THE TRIBES OF QARĀCA DĀĞ

A BRIEF HISTORY

by

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In the wake of the Ğaznavid and Selcuqid invasions, at the beginning of the eleventh century, numerous Ğuz Turkic tribes poured into the vast, mountainous heartland of the Middle East. These tribes from the very start played a dynamic role in the political life of the regions in which they settled. Nowhere has this been more evident than in Persia: since their arrival, they have provided that country with most of its ruling dynasties (i.e., the Ğaznavids, the Selcuqids, the Āṭābegs, the Ilxānid, the Calâ’irids, the Timurids, the Qarâ Qoyūnlūs, the Āq Qoyūnlūs, the Şafavids, the Afšârs and the Qācârs) as well as the core of its army.

On the other hand, the newcomers were a restive and unruly lot, with an insatiable appetite for loot. Although they were peerless soldiers, they also fought among themselves, raided villages and towns, plundered caravans, and, at times, conspired against the ruling tribe. The stronger rulers (e.g., Şâh Esmâ‘îl, Şâh ʿAbbâs I, Nâder Şâh) usually managed to keep the peace by disbanding the most recalcitrant tribes and scattering the various clans to remote corners of the realm, or yet by killing, maiming or imprisoning the most intractable chieftains.

But these measures, harsh as they sometimes were, did not solve the over-all problem of tribal unrest, for they did not affect the tribal system per se. The role of the xân (or chief) in the Turkic tribes has been compared to that of the captain of a ship in a storm-tossed sea, the fate of whose crew hinges upon his every whim and decision. In the absence of a formal administrative machinery, the Turkic xân authority over his tribesmen is indeed absolute, but the analogy is unduly dramatic inas-

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much as it implies that incompetent leadership, as at sea, might bring death to all concerned.

Among the Turkic nomads "tribe" is a political rather than an ethnic concept. A "tribe" is a group of families, or clans, whose only bond is their pledge of allegiance to a common chief. Traditionally, the chief's job was to make war (i.e., to get booty), and protect his tribesmen from other tribes whose leaders were similarly inclined. As a rule, there was a direct correlation between the military prowess of a chief and the size of his following. Whereas a chief of outstanding ability (e.g., Nāder Šāh, Āqā Mohammed Šāh) could found an empire, the emergence of a mediocre chief generally acted as a centrifugal force, the discontented tribesmen attaching themselves to better-led tribes. When a tribe was dispersed, or its chief removed, the nomads simply gravitated towards the strongest leader, or candidate for that position, available, regardless of his tribal or ethnic affiliations—and their day-to-day existence remained substantially unchanged. Thus, while individual tribes tended to be ephemeral, the tribal system itself displayed great resilience.

In an endeavor to establish deeper bonds than those of political opportunity between his tribes and his dynasty, and to rally his followers against the Sunnite Ottoman Turks, Esmā'īl Šāh Šafavī forced all the Šāhseven ("Šāh-loving") tribes to espouse the Šī'ī faith. This policy succeeded in creating a permanent rift between the Turks of Persia and the Turks of Asia Minor (a gap which is still very much in evidence and which accounts to the almost total absence of Pan-Turkic feeling in Azerbāyçān), but there is no indication that it insured a greater degree of allegiance for the ruler. When the commanding personalities of the early Ṣafavīds had passed from the scene and weaker monarchs had taken their place, unrest again became rife.

The Qācārs continued the Ṣafavīd practice of rewarding faithful tribal leaders with provincial governorships and other high offices in the administration and army. They also introduced a system whereby the chiefs of the tribes were appointed, or at least confirmed by the Šāh.

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1 In Turkic tribes any male member of the ruling family is, as a rule, eligible for the succession. This system has the advantage of enabling the strongest person in the tribal dynasty to establish himself in power. But it has the disadvantage of being too vague. As a result the demise of a chief usually ushers in a period of turmoil, as the different contenders for the position endeavor to gain control of each other's followers. Such a struggle for power following the death of Aḥmad Xān-e-Bozorgī in A.H. 1275 (1858/1859) so weakened the once mighty Bahārlū tribe of Fārs that it had to abandon its nomadic way of life.

This gave the Central Government a measure of control over the selection of the chiefs, and made the chiefs themselves personally responsible for the good behavior of their tribes. But these measures were effective only when rigorously enforced by a strong ruler (which was seldom the case under the Qācārs), and there is no indication that the acquisition of an official status encouraged the xāns to develop a sense of national responsibility.

On the contrary, it is in Qācār times that tribal unrest reached its zenith. As Persia suffered defeat after defeat in the nineteenth century, the flow of spoils dwindled rapidly, with the result that the tribesmen lost their most lucrative (and only legal) source of loot. As a consequence, banditry became ever more prevalent—especially during the reigns of Mozaffareddin Šāh, Mohammed ‘Alī Šāh and Aḥmed Šāh, when the Qācār dynasty was in full decay. The ambitious tribal leader now had to build his reputation solely on his exploits as a highwayman. (The revolutionary struggles of 1906-1911, however, momentarily lent some legality to this profession.)

The long-festering anarchy—the age when "every rifle was a scepter and every rifleman a shah"—came to an abrupt end with the rise of Režā Šāh. Režā Šāh tried to implant in the minds of all the nomads in his country the seed of nationalism by compelling them to speak the Persian language, serve in his predominantly non-tribal army and wear clothes indistinguishable from those of other Iranians. When this scheme, instead of arousing the hoped-for national consciousness, caused widespread revolts, the Šāh pounded the nomads into submission with machine guns, armored cars and air planes, and then set out to transform them into peasants by the simple device of cutting off their migration routes.

But with his compulsory settlement policy Režā Šāh was merely accelerating a process which was already well under way, and which had done much to undermine the tribal system. At times this tendency of the nomads to adopt a sedentary way of life had been encouraged by chiefs who, in an endeavor to increase their wealth (there being a limit to the number of sheep and goats which any particular tribe can handle), had branched out into agriculture, or by chiefs who had established local dynasties, such as the Bayāts of Makū, the Donbolis of Xoy, the Moqaddams of Marāgeh and the Afsārs of Ürmiyah, and who, for reasons of security, had thought it advisable to have their fighting men remain the year round near their capitals. It had also been brought about by necessity, the tribesmen who had lost their flocks through wars or natural disasters being forced to eke out a living from the soil. Sedentarization
had been especially prevalent in Azerbâycân, where the land is relatively fertile and the winters too harsh for tent dwelling. In recent years many tribesmen have also moved to the cities and towns, attracted by the prospect of employment in factories and public works projects.

The last few remaining nomadic Turkic tribes in Azerbâycân are to be found in the districts of Qarâca Dâg, Meşgin and Ardabil, in the north-east corner of the province, and on the eastern shores of Lake Urmiyah.

A. Description and History of the Tribes of Qarâca Dâg Until the Persian Revolution of 1906

Qarâca Dâg, or Qarâ Dâg (in Turkic: “Black Mountain”), which is now officially called Araspârân, is a large, mountainous area stretching from the Qošah Dâg massif, south of Ahar, to the Aras (Araxes) river. In this area there are six Turkic-speaking tribes (ilâ): the ÎI-e-Çalabiyânlu, the ÎI-e-Moḥammed Xânlû, the ÎI-e-Ḥoseynaklû, the ÎI-e-Ḥâcci ‘Alîlû, the ÎI-e-Ḥasan Beyglû and the ÎI-e-Qarâ Čorlû. The Moḥammed Xânlûs, the Ḥoseynaklûs and the Ḥasan Beyglûs are now largely sedentary. The nomadic components of these tribes cover a distance of between ten and thirty kilometres on their migrations. The Çalabiyânlu, the Ḥâcci ‘Alilûs and the Qarâ Čorlûs, on the other hand, are, for the most part, still nomadic, and cover a distance of between thirty and seventy-five kilometres on their migrations.

Samuel Graham Wilson, who served as a missionary in Tabriz between 1880 and 1894, is one of the few persons from the West ever to have traveled into the hinterland of Qarâca Dâg. In his book, Persian Life and Customs (New York 1895), he makes the following remarks concerning the Turkic tribes of the region (p. 134):

Some of the nomads live in the villages during the winter. As soon as spring opens they leave the plains, carrying everything of value with them, and their houses become deserted and dismantled, not even a watchman remaining on the site. Some of their villages have cultivated fields around them, and a few men remain to garner the crops. A few plow arable land on the mountains, sow the seed, and return to reap in the following year. They are in a feudal state, the clans being subject to the khan or chief, who is their protector from injury and their leader in war. Their dependence on the shah is slight. They send an annual revenue to the government, and furnish their quota of soldiers in time of war. This semi-independence enables them to oppress all within their reach. Not infrequently we passed their encampments. Their black or brown tents, of homespun woolen cloth, were grouped on the hillsides. Sometimes they were surrounded with reed curtains. Their wealth consists of their flocks and herds, which, with their products, are exchanged in the towns for their necessities. They are not particular how they add to their flocks. The villages around Muzhumbar [Meṣğ ‘Anbâr] had been complaining of their cattle having been stolen. We saw the thieves driving away the
cattle on the hilltops above us. Knowing the bad reputation of these nomads, we always passed their tents with some solicitude.

When the author traveled in Qarāca Dāğ in the summer of 1960, he found that the situation there had not substantially altered since Wilson's visit. The tents of the nomads in Āzerbāycān are very different from the black, goat hair tents of the Turkic tribes of southern Iran: they are circular and white. The frame consists of curved poles (the poorer nomads use branches) stuck at regular intervals into a loop-like, wooden center piece called the "star", which, when uncovered, serves as a chimney. The larger tents have up to twenty-six "windows", or areas between poles, hence twenty-six poles. When the frame has been set up, the "star" is about six feet from the ground. If the ground is soft, the "star" is anchored to a stake which is hammered into the ground. If the ground is hard, it is anchored to a large bag full of earth or rocks. Felt-like mats of wool are then tossed over the frame. When new, these are white. When old they are grey due to the smoke from the fires. In the tent rugs
are laid on the floor and bundles containing clothes and supplies are placed along the sides. Quilts and cushions are then piled on top of the rugs for the nomads to sit on. Four or five colorfully embroidered strips of cloth are wound around the poles near the door-flap. The furniture in the tent consists solely of the ubiquitous samovar.

Even the largest of the tents can be erected or dismantled in less than an hour. The richer nomads (mostly the chiefs and their relatives) use camels to transport their tents, each tent constituting no more than one camel-load. The poorer nomads use cattle (cows, buffaloes, etc.). A good camel is worth about 500 dollars, and is, therefore, a luxury. But its longevity (average life span: 25 years) and its strength (a camel can comfortably carry a load of 200 kilograms) make it invaluable to the nomads, especially those with long migrations. Some of the Şâhsevens of Meşgin and Ardabil now use trucks on their migrations.

The nomads of Qarâca Dâğ spend only about three or four months a year in their summer quarters (where, as a rule, they rent the pastures). They spend some six months in their winter quarters (where they dwell in houses), and the remaining two or three months in roundabout, leisurely migrations. The chiefs usually possess all the land and villages in the winter quarters. They are wealthy latifundisti who sell the produce of their lands (mostly wheat) in Ahar, Meşginşahr, Ardabil, Tabriz and other market places, and often own houses in these cities.

The Turkic influx into Azerbaycan in Selcukid times was so considerable that the autochthonous Iranian population, as well as many of the Kurdish tribes, became Turkophone. Five of the Qarâca Dâğ tribes are of Kurdish origin. Although once professing the Sunni faith, they are now Shi'ites.

