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Islamic revivalism and Kurdish nationalism in Sheikh Ubeydullah's poetic oeuvre

Kamal Soleimani*

Abstract

This article investigates Sheikh Ubeydullah of Nehri's Kurdish-Islamic revivalist project based on a close reading of his *Mesnewî*. This article primarily focuses on the fusion of the Sheikh's Islamic revivalism with his Kurdish nationalism in his poetic work. A close reading of the *Mesnewî* leaves no doubt that in the mind of his author both the future of Kurds and that of his revivalist project depended on the creation of an independent state.

Keywords: Kurds; Ottomans; Islam; religious-nationalism; state.

Vejna dînî û neteweyî ya kurdî di dîwana şî'rên Şêx 'Ubeydullahê Nehrî de

Ev nivîsar lêkolînek e li ser bîr û bernamêya Şêx 'Ubeydullahê Nehrî ya vejîna dînî û kurdî bi rêya tehlîlkirina berhema wî ya bi navê *Mesnewî*. Nivîsar bi taybetî dikeve dû têngîştina têkilbûna hizrên vejîna îslamî û netewegeriya kurdî di şî'rên Şêx 'Ubeydullahî de. Xwendineke hûrbînane ya *Mesnewîyê* çu şîkekê tê de nahêle ku li gor nivîskarê wê berheme, hem paşeroja kurdan û hem jî bernamêya wî ya vejîna îslamî bi damezrandina dewleteke serbixwe ya kurdî ve girêdayî bûn.

نیجیای دینی و ناسیۆنالیزمی کوردی له شیعیره کانی شێخی نههریدا

ئهو نوسراوه لێكۆلینهوهیهكهی له مهبهر مژاری زیندوکردنهوهی بیری دینی- کوردی شێخ عوبهیدبیلای نههری له دواسالهیکانی سهدهی نۆزده دا. پرۆژی شێخ، نمونهیهكهی له هاتنه کاپهی رهوتیکی نوێ له جیهانی نیسلام که بریتیه له تیکهلاویهک له نیسلامی لاوهکی (پریفیریا) و ناسیۆنالیزم. بیگومان خۆیندنهوهیهکی وردی شۆنیهوار ههکانی نههری ئهو تیکهلاویه دهسهلمینی ههریۆیه ئهو نوسراوه که له بهردهستتاندا ههولێکه بۆ ههلسهنگاندنی پرۆژی شێخ لهههینی شیکردنهوهی نامهکان و دیوانه شیعیره فارسیهکهی به پێی ئهو خۆیندنهوهیه که له بهردهستتاندا، دهردهکهوێ که نههری چاره ی بن هیوا بیهکهی به گۆرانی ولاتانی موسولمان هاوسێ له لایهک، داهاوی کورد و نیجیای دینی له لایهکتر هوه، به تیکرایی بهستبۆوه به دامهزراندنی دهولهتی سههر بهخۆی کوردی

* Dr. Kamal Soleimani is an independent scholar. Email: kssoleimani8@gmail.com.



