel trugen maßgeblich zum anarchischen Charakter der Revolutionswirren bei, die in der Tolerierung pogromhafter Ausschreitungen gipfelte. Das galt besonders, wenn übers Land fahrende Agitatoren den Bauern die Sowjetdekrete zur Sozialisierung des Landes von 1917/18 so erklärten, dass diese vor allen Dingen verstanden, die Nomaden hätten keinen Anspruch mehr auf ihr Land. Die Beschlüsse der Bauern-, Arbeiter- und Soldatenräte zur Vergesellschaftung des Bodens unterstellten denn auch die Kontrolle der Nutzungsrechte den regionalen Bezirksräten. Da diese aber von Russen dominiert waren, meinten die Bauern, sich keine Schranken mehr auferlegen zu müssen. Zudem war das Land

⁶⁶ Sil'nickij, „Kratkij očerk“, 53–54. Očirov, „Astrachanskije kalmyki“. Ėrdnjev, „K istorii zemlepol'zovanija“, 27–38.

nach der neuen Agrar- und Bodengesetzgebung unveräußerlich, das Nutzungsrecht an Dritte nicht übertragbar. Grund und Boden fielen nach dem sowjetischen Erbrecht vom April 1918 also an den Staat zurück, so dass nach dem Tod des verstorbenen Nutznießers eine Akkumulation auch in der Familie ausgeschlossen war.⁶⁷

VI. Fazit

Festzuhalten bleibt, dass die Russlandmongolen Weidegebiete und Selbstverwaltungen mit Errichtung der Sowjetmacht an den Staat abtreten mussten. Hatten sie ihre politische Funktion gegen Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts verloren, so büßten sie nun – durch den Verlust von Verwaltungsautonomie, territorialer Integrität und ökonomischem Sonderstatus – auch ihre historische Stellung ein. An die Stelle der kosakischen Kriegsdienste trat der obligatorische Wehrdienst in den Reihen der Roten Armee, wo sich indigene Regimenter jedoch länger halten konnten.

Ein anderes Indiz bestärkt indes die Annahme, dass das traditionelle Souveränitätsverständnis der Kalmücken noch lebendig war, als Lenin ihre nationalen Aspirationen mit dem bolschewistischen Kampf gegen die Weiße Armee verband. In dem bekannten Appell des Rates der Volkskommissare vom 22. Juli 1919 erklärte er nämlich, dass die Garantien der Völkerrechtsdeklaration durch die Konterrevolution in Gefahr gebracht worden seien. Er beschwor die Kalmücken, ihr Schicksal in die eigenen Hände zu nehmen und wie ein Mann in die Reihen der Rotarmisten einzutreten, um gegen die Truppen Denikins zu kämpfen. Denn bevor der Gesamtkalmückische Rätekongress eine konstituierende Versammlung werde einberufen könne, müssten erst bedeutende Teile kalmückischer Ländereien zurückerobert werden! Damit aber transportierte der Vorsitzende ein allen Kalmücken verständliches Axiom: Weidegebiete gegen Kriegsdienste.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ *Sobranie zakonov* 25, Artikel 346 vom 19.(6.)2.1918; 34, Artikel 456 vom 27.4.1918. *Dekrety Sovetskoi Vlasti*, 14.8.1919, VI, 29. Die Regierung hatte die landarme Bevölkerung im Auge, als sie den Bauern Anteile aus Staats- und Kabinettsländereien, den Kosaken Anteile aus Brachländern der Offiziere und Heeresbeamten versprach. An die Nationalitäten dachte sie zuletzt, als man diesen versicherte, dass die „faktisch genutzten Ländereien“ (земли фактического пользования) – ein für Nomaden überaus dehnbarer Begriff – ganz in der Verfügung ihrer Gemeinschaften verbleiben sollten.

⁶⁸ *Dekrety Sovetskoi Vlasti*, 22.7.1919, V, 399. Vgl. dazu die *Deklaration der Rechte der Völker Rußlands* (Декларация прав народов России), *Ibid.*, 2.(15.)11.1917, I, 39–41. *Kis-torii obrazovanija*, 31.

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