1. The Čalabiyanlû Tribe
   a. Description of the İl-e-Čalabiyanlû ¹

According to the Iranian Army Files (Tabriz) ², the İl-e-Čalabiyanlû comprises 1,874 households ³. Its summer quarters are around Hûrmagân (dehestân of Kalîbar), half-way between Ahar and the Aras river; its winter quarters are around Xânbâğî (dehestân of Garmâdûz), some 40

¹ The tribe is sometimes also called “Çalîpânlû”.
² The Iranian Army Files of Tabriz consist of a series of lists of indeterminate vintage and, sometimes, of questionable accuracy. But they constitute the only body of knowledge on the Qarâca Dâğîs and other tribes of eastern Azerbaycan gathered in recent years.
³ One household (xânevar) = usually about 5 persons. European writers have often freely translated the word as “tent” or “family”.
kilometres NE of Kalîbar. The ra’îs (chief) of the Čalabiyañlûs is Ḥâcci ‘Ali Qoli Karîmî.

The Čalabiyañlûs are divided into the following 65 clans, or tirehs (the number of households being in parentheses):

Xânbâğı (the ruling clan; 40), Sârî Beyglû (18), Ālverdi Üsâqi (46), Baxš ‘Alîlar (22), Maḥmûd ‘Alîlîlû (60), Âhmadlû (28), Kadxoðalû (23), Qoli Beyglû (34), Ḥasratân (70), Ḥoseyn ‘Alî Kadxoðalû (31), Şâh Valîlî (8), Darz Valîlî (11), Ḥâcci ‘Âtâlı (40), Kâgli Küzlû (18), Čât Qayeh (5), Pir Âhmadlû (6), Āb Dowlân (also pronounced Āb Dilân; 45), Ca’far Qoli Üsâqi (28), Qara Dağlı (30), Şarafah (20), Emrâhli (4), Moḥammad Şâlîlî (17), Qara Göl (20), Orû Pâşân (50), Gün Görmez (20), Bâqir Owgli (20), Qârlûcah (50), Köhöl Cîq (10), Aṣlân Beyglû (15), Şexemlu (120), Ülû Qeslîq (36), Şeyxler (34), Pîrânîlî (4), Şâh Geldî (5), Dürmûsh Kânîlû (45), Gûy Ağac (19), Serâmlû (30), Farhâdî (22), Yel Derehîs (16), Xânehgîh (35), Gediklî (12), Qîzîl Yol (38), Genânîlû (17), Ýydehçî (32), Qara Atîl (37), Davdân (29), Lahlîlî (11), ‘Âtâlı (18), Ḥoseyn ‘Alî Beyglû (21), Şâh Bodâgîl (21), ‘Alî Pâsâlû (16), Qotîlîr (16), Āg Dâmlîr (3), Şocâ’ Xânîlû (22), Ḥasibânîlû (5), Qoli Beyglû (94), Qayeh Bâšî (115), Qara Pîçânîlû (23), Fath ‘Alî Solţânîlû (45), Bâli Beyglû (29), Esbahâr Soflî (also pronounced Isbahâr Soflî; 8), Esbahâr ‘Olyyâ (also pronounced Isbahâr ‘Olyyâ; 25), Dâş Qayeh Bâšî (16), Bastâmlî (45), ‘Alî Xânîlû (21).

According to Razmârâ 2, in winter the Čalabiyañlûs dwell in the following villages (the number of individuals, when indicated, is in parentheses):


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1 This list is from the Iranian Army Files (Tabrîz), but the pronunciation was checked with Ḥâcci ‘Alî Qoli Karîmî and Moḥammed Keyvânî (of the Xânbâğı tireh) at Ahar (August 20, 1960).

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Farhâdlû (142), Qešlâq-e-Qarâ Pâčânlû (38), Qešlâq-e-Qarâ Dâglû (310), Qešlâq-e-Qarâ Qâbâglû, Qešlâq-e-Qoli Beyglû (136), Qešlâq-e-Qayeh Bâšî (627), Qešlâq-e-Qayeh Dâš Bâšî (107), Qešlâq-e-Kâglû Gozallû, Qešlâq-e-Gûn Görmez (183), Qešlâq-e-Gencehûlû (491), Qešlâq-e-Moheb ‘Alilû (36), Qešlâq-e-Mohemed Şâlehlû (75), Qešlâq-e-Moqaddam Üzbek (310), Qešlâq-e-Moqaddam Tiyül (352), Qürtlûceh.

Dehestân of Ahar: Xân Vali, Xalafiyân.

In summer the population of the following villages in the dehestân of Garmâdûz comprises some Čalabîyânûs: Xânbâği, Şâri Xânlû-ye-Yâğ Bastelü, Şâh Bodâglû.

Finally, the village of Qešlâq-e-Hasan ‘Ali Kadxodâlû, in the dehestân of Garmâdûz, contains 221 Čalabîyânûs.

b. History of the Il-e-Čalabîyânû until the Persian Revolution of 1906

According to tribal legend, the bulk of the Čalabîyânûs are of Kurdish origin, and, long ago (some say in the time of Esma‘îl Şah), made their way to Qarâca Dâg from eastern Anatolia, via Soldûz (where a group of them by the name of Xânevâdeh-ye-Čalâbîhâ are said still to exist in the vicinity of Naqadeh). In Qarâca Dâg the Čalabîyânûs gradually came to speak Turkic, and, in time, they were joined by a group of Persian-speaking nomads from Qazvin and Zencân, who, because of their ignorance of Turkic, were nicknamed “Dil Bilmex” (“Those who do not know the language”). But these apparently also learned to speak Turkic, for today all the Čalabîyânûs speak that language.

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The Čalabîyânûs were long among the most intractable of the nomads of Qarâca Dâg. In A.H. 1225 (1810/1811), they rebelled and crossed the Aras into Qarâ Bâg. But Pir Qolî Xân Qâcâr, whose task it was “to defend the frontier of Mughan”, was ordered to subdue them. The Čalabîyânûs, together with the Yûsefânûs (another restive tribe), were then obliged to return to Qarâca Dâg.

During the latter part of the reign of Naşereddin Şâh, the most notorious bandit in Qarâca Dâg was Raḥîm Xân, the chief of the Čalabîyânûs. S. G. Wilson and his party traversed his camp with some trepidation while travelling in the sub-province:

During the last days of our journey we had to pass through the camp of Rohim Khan [Raḥîm Xân], who, with several thousands of his clan, had pitched his

1 Sir Harford Jones Brydges, The Dynasty of the Kajars, pp. 424-425. (The MS was written by ‘Abdurrazzaq ebn Nacaf Qolî Xân Dönbölî); also Sepehr, Nâsax-ut-Tavârix: Doure-ye-Kâmel-e-Târix-e-Qâcâriyeh, Part I, p. 117.
tents on the bank of the Kaleibar [Kalibar] River. Probably every man, woman, and child among them is a thief. We passed unmolested through the encampment, but just as we had turned out of sight of the last tents a horseman galloped up unobserved from behind and cried, 'Halt! The khan demands your presence.' We remonstrated, and the fellow said, 'You must either knock me down or come.' To have attacked him would only have brought up his comrades, so we parleyed, trying to impress him with our rights and dignity as foreigners, but with small effect. He demanded that I alight from my horse, and, reinforced by some shepherds, he proceeded to put his demand into effect, and in a short time had me on the ground. I held on to the bridle until one of his aids drew his sword, when he assumed undisputed possession. Mounting, he galloped off; but the horse, stiff with a month on the mountains, did not go to suit his fancy, so he returned it soon, and we managed to strike a bargain with him, and, losers by some krans, were allowed to proceed on our way (Persian Life and Customs, pp. 136-137).

Wilson tells us that the Governor of Qarāca Dāg at that time

... was a prince, but in dealing with these chiefs of the tribes he was comparatively powerless. His court was full of petitioners, appealing from their oppressors. The executioner who served him, with his companions, had been waylaid a few days before, and after a musketry skirmish had been stripped of all his possessions. The roads had been so unsafe that the revenue of the province could not be forwarded to the treasury; some of it had been sent concealed in a charcoal caravan. One reason for the insecurity of the roads was that the governor of Azerbaijan [Āzerbāycân] had compounded with the thieves and let them go free on their giving him part of the stolen goods. They immediately returned to plunder other victims (Persian Life and Customs, p. 137).

But the tribal chiefs went too far. In Wilson's words, "Shortly after this time the chiefs of the tribes drove out the governor [of Qarāca Dāg], and the crown prince \(^1\) led an army against them and punished them and their chiefs, shooting some from the cannon's mouth, imprisoning and fining others. Since then Karadagh has been more quiet and safe" (Persian Life and Customs, p. 137). Raḥīm Xān, however, weathered this storm, and, as we shall see, came to play a role of considerable importance in Āzerbāycân during the constitutional crises.

According to Lady Sheil, in 1849 the Čalabiyānlūs comprised "1,500 tents and houses" \(^2\).

2. The Moḥhammed Xānlū Tribe

a. Description of the Īl-e-Moḥhammed Xānlū

According to the Iranian Army Files (Tabriz), the Īl-e-Moḥhammed Xānlū comprises 1,136 households. Its summer quarters are around

\(^1\) It was a practice of the Qācār rulers to send the crown prince, or heir apparent, to Tabriz, as Viceroy of Āzerbāycân, a largely ceremonial office.

\(^2\) Lady Mary Leonora Sheil, Glimpses of Life and Manners in Persia, London 1856, p. 396. Lady Sheil points out that her list of the tribes of Persia was "derived from a variety of sources", but she warns her readers that "as these sources [were] entirely Persian, there are, no doubt, many errors". This list is, nevertheless, an important and unique document, for we do not possess any other tribal lists from the same period.
Marz Rüd (dehestân of Mîshê Pâreh), some 20 kilometres south of Kalîbar; its winter quarters are around Ḥaydar Kânî (dehestân of Mencevân), near the Aras river. The raʻîs of the Ḥaydar Kânîs is Asadollah-e-Moḥammed Xânî.

The Moḥammed Xânîs are divided into the following 23 tirehs (the number of households being in parentheses):

Ḥaydar Kânî (the ruling clan; 60), Şafarlû (55), Tû ‘Ali Soflî (50), Cânânlû (60), Zarınaq (35), Xomârlû (60), Zonbalân (60), Hemîdân Kerişân (80), Tû ‘Ali ‘Oliyâ (35), Şocâ’îlû va Mafrodlû (80), Kûrâzaq (16), Derîlû (40), Sîtan va Masedîlû (120), Ṭalân Dereh (70), Bâydiq (30), Lütéhcân (50), Sîqeḥ Sây (50), Gavâhîn (50), Kârânîlû (40), Ebriq (25), Ham Neşîn (25), Maşhâdi Ḥasanlû (25), Şâh Yûrî (20).

According to Asadollah-e-Moḥammed Xânîlû, the population of the following villages contains Moḥammed Xânîlûs:


Dehestân of Mencevân: Aḩmadlû, İlân Keş (Razmârâ: İlân Koş), Bâbâ’ilû, Behrûz, Pîrêh Beyg (?), Tâţîh Kend, Ḫeyrân-e-Soflă, Ḫeyrân-e-‘Oliyâ, Dârâţî, Dâs Ārâsi, Dâş Bâšî, Dereh Çiq, Sârî Celû, Şeyx Ḫoseynlû, ‘Abaśâbâd, Qâqâlû, Qârâ Tekânlû, Qârâ Towprâq, Qârâ Qowč, Kâverân (Razmârâ: Kârevân), Keşîş Qeşlâq, Gandûm Nân, Maḩmûd Kâşî, Vinaq, Hûmân (Razmârâ: Homân), Yûseflû.

Dehestân of Mîshê Pâreh: Uskûlû, Āgüyeh, Barzand (Razmârâ: Barzandiq), Tâţîh Kend, Cend, Čari (Razmârâ: Čariq), Şîrnamaq (Razmârâ: Şernaq, or Şarîq), Seheq, ‘Aliâbâd, Qârâ Güney, Kârdecîn (Razmârâ: Kârdêzn), Garm Náb, Maḩmûdâbâd, Marz Rüd, Makîdî, Ḫecrân Dust, Hîcaq (Razmârâ: Heceh), Yengî Qeşlâq.

Dehestân of Kalîbar: Bâlâ Sang, Mowlûd, Nocwçeh Deh.


The Moḥammed Xânîlûs claim that they are of Kurdish origin, and that the tribe was founded by one Moḥammed Xân in the Qâcâr period. Beyond this, little is known concerning the history of this group. According to the Iranian Army Files (Tabriz), Cavâd Xân, Şamad Xân, Asad-

1 This list is from the Iranian Army Files (Tabriz), but the pronunciation was checked with Asadollah-e-Moḥammed Xânîlû at Kalîbar (August 28, 1960).
ollah Xân, ‘Abdollah Xân and Asadollah Xân II ruled successively after Moḥammed Xân (Asadollah Xân II being the incumbent).

3. The Ḥoseynaklū Tribe

a. Description of the Il-e-Ḥoseynaklū

According to the Iranian Army Files (Tabrīz), the Il-e-Ḥoseynaklū comprises 1,500 households. Its summer quarters are around Hašt Sar (dehestân of Vargāhān), NE of Ahar; its winter quarters are around Kam Čübeh (dehestân of Yāft), to the north of the dehestân of Vargahān. The ra‘is of the Ḥoseynaklūs is Ḥoseyn Noṣratī.

The Ḥoseynaklūs are divided into the following 11 tirehs (the number of households being in parentheses):

‘Amaleh-ye-Farox Xân ¹ (the ruling clan; 871), Macid Beyglū (220), Amir Xānlū (153), Navāsar (60), Moẓaffarlū (50), Kūrlānī (40), Nūrūlū (32), Āqā Caʿfarlū (20), Nāder Xānlū (20), Şalāhlū (17), ‘Aṣīlū (15). ²

According to Razmārā ³, the population of the following villages contains Ḥoseynaklūs:

Dehestân of Vargāhān: Xorveh Qešlāq, Dāš Qāpī (also called Dāš Qāplū), Dūstūr, Qal‘eh Bāšī, Vecānī, Vargāhān.

Dehestân of Yāft: Belān, Čerčerū (also called Čercher), Čerčalū, Delqānāb, Dīk Daraq, Zāviyeh, Qarā Āgālū, Qešlāq-e-Zāviyeh, Qūānlū, Korah Nāb, Gerdeh Gol, Gombarān, Gan Čübeh (now called Kam Čübeh) ⁴, Gavlān, Leqalān, Meşqalān, Mašīrān, Mollā Ḥūnī, Molkās, Mizān Āb, Naqdi, Navāsar, Harasbān (also called Harāsbān), Helān.

Dehestân of Dīkleh: Sangar Āb.

According to Ḥoseyn Noṣratī, a clan of the Ḥoseynaklūs by the name of Mursellū ⁵ has left the main body of the tribe and crossed the Sabalān

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¹ The word ‘amaleh (which is of Arabic origin) usually means “worker”, or “laborer”. But among the Turkic tribes of Iran it usually refers to the servants and retinue of a leader.

² This list is from the Iranian Army Files (Tabrīz), but the pronunciation was checked with Ḥoseyn Noṣratī at Aq Bāyer, Arşaq (August 25, 1960).

³ Farhang. There is a village by the name of Čupānlār-e-Ḥoseynaklū a few kilometres north of Ahar (p. 162) and a village by the name of Maşhadī Ḥoseynaklū in the dehestân of Menceevān (p. 498).

⁴ It is to the west of this village that the mysterious Qal‘e-ye-Qahqāh, in which Śāh Esmā‘īl II was incarcerated for some twenty years, is to be found. Hammer-Purgstall confused this fortress with the Alamāt, Malcolm and Seddon located it in Şula, Herbert placed it near Tabrīz and Don Juan between Tabrīz and Qazvin (see C. N. Seddon, Aḥsanat-Tawārikh, Vol. II, p. 293). The author visited it in August 1960 and found it in ruins. However, the admirable stonework is still much in evidence. Only one inscription, the word ʿallār graces the few remaining walls.

⁵ This name might be derived from the Arabic word mursal (in Turkic, mürsel): “prophet”, “apostle”.
range. It has its summer quarters on the slopes of the Üç Tepeh and Sâromsâxlû mountains, in the Bozgûş range, between Sar Āb and Miyâneh, and its winter quarters near Miyâneh. Ḥoseyn Noṣratî now regards this group as a Sâhseven clan.

b. History of the Il-e-Ḥoseynklû until the Persian Revolution of 1906

The Ḥoseynklûs claim to be of Kurdish origin. Beyond this, little is known concerning their history. The Iranian Army Files (Tabrîz) merely inform us that until recently, the tribe was ruled by four brothers, Moṣṭafâ Beg (whose title was Noṣratolmolk), Ebbrâhim Beg, Loṭf Āli Beg, and Āqâ Bâbâ Beg.

4. The Ḥâcci Ālîlû Tribe

a. Description of the Il-e-Ḥâcci Ālîlû

According to the Iranian Army Files (Tabriz), the Il-e-Ḥâcci Ālîlû comprises 985 households. Its summer quarters are around Mešg ‘Anbar (dehestân of Üzümdel), some 15 kilometres SW of Varzaqân; its winter quarters are in the Kûh-e-Barzaki, a massif in the north of the dehestân of Garmadûz. The ra'îs of the Ḥâcci Ālîlûs is Noṣratollah-e-Ḥâcci Ālîlû Mašhûr, whose palace is at Āb Xâreh, 10 kilometres north of Varzaqân.

The Ḥâcci Ālîlûs are divided into the following 13 tîrehs (the number of households being in parentheses):

Qarâ Xânîlû (the ruling clan; 214), Tarâkemeh (150), Yâţ Baselî (comprising two sections: Mîr Aḩmajdîlû and Şûme'eh; 125), Moqaddam (comprising two sections: Qarî Gûney and Tûvîl; 90), Özbek Moqaddam (90), Gencehîlû (60), Qarâ Bâglû (50), Çaxerîlû (45), Madadîlû (45), Pîr ‘Alîlû (45), Zeyn Beyglû (35), Kengerîlû (25), Qarâ Dâglû (11).²

According to Razmârâ (Farhang), in summer there are Ḥâcci Ālîlûs in the following villages:


In the winter there are Ḥâcci Ālîlûs in the following villages:

Dehestân of Keyvân: Xodâ Aferîn.

¹ See also Razmârâ, Farhang, p. 515. Tribes (or clans) by the name of Qûrtlûr and Xodâverdîlû spend the summers in the same area.
² This list is from the Iranian Army Files (Tabriz), but the pronunciation was checked with Noṣratollah-e-Ḥâcci Ālîlû Mašhûr at Āb Xâreh (August 22, 1960).
To the east and north-east of Ahar: Qară Yāşmāx, Qešlāq-e-Čennāb, Qešlāq-e-Xiyālū, Qešlāq-e-Sārī Sulī, Qešlāq-e-Sārīlār, Qešlāq-e-Şeyx.

Some Ḥācī ‘Alīlū live in the following villages, apparently the year round:

Dehestān of Üzümdel: Xaliffeh Anšār, Şexemlū.
To the east of Ahar: Zakleq Kūr Bolāḡ, Soṭṭū, Qešlāq-e-Karamlū.
Finally, there are Yāḡ Bastelūs in Kāsīn, in the dehestān of Üzümdel. ¹


According to Noşratollah-e-Ḥācī ‘Alīlū, the Gencehlū (whose name comes from Genceh, in Transcaucasia), the Qară Bāḡlūs (whose name comes from Qară Bāḡ, a region between the Kūr and Aras rivers) and the Čäxerlūs lived north of the Aras river until the Treaty of Turkomančay (1828) deprived Persia of the provinces of Yerevān (Erivan) and Naxcevān. At that time ‘Abbās Mīrzā, the Crown Prince, who valued the fighting ability of the Turkic tribesmen, encouraged several Turkic tribes which dwelled in the ceded provinces to settle down south of the Aras, offering them fertile lands and lush pastures. The Gencehlūs, the Qară Bāḡlūs and the Čäxerlūs ², the author was told, were among these.

In any case, there is reason to believe that the Kengerlūs immigrated to Persia in this fashion. In Šafavīd times this tribe, or one of its branches, was affiliated to the Ustāclū tribe ³. The Ustāclūs, who had come from Anatolia ⁴, were one of the major Šāhseven tribes, and vestiges of them might still be found in Anatolia and in the vicinity of Kuba, in Soviet ʿAzerbāyjān ⁵. During the early Qācār period there was a group of

¹ There is also a village by the name of Yāḡ Bastelū, 2 kilometres north of Ahar, as well as a village by the name of Qešlāq-e-Moqaddam Özbek, a village by the name of Qešlāq-e-Moqaddam Tīyūl, a village by the name of Qešlāq-e-Gencehlu and a village by the name of Qešlāq-e-Çäxerlū in the dehestān of Garmādūz (Razmārā, Farhang).
² There is a clan of the Qarapāpāq tribe (which also moved southward following the Treaty of Turkomančay) by the name of Çäxerlū. A Çäxerlū (var.: Çâgërū, Çâgërû) tribe existed in Xwārazm in Gaznavid times. Z. V. Togan believes that those who migrated to ʿAzerbāyjān came with the Kipčaks (“Azerbaijan Etnografisinin Dair II”, Azerbaycan Yurt Bilgişi, Year 2, fasc. 15, March 1933, p. 103). Their name might be connected with that of the Turkoman Governor of Ardabīl and the Moḡān, Soṭṭān ‘Alī Beg Čākārū, one of the early opponents of Esmāʿīl Xān Šaftāvī.
⁵ Moḥammad Ḥasan Vālī Bahārīlū, ʿAzerbāyjan Coğrafi, tabii, etnoğrafi ve iktisadi müllaḥadə, Baku 1921, pp. 61-96.
Kengerlūs in the neighborhood of Yerevān. In 1803 the Kengerlūs of Yerevān were moved towards Kars by the pro-Russian Governor of Yerevān, Moḥammad Xān Qācār, along with a group of Qācārs. But shortly thereafter ‘Abbās Mīrżā subdued the refractory governor and forced the exiled tribes to return to Yerevān. These Kengerlūs are mentioned in Jouannin’s list of the Turkic tribes of Persia (circa 1809). “The Kengerlūs”, he wrote, “constitute a small tribe established in Persian Armenia, on the banks of the Aras river, and number upwards to four or five thousand persons”.

The name Kengerlū, or Kenger, is very ancient. Togan connects it with that of the Kenker tribe which was dominant in Turkestan some two millennia ago, and was mentioned as Kenker As in the Orhan inscriptions. He further suggests that the Kengerlūs of north-western Persia came thither with the Pečenegs, and therefore prior to the Selcuqid invasions (Togan, Azerbāycan Etnoqrafiisine dair II, p. 102). There was a Kenker dynasty in Tārom in the tenth century A.D. (it was also called Āl-e-Sālār). During the Šafavid and Qācār periods the Kengerlūs produced several governors. One of these, Moṣṭafā Beg Kengerlū, who was Governor of Tūn and Tabbas, fought heroically against the Üzbek in 1592 with only a handful of horsemen (who were mostly Ustāclūs). Another one, Maqṣūd Sołṭān Kengerlū, was appointed Governor of Naxcevān in 1604 (Chah ‘Abbās I, p. 131). A third, Kalb ‘Alī Xān Kengerlū, was also appointed Governor of Naxcevān (1803), and distinguished himself as one of ‘Abbās Mīrżā’s trusted lieutenants on the Russian front (Brydges, The Dynasty of the Kajars, pp. 209, 253, 255).

According to Togan, the Kengerlū tribe was one of the tribes which fought the Russian armies with the most ardor, and when Persia lost her territories to the north of the Aras river, they headed south to remain under Persian jurisdiction.

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2 Joseph Marie Jouannin’s list of the Turkic tribes of Persia, in Adrien Dupré’s Voyage en Perse, fait dans les années 1807, 1808 et 1809, Paris 1819, Vol. II. Jouannin was chief interpreter of the French legation in Persia. His list is important inasmuch as it is the document which best depicts the tribal situation in Persia at the beginning of the nineteenth century.
4 Togan, “Azerbāycan”, İslâm Ansiklopedisi, fasc. 12, pp. 115-116. Today their summer quarters are in Yahar Yūrūd, near Meşg ‘Anbar, and their winter quarters are in Hasan Qešlāqī, in the Barzakī mountains.

There are other groups of Kengerlūs in Persia and Russia. Bahārlū informs us that there are Kengerlūs in Gökçe and Kubā, and especially in Šūsā and Jevasnīr (Azerbāycan etc., p. 61 ff). He also mentions a group which dwells in Selmās, to the north-west of Lake Urmīyah. The name of the village of Kengerlū, 25 kls.
The Moqaddams and the Moqaddam Özbekhs are offshoots of the Moqaddams of Marāgeh. According to legend they moved into Qarāca Dāğ about a hundred and fifty years ago.

According to Nosratollah-e-Ḥācci ‘Allīlū, the Qarā Xānlūs are of Afšār origin, and moved from Xorāsān to Azerbāycān in the time of Nāder Šāh. The origin of the Yāğ Bastelūs is still shrouded in mystery, but their chief claims that his clan once contained a section of Afšārs. This section comprised some one hundred households and it was called Qirqlū (which is the name of one of the major divisions of the Afšār tribe). These Qirqlūs, however, have become sedentary and live in the village of Lecen, dehestān of Üzümdel.

The Tarākemehs (whose name means “Turkomans” in Arabic) undoubtedly also came from Xorāsān.

Nothing is known concerning the origin of the Madadlūs, the Pir ‘Allīlū, the Zeyn Beyglūs and the Qarā Dāglūs. The name Qarā Dāglū has long been used as a collective name for all the tribes of Qarā Dāğ, irrespective of their origin. So it does not give us any hint as to the provenance of the above-mentioned Qarā Dāglūs.

According to the Iranian Army Files (Tabrīz), the chief of the Ḥācci ‘Allīlū tribe some one hundred and thirty years ago was one Asadollah Xān, who lost nine sons while fighting for ‘Abbās Mīrzā. When the

north-east of Dīlmān (Šāpūr), is probably connected with these Kengerlūs. ‘Abdarrazzāq Donboli mentions a tribe by the name of Kengerlū-ye-Xoy (Brydges, The Dynasty of the Kajars, p. 253). According to Jouannin there were some one thousand Kengerlūs in the neighborhood of Qom (Dupré, Voyage en Perse, p. 460). This group was also mentioned by Shell (Glimpses of Life and Manners in Persia, p. 397) and by S. I. Bruk (The Ethnic Composition of the Countries of Western Asia, in Sovetskaya Etnografija, No. 2, 1955, trans. in Central Asian Review, Vol. IV, No. 4, 1956, pp. 417-420). The latter placed the tribe in the Qom and Verāmīn regions and estimated its population at 30,000 souls (a number which seems excessive). Finally, there are villages by the name of Kengerlū 9 kms. east of Bostānābād and 24 kms. north-east of Meşgīnshahr, in Azerbāycān.

1 The Moqaddam Özbek clan probably got its name from the village of Özbek 10 to 15 kms. NE of Marāgeh.

2 The last assertion should be taken with a grain of salt as Persian tribesmen tend to ascribe all past tribal movements to Šāh ‘Abbās I or Nāder Šāh, the only two names of former rulers with which they are familiar.

3 The name might be related to that of Yāğī Bastī, son of Amīr Čoban, the grand vezir of Abū Saʿīd, and an important Čobanid chief, who lived in the first half of the fourteenth century A.D. (Tarīkh-i Shaikh Uways, ed. J. B. Van Loon, The Hague 1954, pp. 168-172).

4 Personal interview, Āb Xārēh, August 22, 1960. The chief of the Yāğ Bastelūs told the author that the Qirqlūs settled down in Lecen “67 years ago”.

5 There is a Sāhseven tribe by that name.

6 There is a village by the name of Pir ‘Allīlū 22 kms. NE of Meşgīnshahr, and very close to the village of Kengerlū. A part of that clan might have settled there.
The Tribes of Qarāca Dāğ

Prince Royal decided to sue Russia for peace, Asadollah Xān is alleged to have protested vehemently and to have offered to sacrifice his last remaining sons in a renewed attempt to repulse the invaders.

Sām Xān Amīr-e-Aršad, who was the chief of the tribe in the time of Nāshereddin Šāh is mentioned in the yearbooks (sālnāmehā) of E’temād- os-Salṭaneh as the ra’īs of the road guards (qarasūrān) of Qarāca Dāğ.¹

According to Sheil, the Ḥācci ‘Alilū tribe comprised some 800 tents and houses in 1849 (Sheil, Glimpses, p. 396).

According to Noṣratollah-e-Ḥācci ‘Alilū, a part of the Ḥācci ‘Alilū tribe left Qarāca Dāğ many years ago and established itself in the neighborhood of Astarābād (Gorgān), while a second group made its way to the Marāgeh region.

The latter group spends the winters in villages on or near the eastern shores of Lake Urmiyeh, from Gogān (north-west of Azerāshahr), to the delta of the Cağatū river (now called the Zarrīneh Rūd). Its summer pastures are on the slopes of the Sahend range. It is divided into the following four clans: 1) Ināllū (comprising the following sections: Göycallū, Aqbaşlū or Aqbaşdī, Qarā Müşalū, and Rāhatlū, or İrāhattū), 2) Zargar, 3) Yağ Bastelī, and 4) Dùsmallū.²

The fact that the names of two of these clans (i.e., Ināllū and Zargar) are also to be found among the Şāhsevens of north-eastern Azerbāycān suggests that the tribe is a mixture of Ḥācci ‘Alilū and Şāhseven elements.

There are eighteen families of Muşellūs in the village of Tāpīk Dereh, and two more families of them at Yengeceh, some twenty klm. from Acab Šir, up the Qal’eh Čăy valley, in the district of Dīzāc Rūd. In the summer they set up camp on the nearby Torpāxlū Dāğ, in the Sahend range (the migration lasts five days).³ These Muşellūs might be related to the Qarā Müşalūs of the Ḥācci ‘Alilū tribe.⁴

5. The Ḥasan Beyglū Tribe
a. Description of the İl-e-Ḥasan Beyglū

According to the Iranian Army Files (Tabrīz), the İl-e-Ḥasan Beyglū comprises 1,608 households. Its summer quarters are in the central and southern parts of Ḥasanābād, and in the western part

² The author obtained this information from Ḥācci Akbar ʿAlī Necāt, one of the leaders of the tribe, at Kowxālī, on Lake Urmiyeh, on November 3, 1960.
³ The author obtained this information from the headman of Tāpīk Dereh, at Tāpīk Dereh, on November 3, 1960.
⁴ They might also be related to the Muşellūs of Sā’yen Qal’eh (Sāhin Dezh). The Muşellūs were one of the major Aq Qoyūnlū tribes. A branch of them migrated to Fārs many years ago; today it constitutes a clan of the Qaşqâ’i tribe of ʿAmaleh.
of the dehestân of Mişeh Pâreh (W and SW of Kalîbar); its winter quarters are in the northern part of the dehestân of Hasanâbad, in the northeastern part of the dehestân of Dişmâr, and in the south-western part of the dehestân of Mîncvân (near the Aras river and NW of Kalîbar). The ra'îs of the Hasan Beyglûs is Mîr Moștafâ Ahmâdî. The Hasan Beyglûs are divided into the following 50 tirehs (the number of households being in parentheses):

Hasan Beyglû (the ruling clan; 70), Āqā Mirîlî (23), Diş Gâdûk (35), Arażîn (55), Haddâdân (43), ‘Alî Bolâğî (35), Raštîn (20), Qoli Kendî (18), Kalâleh (50), Bâllûcê (35), Òûvîl (30), Rûzî (30), Sûngûn (40), Nabicân (21), Arpâlîq (50), Seyx Ahmôdîlî (50), Benêhdiq (30), Ganzrûd (30), Kalâsîr (40), Xarîl (60), Tûveh (15), Şâbûxânîh (40), Mâzgar (60), Bâlân (35), Vâyûn (90), Maşhadi Hasanlî (20), Teýmûr Beyglû (7), Pesyân (22), Âlá Cûcêh (22), Üzân (40), ‘Âseqlî (45), Bûyûdz (15), Ebrâhîm Samî (60), Karîm Xânîlî (10), Tâzhê Kend (12), Sâdeq Beyglû (35), Lômaq-e-Ärâménêh (35), Lômaq-e-Eslâm (30), Çûbehe Daraq (20), Karzrûd (15), Kârrân-e-Rahîm Xân (12), Kârrân-e-Moctahêdî (10), Dârânîq (20), Yûseflû (30), Alârîd (30), Qarâ Tekân (15), Zâqîk (8), Zarrin Rekâb (45), Kûlûlî (20), ‘Abbâsâbâd (25) 1.

Thirty-one more clans are now sedentary.


The Hasan Beyglûs claim to be of Kurdish origin. Beyond this, the author was not able to obtain any information as to their history.

6. The Qarâ Čorlu Tribe
a. Description of the Il-e-Qarâ Čorlu

According to the Iranian Army Files (Tabriz), the Il-e-Qarâ Čorlu comprises 543 households. Its summer quarters are in the Keçî Qrân region, to the south-east of Ahar; its winter quarters are in the Qowri Çay region, to the north of Ahar. The ra'îs of the Qarâ Čorlûs is Ḥâbib Eşkandari.

The Qarâ Čorlûs are divided into the following 11 tirehs (the number of households being in parentheses):

‘Amâleh (the ruling clan; 150), Keçêklû (81), Ât Mîyânîlî (75), Gârrûs-e-Bastâm (57), Gârrûs-e-Sang (55), Qûrçûlî (43), Şibelî (35), Bâyrâm Kânîlî (13), Keçêlânî (12), Qerî Leylî (12), Kôrlânî (10) 2.

1 This list is from the Iranian Army Files (Tabriz). All these clan names are from villages in which the tribesmen spend some time either in the summer or winter, and which are located in the above-mentioned dehestâns.

2 This list is from the Iranian Army Files (Tabriz), but the pronunciation was
b. History of the İl-e-Qarā Čorlū until the Persian Revolution of 1906

The Qarā Čorlūs are of Kurdish origin. They long enjoyed a reputation for bravery and intractability. In September 1726, they joined the Armenians of Avan Yüzbaşî in an ill-fated uprising against the Ottoman Turks, who had taken advantage of the weakened state of Persia under the Afghan yoke to invade its north-western provinces.

Until the Treaty of Turkomānčay the Qarā Čorlūs lived in Qarā Bāg. According to Jouannin, in 1809 they were “in Azerbâycân and in the province of Qarā Bāg, at the junction of the Aras and Kūr rivers”, and comprised some 12,000 individuals (Dupré, *Voyage en Perse*, p. 460). Amédée Jaubert, who visited Persia in 1805 and 1806, rated the İl-e-Qarā Čorlū among “the most important Turkic-speaking tribes” of Persia, and also located it in Qarā Bāg.

The Iranian Army Files (Tabriz) inform us that the founder of the present ruling dynasty of the Qarā Čorlū tribe was one Ca'far Qoli Xân Amir Tūmār, who lived a little over a century ago. His only son, Sorxây Xân, died before him, and he was succeeded by his grandson, Rahidel (?). Xân. In A.H. 1256 (1840/1841), the tribe was rewarded for its services to the Şâh by being exempt from paying taxes for a year. In A.H. 1285 (1868/1869), Rahidel Xân was promoted to the rank of sartîp (“brigadier general”), and, twenty years later, he was awarded two medals. During this period, the İl-e-Qarā Čorlū was the largest of the tribes of Qarāca Dāğ, numbering some 4,000 households. (According to Sheil, the tribe comprised some 2,500 tents and houses in 1849—Sheil, *Glimpses*, p. 396). But during the reign of Mozaifareddin Şâh (1896-1907), the Qarā Čorlūs became involved in a rebellion, as a result of which most of them were dispersed towards Miyândoāb, Marāgeh, Ardabil and Xalxāl.

There are other tribal groups in Iran by the name of Qarā Čorlū. Jouannin claimed that there “are many more [Qarā Čorlūs] in Xorāsân and other provinces” (Dupré, *Voyage en Perse*, p. 460). There is a small tribe of Qarā Čorlūs in Central Iran. It is mentioned by Sheil (*Glimpses*, p. 397) and Kayhān. According to Kayhān, it comprises some 120 tents, or households; its summer quarters are in the Alborz mountains.

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and its winter quarters are in the district of Xavār (Kayhān, Coğrāfiyā). The Ḍarā Čorlūs of Qūčān, to the north of Mašhad, participated in numerous rebellions in the first half of the eighteenth century.

B. HISTORY OF THE TRIBES OF QARĀCA DĀḠ
SINCE THE PERSIAN REVOLUTION OF 1906

On December 30, 1906, after a bloodless revolution, the moribund Moẓaffareddin Šāh reluctantly signed the Constitution, which provided for an elected parliament and limited, to some extent, the prerogatives of the Crown. But he died shortly thereafter, on January 4, 1907. He was succeeded by the Crown Prince, Mohammed ‘Ali, who had been Viceroy in Azerbāycān. Rahīm Xān Čalabiyānlū, who had become one of the Viceroy’s favorites, followed him to Tebrān as a member of his entourage. Subsequently, he acquired the titles of Noṣratosoltān and Sardār-e-Noṣrat, and assumed the command of the court cavalry (riyāṣal-e-savārān-e-dīvānī).

The new Šāh was an unprincipled despot, and, though he solemnly swore to uphold the Constitution, from the beginning of his short, but stormy reign, he plotted to overthrow the Parliament (or Meclis), and abolish the revolutionary committees (or ancomans). In this endeavor he had the backing of many of the tribal leaders and semi-independent local rulers, who had prospered under his ineffectual predecessor and who were fearful of a change in the status quo should the Constitutionalists get the upper hand. The Čalabiyānlū leaders were among his staunchest supporters.

In May 1907, Büyük Xān, Rahīm Xān’s second son, raised the standard of revolt in Qarāca Dāḡ. According to the British Parliamentary Papers,

On the 21st May three men entered the telegraph office [in Tabrız] with the intention of assassinating certain members of the local Assembly [Ancoman], which held its sittings there. Their proceedings attracted suspicion and they were arrested. One of them resisted, and was shot and mortally wounded. The two

\[\text{Sources:}  
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uninjured men were well beaten, and confessed that they were natives of Karadagh who had been promised 100 tomans each and a rifle to murder the leading members of the Assembly by Ikram-es-Sultan, one of the Shah’s attendants. The wounded man voluntarily confirmed the statement of his accomplices before expiring. On the 22nd it became known that Buyuk Khan, son of Rahim Khan, was advancing towards Tabreez with a considerable force, pillaging all the villages on his way. Two days later the apprehensions caused by this news were somewhat allayed by a telegram to the effect that a local tribe was pillaging Rahim Khan’s territory in the absence of his son, who was obliged to return in order to defend his father’s estates. On the 25th a letter from Buyuk Khan to the Governor of Tabreez was intercepted, stating that he had pillaged a satisfactory number of villages and was ready to come to Tabreez, if the Governor gave the word, and carry off the local Assembly to Tehran... The Governor was at once placed under arrest when the incriminating letter was received. The matter was taken up by the Tehran Assembly on the 25th and 26th May, with the result that Rahim Khan was placed under arrest 1.

On December 15, 1907, Mohammed ‘Ali Sah made an abortive coup d’état. He threw Nasrolmolk, the mildly reform-minded Prime Minister, into chains, then collected the Cossack Brigade 2, his household troops, his servants and a band of roughnecks for an attack on the Meclis. But, at the critical moment, he procrastinated, thus enabling the ancomans to organize their forces and deploy them around the Baharestan (or Parliamentary Building). Finally, the Sah yielded to the popular outcry against his ill-conceived plot; he released Nasrolmolk, and sent a sealed Qor’an with an oath that he would henceforth abide by the Constitution.

That winter there was unrest and lawlessness in every part of the country, and the British Parliamentary Papers report that Qaraca Dag was “still infested by brigands” 3. Meanwhile, in Tehran, Rahim Xan was released. The Minister of Justice and Hacci Emam Com’eh-ye-Xoy interceded on his behalf before the Meclis; later they brought him to the Baharestan in person. The glib-tongued chief quickly convinced the deputies that he had mended his ways, and to dispel any lingering suspicion as to his loyalty, he swore on the Qor’an that he would forever uphold the Constitution (Farzad, Engelab, p. 91).

At the end of April 1908, Rahim Xan left for Tabriz, where, with

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2 This force was organized in 1879 by order of Nasereddin Sah. It was patterned on the Russian model, and instructed, as well as commanded, by Russian officers until 1920. In 1916 it was expanded into a division. Its principal duty was to serve as a bodyguard for the Sah, but, occasionally, it performed other services, such as guarding foreign legations or partaking in punitive expeditions against the tribes. Most of the recruits were Turkic-speaking persons from northern Persia. It was disbanded by Reza Sah.

consummate skill, he persuaded the members of the Ancoman that his only desire was to serve the Constitutionalist cause. So gullible were the Tabrizis that they sent him to Ardabil to quell an uprising, providing him with eight hundred rifles, two cannon and the sum of eighteen thousand tomans (Farzad, Engelab, pp. 91-92).

On June 23, 1908, Mohammed 'Ali Sah staged another coup d'état, and this time he was successful. The Cossack Brigade invested the Baharestan, and, after shelling the building, proceeded to take it by storm. Seven of the eight Constitutionalist leaders were seized (two of them were subsequently strangled), the ancomans were disbanded, and martial law was established. Unhappily for the Sah, however, this coup, brilliantly executed though it was, sparked a revolution in Tabriz which was to contribute very substantially to his ultimate downfall. Under the two heroic leaders, Settar Xan and Baquer Xan, the Tabrizis withstood the combined assaults of the Royalist troops and their tribal allies for ten months. During much of that time they were completely surrounded, and suffered cruelly from hunger and disease. They were finally overwhelmed by a Russian force despatched for the official purpose of protecting the foreign subjects in the besieged city. But by that time the valiant Tabrizis had inspired the inhabitants of other cities, such as Rešt and Esfahan, to emulate them. Soon, two rebel armies, one under the command of Sepahdār-e-A'zam from Rešt and the other under the command of Sardār-e-Asad from Esfahan, converged upon the capital, and on July 16, 1909, Mohammed 'Ali Sah was formally deposed after having taken refuge at the Russian Legation.

Arthur Moore, who was in Tabriz during the siege, has given us a vivid, though caustic, account of this event and his description of the two adversaries is worth quoting:

The total strength of the three small forces which shut up possibly 250,000 people for three months will never be known. But I do not think it can ever have exceeded 6,000 men. But if the nominal combatants were 2,000 inside and 6,000 outside, the real situation was much more extraordinary. For all purposes except those of noise and the possible damage which may be done by stray bullets, there were not more than 100 men in each of the three besieging camps who mattered; amongst the besieged there were not 250. The warlike resources of the Persian Empire may be gauged from the fact that, while the Shah rightly regarded the subjugation of Tabriz as vital to his own interests, he was only able to send a little over 2,000 so-called regular troops against it. Of these only 400 Cossacks, who owed their training and discipline to Russian officers, were worthy of the name. But the main force consisted, not of soldiers, but of savage tribesmen—Kurds, Karadaghlis, and Makulis—bloodthirsty brigands who, by terrorizing villages and wayfarers from time immemorial, have gained a reputation for fierceness, which should not be mistaken for a reputation for bravery. They possess the common vices of cowards—treachery and cruelty; but of courage they are for the most part
totally devoid. They were out for loot, with the minimum of risk. To starve Tabriz and then to pillage it was the dazzling prospect which kept them in their camps ¹.

The most powerful of the tribal leaders who fought on the Royalist side was Raḥîm Xan, who, with his private army of Çalabiyânîs, Moḥammed Xânlûs and Şâhevens, and with the arms and ammunition supplied by the Ancoman of Tabriz for his campaign in Ardabil, occupied the northern approaches to the city and raided the whole countryside between the Kalîbar river and the Culfâ road. According to Moore,

Only once, and as late as April [1909], did Rahîm Khan take the offensive. He held lawless sway on the Julfa road, and lay in wait for such wayfaring men and fools as erred therein. His chief amusement was to strip them naked and to turn them adrift in the snow, which covers the country until mid-March. Two European merchants, who were rash enough to attempt to escape from Tabriz, succeeded indeed, but arrived in Julfa dressed only in their galoshes, their lives having been spared at the intervention of their driver. The Russian merchants in particular suffered heavily from Rahîm Khan’s raids, but all Europeans felt his hand, and those who had no merchandise lost their letters and their parcels. Even when the officials of the Russian Consulate-General passed with their escort, this worthy Musulman levied toll from them in the shape of bottles of wine and brandy, while to the French nurse of one of the Russian ladies he held out the dazzling prospect that he would cover her with jewels if she would remain and share his fortunes. After the coming of the Russian army, he fled to Karadagh, his native stronghold, with three hundred camel loads of loot. The Russians might easily have arrested him, and would have had plenty of justification for doing so, but he was allowed to go free and make trouble at a later day ².

Raḥîm Xan left the neighborhood of Tabriz on May 4, 1909 ³, and almost immediately Qarāca Dâğ was in turmoil. In July there was fighting between Raḥîm Xan’s tribesmen and a group of Şâhevens “in which the honours appear to have been divided”. This was followed by a reconciliation (British Parliament, Cont. of Persia No. 2 (1909), pp. 80 and 113). In August, a relative of Raḥîm Xan was busy pillaging villages in the sub-province, and three detachments of Russian troops, each numbering eighty men, were sent from Tabriz to discourage him from carrying out further raids (BP Persia 2, p. 108) ⁴.

In the autumn of that year Raḥîm Xan began to covet Ardabil. The Ardabil region had already been repeatedly raided by the Şâhevens since the beginning of the Constitutional struggles. In April 1908, they

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⁴ Hereafter, it is to be understood that BP Persia 2 refers to British Parliament: Accounts and Papers 1910, Vol. CXII, Continuation of Persia No. 2 (1909).
had not only pillaged many of the villages in the vicinity of Ardabil, but had even penetrated into the city, robbing some fifty houses and causing the governor to take flight (BP Persia 1, p. 116). In June 1909, the Šâhsevens had once more threatened Ardabil. A panic had ensued and many people had taken refuge at the Russian Vice-Consulate (BP Persia 2, pp. 29 and 66). In July, the Šâhsevens had been plundering all along the Tehrân road between Miyâneh and Ḥâcci Āqâ, as well as the country around Ardabil. For a while, they had even occupied the city of Ardabil and indulged in general looting. This attack had been led by Moḥammad Qoli Xān, a Šâhseven chief and a famous smuggler, who had been appointed deputy governor of Ardabil by Sepâhdâr-e-Aʿẓâm, the new Persian prime minister. Again, a large number of the citizens (including the governor, this time) had sought refuge at the Russian Vice-Consulate. But the tide had turned when the arrival of a detachment of Russian Cossacks a hundred strong had frightened away the Šâhsevens (BP Persia 2, p. 113). Finally, during that summer the Šâhsevens had also blocked all traffic on the vital Āstârâ-Ardabil-Tabriz road (BP Persia 2, p. 150). By September 1909, it was obvious that the Ardabilîs had no heart for a fight, and would, therefore, be unlikely to offer Raḥîm Xān any effective resistance. Moreover, the Russian garrison at Ahar, which could have neutralized the Čalabîyânî leader’s forces in Qârâeca Dâğ, had been evacuated. Raḥîm Xān, accordingly, set out for oft-plundered and thoroughly demoralized Ardabil with his army of Qârâeca Dâğis and Šâhsevens, and with victory practically in his grasp.

At the same time, Raḥîm Xān and other chiefs friendly to his cause sent the following telegram to the ex-Šâh in Tehrân:

For some time these constitutionalists have created disorders, murdered and plundered. Firstly, how many of the notables and seyyids of Tabrêez have they not killed and plundered their houses! Also at Ardebil they have killed several notables and seyyids, and carried off all their property. And in Tehran they have killed several notables and mujtaheds [moctaheds], who are the representatives of the Imam. Having united with Georgians and Armenians, they have killed our ulema and seyyids. If they had any religion, what fault had the ulema and seyyids in their eyes? Their whole thought is to ruin us and to annihilate the Mohammedan religion and our honour. Therefore, more than 2,000,000 people [a slight exaggeration!], and all the khans of Karadagh, and all the begzades and chiefs of the Kujubeglu [the Qocah Beyglüs, one of the major Šâhseven tribes], and the katkhodas of the Shahsevan tribe, have unanimously agreed to start for Ardebil on the 14th of Ramazan [September 29, 1909], and as long as we live we will not allow any one to mention anywhere the word ‘constitution’. We do not grudge any service for Your Majesty, and we offer our lives and property as a sacrifice to Your Majesty.¹

They also sent a similar telegram to Amir Mofaxxam and Sardâr-e-Cang,

two prominent Baxtiyārī chieftains. It concluded thus: "All the khans and chiefs of Karadagh, and the khans, begzadehs, and katkhodas of the Shahsevans, having assembled, have agreed to start for Ardebil on the 14th of Ramazan, in order to destroy the constitutionalists there. Thence we will march on Tehran. Having marched straight there, as long as we have life, we will not allow the name of constitutionalism to exist in Persia" (BP Persia 1, p. 5)¹.

In the middle of September, the Governor-General of Āzerbāycān, alarmed by the news from Ardabil, dispatched the celebrated Settār Xān to that city (via Sar Āb) with a column of his fedāīs ("devotees") for the purpose of organizing the defenses therein (BP Persia 2, pp. 143, 150). But this mission was a total failure. Settār Xān was unable to disarm the unruly elements of the population (mostly fedāīs from the Caucasus), and, by mid-October, those Shahseven leaders who had submitted to him upon his arrival at Ardabil had deserted him, not wishing to oppose Raḥīm Xān (BP Persia 2, pp. 138, 150). Finally, as the Qarāca Dāḡīs and their Shahseven allies were approaching, "pillaging mercilessly the villages en route", the greater part of Settār Xān's army of a thousand men melted away, leaving him behind with only a handful of horsemen (BP Persia 2, p. 150).

By October 22, Raḥīm Xān's army had "practically surrounded Ardebil" (BP Persia 2, p. 154) and on October 25 it penetrated into the city proper. Settār Xān and the Governor shut themselves up in the citadel, and a new wave of panicstricken citizens sought refuge at the Russian Vice-Consulate. A few days later Settār Xān and a few horsemen managed to elude the Qarāca Dāḡīs and make their way to Sar Āb. The governor, on the other hand, headed for the already overcrowded Russian Vice-Consulate (BP Persia 2, pp. 147, 148, 150).

By early November the rebels were in complete control of Ardabil. The following communiqué was issued in St. Petersburg on November 5:

According to latest information from Ardebil, local governor, members of Anjuman, and clergy have taken refuge in Russian vice-consulate, and immediately afterwards town was occupied by Shahsevans and Karadaghis. All bazaars, caravan sheds, and most of the houses have been looted. Shahsevans have demanded of the vice-consul surrender to them of three persons who have taken up their quarters in consulate compound. It is feared that consulate may be subjected to an attack by these nomads, and that small consulate guard, consisting of one sotnia of Cossacks, will not be able to withstand an assault. In view of such circumstances one battalion of infantry, two of Cossacks, with two guns and detachment of engineers, have been sent to Ardebil already; another column of sufficient strength is being dispatched therither in order, should occasion arise, to take decisive action against these nomads (BP Persia 2, p. 148).

¹ Hereafter, it is to be understood that BP Persia 1 refers to British Parliament: Accounts and Papers 1911, Vol. CIII, Continuation of Persia No. 1 (1910).
A few days before, the Governor-General of Azerbajcan had sent an official (Rashidolmolk) to Sar Ab with 100 Persian Cossacks to negotiate with the rebels and forward to Rahim Xan a letter from the Russian Acting Consul-General at Tabriz warning the old bandit that he would be held personally responsible for the safety of Russian subjects; simultaneously, the Russian Minister in Tehran had informed the Persian Government that they would be held responsible for all losses suffered by the Russians in Ardabil.

Settar Xan and his party were harassed by rebel gunfire around Sar Ab, but nevertheless managed to return to Tabriz by November 5 (BP Persia 2, pp. 149, 150). On November 9, the Russian Foreign Minister announced that Rahim Xan had reached Sar Ab and “had proclaimed his intention of marching on Tehran with a force of Karadaghis and Shahsevans” (BP Persia 2, p. 152). On November 12, the same official claimed that Rahim Xan had nominated a new governor of Ardabil, who had taken up his residence in the citadel with a number of men, that he (Rahim Xan) had paid a visit to the Russian vice-consul to whom he had reiterated his demand for the surrender of those who had taken asylum in the Vice Consulate, and that he had expressed his “fidelity” to Russia, going so far as to suggest that that country “should take over all the districts in Persia where her troops were located” (BP Persia 2, p. 152).

By November 14, however, the Russian reinforcements had reached Ardabil, and, after two days’ negotiations, Rahim Xan’s troops had retired outside the town, to the camp previously prepared by Settar Xan, leaving behind their puppet governor, Cafar Xan (BP Persia 2, p. 152; also Persia 1, p. 4). On November 28, 1909, the British Minister in Tehran sent the following report to Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary: “I am informed by His Majesty’s acting consul-general at Tabreez that Shahsevans have gone into winter quarters at Moghan and that Rahim Khan has retired to Karadagh” (BP Persia 2, p. 159).

Meanwhile in Tehran, the Central Government had been following developments in Qaraca Dag and Ardabil with mounting anxiety. In the early days of the rebellion, the Governor-General of Azerbajcan had announced that a substantial force had been sent from Tehran to put down the revolt. When, after some time, these troops had failed to materialize in Tabriz, the Governor-General had contended that they had been delayed at Zencan “where reactionaries, headed by local high

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1 BP Persia 2, pp. 150, 154. The Russian Acting Consul-General at Tabriz had also instructed the Russian Vice-Consul in Ardabil to convey a similar message to Rahim Xan (BP Persia 2, pp. 147, 155).
priest, [had] obstructed the road and stirred up disorders" (*BP Persia* 2, p. 138). By October 23, only a minute contingent had reached its destination (*BP Persia* 2, p. 140). On October 28, the British Acting Consul-General had expressed downright scepticism concerning the promised force. "The troops that were sent from Tehran have all arrived here", he had reported. "They are composed of 200 [Persian] Cossacks and 200 Inanloo only. The remnant of the force which was supposed to be at Zenjan is not there. If it existed elsewhere than on paper it has dissolved into space". In late October, the Governor-General had also sent a small army consisting of some 1,500 infantry and cavalry under Bāqer Xān towards Ardabil, but that force had stalled around Bāsmenc, 19 klms. to the south-east of Bostānābād. Later, it was to push on to Sar Āb, where it was to be joined by an army of similar size under Şamad Xān of Marāgeh (*BP Persia* 2, p. 147).

By early November, these desultory efforts having proved futile and the situation in Ardabil having progressively worsened, the Central Government decided to take drastic action. A force of 1,600 men and three cannon, under the command of Yępren Xān, the Chief of Police of Tehran, and Sardār-e-Bahādor, son of Sardār-e-Asad, was then despatched to the area.

By November 30, Rašīdolmolk, the Government-appointed Governor of Ardabil, had reached his destination and assumed his functions (*BP Persia* 1, p. 7). In December there was fighting around Sar Āb, where Yępren Xān and Sardār-e-Bahādor were reported to have beaten a rebel force under Büyük Xān (*BP Persia* 1, p. 14). On January 28, 1910, the following report on the situation in Qarāca Dāg was sent to the Foreign Office by the British Minister in Tehran:

At the end of December the Government troops under Yprim [Yępren] and Sardar Bahadur defeated the Karadaghis under Rahim Khan's son [Büyük Khaan] and captured Ahar, Rahim Khan's head-quarters. A few days later the Karadaghis, having been reinforced, returned and attacked Ahar. The Government troops went out into the open and repulsed them, killing 30, and losing 1 killed and 4 wounded. The Karadaghis fled northwards.

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1 *BP Persia* 2, p. 147. These Cossacks and İnānlūs were destined to remain idle and in Tabrīz during the whole crisis. There are several tribes by the name of İnānlū (or Eynālū) in Persia, and the Parliamentary Papers do not indicate from which area these İnānlūs hailed.

2 *BP Persia* 2, p. 155. Yępren Xān was one of the most striking figures of his day. An Armenian, born in Borsum (near Genceh) in 1868, he was the owner of a brick factory in Rešt when he joined Sepãhād-e-Azām's army in June 1909. A man of extraordinary courage and ability, he is generally believed to have been the leading spirit of the expedition from Rešt, and, in spite of being an "infidel", he quickly rose to a position of great eminence in the period following the overthrow of Mohammed 'Ali Šāh.
About the 10th January the Karadaghis, under Rahim Khan’s son, once more attacked Ahar, this time in large numbers and from several directions. They were repulsed with heavy loss and fled, being pursued for 8 miles by the Government troops who lost 10 killed. Sardar Bahadur was slightly wounded in one foot and had his horse shot under him. This defeat appears to have finally broken the power of Rahim Khan, as he has applied to both the Russian and Turkish Consulates at Tabreez for protection (BP Persia 1, p. 22).

According to the British Minister’s summary of events in Persia for February 1910, Rahim Xan’s final defeat occurred on the first of that month (BP Persia 1, p. 30), but W. Morgan Shuster maintains that it took place on January 24. In any case, early in February the rebel leader fled northward to Russia with a number of families from his tribe and a large amount of plundered merchandise, leaving behind two cannons and eight loads of ammunition (BP Persia 1, p. 30). On February 6, the British Minister received the following message from the British Acting Consul-General at Tabriz: “Rahim Khan has, Governor-General inform me, crossed Russian frontier, together with 100 families. Viceroy has given instructions that the rebel chief and his followers should be conveyed to the interior of the Caucasus, after being disarmed” (BP Persia 1, p. 17). This last measure was probably undertaken by the Russians to comply with Article XIV of the Treaty of Turkomânçay, but the mere fact that the Russians granted Rahim Xan asylum encouraged the suspicion (already widespread) that they had been using him as an excuse for sending more troops into Persia and had further designs in mind for him.

Rahim Xan’s flight to Russia momentarily relieved the Persian Government of a troublesome enemy, but it did not put an end to banditry in the sub-provinces of Qarâca Dâgh and Ardabil. At the beginning of April a punitive expedition was launched from Tabriz to suppress elements of the Sâhseven confederacy which were pillaging in the Ardabil district. This force was led by Yeprem Xan and Sardâr-e-Bâhâdor, and comprised 400 Baxtiyâris, 170 fedâis, 100 Persian Cossacks, and some

2 This Article reads in part: “His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russians promises...not to permit Persian deserters to establish themselves or to remain fixed in the Khanats of Karabag [Qarâ Bâgh] or of Nakhitchevan [Naxcevân] or in the part of the Khanat of Erivan [Yerevân] situated on the right bank of the Araxe [Aras]. It is, however, understood, that this clause is and will only be obligatory in respect of individuals possessing a public character of a certain dignity, such as the Khans, the Begs and the spiritual leaders or mullahs, whose personal example, intrigues and clandestine correspondence may be able to exercise a pernicious influence on their former compatriots, those formerly under their administration or their vassals.” (J. C. Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East, New York 1956, Vol. I, p. 99.)
3 The Russian occupation already extended as far as Qazvîn.
artillery (BP Persia 1, p. 45). The Sāhsevens were quickly overpowered, and, for a while, comparative tranquility was restored in that area (BP Persia 1, p. 51).

In September, however, there were new outbreaks of violence in north-eastern Azerbāycān. The British Minister in Tehrān sent the following report to London on September 25:

Russian Minister tells me following: Governor of Ardebil, who had collected a force of 1,000 men to disarm Shahsevans has been defeated by that tribe 5 miles from Ardebil. Part of this force joined the Shahsevans and part were made prisoners. A few escaped with the governor to Ardebil, leaving all arms and ammunition in the hands of the rebels. Russian Minister says that had it not been for the Russian troops nothing could have opposed the Shahsevans, who would once more have looted the town, and Shahsevans are also looting properties of Russian subjects in Karajadagh and in other places in the north (BP Persia 1, pp. 91-92).

On September 29, a strong body of Sāhsevens was reported to be pillaging in the vicinity of Šibli, some 25 miles to the south-east of Tabrīz (BP Persia 1, p. 99). On September 30, the Russian Minister in Tehrān announced that the Sāhsevens were now in complete control of the neighborhood of Ardabil (BP Persia 1, p. 97).

Meanwhile, Büyük Xān, who was thought to have fled with his father, was once more on the warpath in Qarāca Dāğ. In October, he launched an attack on some Government forces near Ahar with 1500 men, but was apparently defeated (BP Persia 1, pp. 102, 110).

According to Shuster, Raḥīm Xān returned to Persia in January 1911, "to become a further source of expense and difficulty to the Constitutionalist regime" (Strangling of Persia, p. lii). In February there was fighting in the Āštārā region. The murder and mutilation of two Russian Cossacks gave the Russians a pretext for sending yet more troops into Persia and decimating the population of a village near Āštārā 1. In May the Governor of Ardabil, Rašidolmolk, was once more defeated in an attempt to disarm the Sāhsevens. He fled to Ahar, where the Governor of Qarāca Dāğ was similarly trounced by some of the tribesmen of that area (BP Persia 3, p. 59). By July, the Tabrīz-Ardabil and Tabrīz-Miyāneh roads had become very unsafe due to Sāhseven marauders (BP Persia 3, p. 84). On July 13, the British Minister in Tehrān sent the following cable to London: "Acting consul at Tabreez reports Karadaghīs as well as Shahsevans are in complete revolt. Pillaging proceeding on large scale neighbourhood of Tabreez. Tabreez population outer suburbs and neighbouring villages are taking refuge in town" (BP Persia 3, p. 85).

On July 18, the ex-Šāh, Mohammed ʿAllī, who had left Tehrān for

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exile in Odessa on September 9, 1909, was allowed to return to Persia with a complete arsenal by his Russian protectors. He landed at Gümüş Tepeh, in Xorāsān, and then, with his adherents from the powerful Turkomān tribes, occupied Astarābād and pushed on towards Tehrān. At the same time, all over the country, elements favorable to the dethroned monarch took up arms against the Government.

In September, supporters of the ex-Šāh made an attempt to seize Tabrīz. As on the previous siege of that city, Raḥīm Xān and his army of Ḥārā Ḍāḡis and Šāhsevens played a key role in the operation. But this time the campaign was as short as it was premature. After Moḥammad ‘Ali’s forces were decisively beaten near Verāmīn on September 5 by Yeprem Xān, the rebellion quickly subsided. The former monarch’s armies disintegrated, and he himself sought refuge in Russia for the second and last time. In October, Raḥīm Xān was captured, and, it is alleged, secretly executed in prison at Tabrīz 1.

Following the disappearance of Raḥīm Xān, the ČalabīyānĪs lost most of their influence in Ḥārā Ḍāḡ. But Sām Xān Amīr-e-Aršād, the chief of the Ḥācī ‘Alīlūs, rapidly filled the power vacuum left by the old brigand. According to Moctahēdī, both Amīr-e-Aršād and his brother, Moḥammad Ḥoseyn Xān Zargām Sardār-e-‘Aṣāyer, had sided with the Government during the Constitutional struggles 2, and had helped Yeprem Xān crush the ČalabīyānĪs and their allies, the Moḥammad Xānlūs, in the winter of 1909-1910 3.

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2 But on October 14, 1909, the British Minister in Tehrān cabled to London that he had heard from the British Acting Consul-General in Tabrīz that in his bid to conquer Ardabil Raḥīm Xān was “apparently . . . supported by a powerful Karadagh chief, Zergham, who was supposed to act against him” (BP Persia 2, p. 138).

As we have previously pointed out, many of the tribal leaders of Persia supported Moḥammad ‘Ali Šāh because they favored keeping the status quo and thrived on the anarchy which flourished everywhere at that time. But a number of xāns were dissatisfied with the status quo and, therefore, joined the Constitutionalists—though usually not for idealistic reasons. Foremost among these, we have seen, were the Bāxṭiyārīs, who dreamt of replacing the decadent Qācārs as the ruling dynasty, but who, as events were to show, lacked the necessary qualities for national leadership, and thus missed their cue in history. Also among them were the Qāṣqā’īs, who manifested their opposition to Moḥammad ‘Ali Šāh by widespread pillaging in Fārs province. It is generally surmised that they joined the Constitutionalists in order to destroy their arch-enemies, the Qāwāmīs, who were in the ruler’s good graces, and also because they did not want to be outdone by their old rivals, the Bāxṭiyārīs. Amīr-e-Aršād’s reasons for siding with the Constitutionalists are obscure, but, more likely than not, he merely wished to supplant Raḥīm Xān as the dominant political force in Ḥārā Ḍāḡ.

3 Moctahēdī, Recāl, pp. 184. The author tells us that the Ḥācī ‘Alīlūs captured and killed several of the Moḥammad Xānlū leaders.
During the next decade, while the ailing Constitutional régime in Tehran struggled in vain to get on its feet, Persia dissolved into a myriad khanates and satrapies. Not satisfied with being the absolute ruler of Qarācā Dāğ, Amīr-e-Aṛšād extended his zone of influence as far as Xoy. He was killed while on a campaign against the famous Kurdish bandit Simko in A.H.S. 1300 (1921/1922), and was buried in Tabrīz with full military honors. According to the Iranian Army Files (Tabrīz), the Ḥoseynaklūs and the Qarā Čorlūs were also involved in the conflict with Simko.

Amīr-e-Aṛšād was succeeded by his brother, the well-known Sardār-e-ʿAšāyer. But with the emergence of Rezhā Xān, the influence of the Ḥācci ʿAllūs quickly waned.

Rezhā Xān, an officer of the Cossack Brigade, became War Minister in 1921, Prime Minister in 1923, and, finally, Sāhenšāh in 1925, after having dethroned Ahmad Šāh, the son of Mohammed ʿAlī Šāh. A man of vision and boundless energy, he promoted a bold program of reforms patterned after that of Atatürk in Turkey. But in his attempts to apply these reforms to the tribes he was consistently unsuccessful.

One of Rezhā Šāh’s greatest ambitions was to unify his country and awaken a national consciousness in all his subjects. In order to achieve this, it was necessary for him to uproot the multitude of local dynasties that had flourished under the Qācārs and to bring to heel the most recalcitrant of the tribal chieftains—all of which he set about to accomplish by diplomatic means, using force only as a last recourse. But as these measures did not put an end to tribal unrest, he decided to do away with the tribal system altogether.

From the beginning of his reign Rezhā Šāh displayed a pronounced aversion towards the tribes, which comprised between a quarter and a third of the population of his kingdom. Unlike the peasants, who docilely paid their taxes, submitted to conscription and seldom protested, the nomads were thoroughly intractable, prizing their liberty above all else and remaining faithful only to their chiefs.

Rezhā Šāh, moreover, felt that most of the tribesmen were of an alien culture. In his vision of twentieth century Iran, Persian was not to be

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1 Moctahedī, Recāl, p. 184-5. Moctahedī suggests that foul play was involved in the death of the Ḥācci ʿAllūs chief. According to him, the Governor-General of Azerbāycān, who had asked Amīr-e-Aṛšād to give him a hand in suppressing the Kurdish uprising, was suspected at first, but subsequently exonerated. He then implies that an agent of Simko might have assassinated him because at a banquet some years previously a brother of the Kurdish chief, Caʿfar Āqā, had been murdered by some of the people of Sardār-e-ʿAšāyer (Amīr-e-Aṛšād’s brother). Minorsky, however, writes that Caʿfar Āqā was killed “at Tabrīz in 1905 by order of the governor general” (Shakāk, Encyclopaedia of Islam, Vol. IV, p. 290).
merely a *lingua franca*. It was to be the very cement which would join
the rough stones in the national edifice and seal them together for
eternity. He realized that the many Arab, Turkic and Kurdish tribes
were too self-contained to become culturally assimilated within a short
period of years.

In any case, Reżā Šāh did not think that the tribes belonged in the
twentieth century. In his enthusiasm for the modern, he came to abhor
the old-fashioned. Besides, he was hypersensitive to criticism in the
foreign press and was haunted by the fear that Iran might be regarded
as a backward country. To him the tribes constituted a shameful ana-
chronism, and the very sight of camels, tents and tribal attire (so pictu-
resque to foreign eyes) was repugnant.

He gradually came to the conclusion that the only solution to the
tribal problem was to compel the nomads to settle down upon the land
and become agriculturists. Troops were accordingly dispatched into
tribal territory and the migration routes were blocked. But, as A. K. S.
Lambton puts it, "Suitable areas in which to settle the tribes were not
always chosen, adequate provisions for health and education were not
made, and sufficient facilities by way of agricultural training and the
 provision of agricultural implements were not given to the tribesmen
to enable them to change over from a pastoral to an agricultural life".¹
Many of the officers entrusted with this delicate task were, furthermore,
unnecessarily brutal. It is therefore not astonishing that the project was
far from a resounding success. The tribes lost much of their organization,
which once rendered them formidable, but the settlement program did
not produce peasants—only starving tribesmen, and the tremendous
economic losses that Persia suffered as a result of the dwindling of the
sheep and goat herds were in no way compensated for by an increase
in agricultural productivity.

In 1922, while Muḥammad Moṣaddeq (then known as Moṣaddeq-os-
Salṭaneh) was Governor-General of Āzerbāyţan, Sardār-e-ʿAšāyer was
arrested, and his private army was disarmed. This spelled the end of
Ḥāccī ʿAlīlū domination in Qarāca Dāğ (Moctahedī, *Recāl*, p. 185). But,
in general, the tribesmen of this sub-province were not as severely
affected by Reżā Šāh’s tribal policy as were most of the other nomadic
groups of Iran, such as the Lurs, the Kurds, the Turkomāns and the
Qašqā’īs. They dwelled in a relatively fertile region, where agriculture
was already widely practised, had short migration routes, so that a few
shepherds usually managed to take the flocks from their summer pastures
to their winter pastures, and vice versa, without arousing much attention,

and many of them were accustomed to village life since they ordinarily spent half the year in settled communities.

In Persia the nomads who adopt a sedentary way of life—a condition which is known as taxteh kāpū, or "wooden door", in tribal territory—usually go through a prolonged period of semi-nomadism (in which they still live in tents but remain the year round in one area) before they settle down in individual villages. At this stage, the tribe might still retain its original political organization. But when the tribe becomes completely sedentary, its political organization begins to break down. At first a given leader might be sarperest of several villages at a time, as in the case of the Ağāč Erīs of the Kūh-e-Gīlūyeh, who have been village dwellers only since the reign of Režā Šāh. Later, each village becomes a separate political entity with its own kextodā, as in the case of the Turkic villages of the Zarqān region, in Fārs (i.e., Šamsābād Qoroq, Būmākī, Gondāšlū Sar Češmeh, Qantar Qolū Bālā, Qantar Qolū Pā’īn), the inhabitants of which have been village dwellers for several generations. The brevity of Režā Šāh's rule was a vital factor in the rapid resurgence of tribal power following his abdication. The nomads' political organization had been disrupted, but not long enough for them to have developed a new mentality and acquired a new set of attitudes towards their leaders. Many of the tribesmen immediately resumed their migratory (and predatory) ways.

But if the attitude of the nomads towards their leaders had not appreciably changed, that of the city dwellers towards the nomads had undergone a real metamorphosis. Although the city dwellers had always regarded the nomads as illiterate barbarians, their dislike of them had been tempered by a certain respect, if not admiration. In his History of Persia, Malcolm observed that the word šahrī, or citizen, was "used in Persia as a term of contempt, to signify unwarlike, the soldiers being all men of wandering tribes" (Vol. II, p. 115 n.). With the establishment of a mechanized army recruited from the urban lower classes and the peasantry in the reign of Režā Šāh, however, the balance of power shifted from the nomadic to the sedentary elements of the population, especially the city dwellers, who now provided most of the officers and noncoms—and all respect vanished with the passing of the tribal army. As in the case of the nomads of Mongolia described in Owen Lattimore's On the Wickedness of Being Nomads, to be a nomad became "a kind of social crime" 1. This discrimination against the nomads as nomads has

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added a new dimension to the age-old political struggle between the tribes and the Central Government.

In this period a strong linguistic prejudice also came to manifest itself against the vast majority of the nomads. Although the city dwellers had always ridiculed the language of the tribes, be it Turkic, Arabic, Luri or Kurdish, it is only in the reign of Režā Šāh that this prejudice acquired political significance. Režā Šāh, as has been pointed out, considered the adoption of the Persian language by all Persians as an essential stepping stone towards the realization of national unity. Under him the names of cities and towns which were of non-Persian origin were changed (e.g. Moḩammarah became Xorramšahr, Sāuc Bolāğ became Mahābād, Ašraf became Behšahr), and a ban was put on publications in non-Persian languages. Since the tribes have never had a written literature, this form of discrimination did not affect them directly, but in the eyes of many of the Persian-speaking people, it branded them as foreigners, or second-class citizens, and further reduced their prestige. In this connection, it is interesting to note that the nomads of Āzerbāycān who were forced to adopt a sedentary way of life by no means gave up their "alien culture", since Āzeri, a Turkic dialect, was spoken by the bulk of the inhabitants of the province.

Oddly enough, the Režā Šāh reform which has found the most widespread acceptance among the tribes of Iran has been the one concerning clothes. As we have previously pointed out, Režā Šāh tried to implant a national consciousness in the minds of his people by abolishing all their cultural differences. Clothes figured prominently in this scheme, for every ethnic and religious group had its distinguishing attire. Režā Šāh, therefore, resolved to force all his subjects to wear the same type of clothes—namely to adopt the European mode of dress. (Thus the reform also fitted in with his drive to westernize Iran.) The clothes reform was adamantly opposed by the tribesmen and was one of the irritants which culminated in bloody uprisings throughout Režā Šāh’s reign. But today most of the tribesmen of Iran, including those of Qarāca Dāğ, wear European suits—albeit very tattered ones. The reason for this change of attitude might be that the nomads had already for long been buying their clothes at the bazaars of towns on their migration routes, or from the pilehvars, or ambulatory merchants. When the Central Government put pressure on the merchants to limit their stock to the desired type of attire they complied, since they were more vulnerable than the tribesmen

1 There is an old Persian proverb which says of the Xalacs, one of the major Turkic tribal groups of Persia, "Zabān-e-xarī Xalac midārand". ("The language of jackasses the Xalacs have.")
to the repressive actions of Army and Police. When the merchants were compelled to sell only Government-approved clothes, the nomads in turn had no recourse but to buy them. The tribal women, however, have not been affected by the clothes reforms and still wear the traditional attires.

During the period of semi-anarchy which followed the downfall of Reţā Šāh in 1941, the tribes regained much of their former independence and the xāns once more reasserted themselves. But the Qarāca Dāgis had to wait five more years for the thaw to come.

During the Russian occupation of Azerbāycān (1941-1946), and especially under the Communist régime of Ca'far Piševārī and his fellow “Democrats” (1945-1946), the tribal leaders of the sub-provinces of Qarāca Dāg and Ardabīl—all of them big landowners—had nothing to gain and plenty to lose. Hence, they were, as a rule, unfavorably disposed toward the new system. They manifested their discontent by indulging in sporadic guerilla activity. According to the Iranian Army Files (Tabrīz), Mīr Şamad Xān, the chief of the Ḥasan Beyglūs, went to the extent of declaring a cehād (“holy war”) against the Communists, and Ḥasan Xān, his son, was killed in the course of the fighting which ensued. ‘Abdollah Xān, the chief of the Moḩammed Xānlūs, also perished in the struggle, and several leaders of his tribe were arrested. Meanwhile, Loṭf ‘Alī Beg Noṣrātī, the chief of the Ḥoseynaklūs (and father of the actual head of the tribe) fought with such distinction that the Šāh awarded him a medal (medāl-e-šocā‘at) and gave him a rifle.

Shortly after World War II, the Iranian Government attempted a new solution to the problem of chronic tribal lawlessness: it was decided to make the xāns themselves responsible for security within their areas, and arms were provided them for that purpose. This policy met with a fair measure of success in Fārs and Xūzestān, but had lamentable results in Qarāca Dāg—especially among the Čalabiyānlūs, the Moḩammed Xānlūs and the Ḥāccī ‘Alīlūs, whose chiefs apparently used their weapons “to overawe their settled neighbours and to levy illegal dues” (Lambton, Landlord, p. 287).

When Moḩammed Reţā Šāh (who had succeeded his father in 1941) returned to Iran following Moḩammed Moşaddeq’s abortive coup d’État in the summer of 1953, he resolved to clamp down hard on the xāns, for they had taken advantage of the political chaos in the capital to further increase their power, and were once more transforming the country into a mosaic of semi-independent states 1. The tribes were urged to settle down, and military governors were dispatched to all provinces to function

1 He was especially picqued at the Qašqā‘ī leaders for having openly sided with Moşaddeq.
as tribal administrators, while officers of lesser rank were assigned to the clan leaders to keep watch over their activities. These measures have resulted in a significant lessening of tribal unrest, but the officers selected for this delicate mission have too often been of questionable ability, thus reducing the prospect for a harmonious relationship between the Army and the nomads.

In the summer of 1960 the Central Government abolished all the titles of the tribal leaders, and, on paper at least, the tribal system per se. Henceforth, it was decreed, the xâns were merely to serve as advisors to the military governors. But habits are firmly ingrained in the mind of the nomad, and it might take more than a law promulgated in Tehrân to convince the tribesmen to change their attitude toward their chiefs. It should be remembered, moreover, that the xâns still own most of the tribal lands and villages—and, hence, indirectly, the tribesmen themselves. This is especially the case in Qarâqa Dâğ, where most of the nomads live in villages in the winter and carry on agriculture.

**CONCLUSION**

For centuries the tribes exerted a paramount influence in the political life of Persia, providing the country with its army and its rulers. But the tribal system, dependent as it was on wars and banditry, was incompatible with twentieth century concepts of administration. The creation of a mechanized, European-trained and non-tribal army, and the establishment of a centralized form of government in the reign of Rezâ Šâh shifted the balance of power from the tent to the court, and condemned the warrior-xân and the bandit-xân to gradual extinction. The landlord-xân, however, has not yet disappeared from the scene, and since the land-owning class still holds the center of the political stage, the xâns have by no means been shorn of all their political influence.

As members of the landed aristocracy, the xâns of Qarâqa Dâğ, like most of the tribal leaders in Persia, are reactionaries. They are critical of the Šâh for his efforts to divest them of their titles and prerogatives, and for his mild attempts at land redistribution. But in a test of strength between the court and the National Front (or any other reform group), they could nevertheless be expected to throw in their support with the former, as the lesser of two evils.

One factor which has generally stood the Qarâqa Dâğis in good stead has been their geographical position. Their grazing lands are relatively lush, and for many years they have lived on the marches of north-western Persia, a choice location for the acquisition of booty. Their lands, more-
over, are suitable for farming, so that no matter what fate has in store for their leaders, they themselves will no doubt survive, and perhaps even thrive—albeit without the benefit of their former tribal organization.

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