The Rise of Sheikh Ubeydullah and his disillusionment with the Ottomans

This paper aims to shed light on the Sheikh Ubeydullah Nehri's religious nationalism through a close reading of his unexplored poetic work, *Mesnewi*.¹ One of the most important characteristics of the Sheikh's revolt was the collective religious self-differentiation that signified the rise of a new socio-historical phenomenon in the modern Middle East. Except for Wadie Jwaideh (2006), scholars of Kurdish nationalism have generally overlooked the Sheikh's Kurdish-religious self-differentiation. Nonetheless, this tendency in the Sheikh's movement is the most important factor that distinguished it as a religious nationalist movement. Therefore, this paper is an attempt to show how the Sheikh perceived the Kurds and their Others and how he downplayed the religious bonds between the Kurds and non-Kurds. The very stratification of people's religiosity based on their ethnicity (as per the Sheikh) unveils the fusion of religion and ethno-nationalism, which in turn reflects the difference between the periphery and the centre in their interpretation of Islam. Now, there is an important body of scholarship documenting the rise of Nehri in 1880. Yet, except for a few letters, the Sheikh's other work, i.e. *Mesnewi* was not available to those who had previously studied his uprising. The lack of attention given to the *Mesnewi* was partly due to the fact that it was not available in print. It existed only in the form of a manuscript available to the close relatives and followers of the Sheikh. It was also written in Persian, a language most likely to constitute an important barrier for the new generation of the Sheikh's relatives living on the Turkish side of Kurdistan. Furthermore, except for the work of historian Sabri Ateş, most of the existing scholarship concentrates on non-Persian documents concerning the Sheikh's uprising. It is for this reason that the *Mesnewi* has remained a manuscript unknown to people other than the close relatives and followers of the Sheikh in Eastern Kurdistan. It took this poetry book over a century until it was printed and presented to the public audience in 2000. Before addressing the Sheikh's *Mesnewi*, I shall briefly outline the historical context that gave rise to that poetic work.

Sheikh Ubeydullah (d. 1883) was a Kurdish Naqshbandi² Sheikh. He was one of the most prominent Kurdish community leaders and religious scholars of his time. Describing the place of the Sheikh among Sunni Muslims, Robert Speer (1911), the biographer of renowned missionary figure Dr. Cochran, states that "next to the Sultan and the Sheriff of Mecca the Sheikh was the holiest person among the Sunni Mohammedans. Thousands were ready to follow him as the vicar of God... He was a man of some real virtues of character, vigorous, just, and courageous" (p. 74). In British Parliamentary papers, the Sheikh was described as someone who was "entertaining daily at his gates from 500 to 1000 visitors of all classes. His character stands out in clear contrast with that seen

¹ Unless otherwise stated, all translations in this article are my own.

² Naqshbandi is a major Sunni Sufi order, which emerged in the 12th century.

in Persian officials as well as Turks” (Turkey. No 5.; 1881. Inclosure 4 in No. 8). The personal life of the Sheikh, we are told, was fairly simple and he or his son would personally see “all who come to them on business, no matter how trivial it may be... From early morning to late at night he [was] employed in the interest of... his people” (ibid).

Sheikh Ubeydullah rose to prominence on the Kurdish political scene, especially during the Russo-Ottoman war (1877-78) as he received a request from Abdulhamid II to join the “*jihad*” against the Russian Army. According to the Sheikh’s personal account (2000: 108), he was able to gather thousands of armed men.³ This event was to become one of the major factors in the Sheikh’s growing nationalist sentiment and his disillusionment with the Ottoman state. The Kurdish-Turkish interaction and the Ottoman army’s treatment of the Kurds during the Russo-Ottoman War seems to have had a profound impact on the Sheikh’s views with respect to non-Kurdish Islam(s). Moreover, this interaction appears to explain his subsequent political activities against both the Ottoman and Qajar states. Consequently, in 1879, just a year after the War, the Sheikh led an unsuccessful uprising against the Ottoman state. However, seeing the superiority of the state forces and an inevitable defeat at hand, he found a way out of this situation and convinced the Sultan that the uprising was not a rebellion against the Sultan himself, but rather an outbreak of the people’s frustration and against the local officials’ corruption. In the following year, perhaps in the hope that the previous year’s rebellion was the end of the Sheikh’s anti-state political activities, the Sultan bestowed his decoration⁴ upon him.⁵ Yet, only a few months later, using his Kurdish league⁶ which was a broad

³ Ateş (2006: 311), a scholar of Kurdish and Ottoman history, states that “Sheikh Ubeidullah, in his correspondence with the Sultan Abdulhamid, claimed he headed a force of 30,000. The Ottoman Commander of the Caucasian and Eastern front, Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha, maintained that Sheikh Ubeydullah organised seven *redif* (reserve force) battalions, with battalions coming from other districts as well. In addition to regular troops, he wrote, “Sheikh [Ubeydullah] Efendi [from] Hakkari raised 50-60 thousand irregular soldiers, both infantry and cavalry, from his districts of Van province.”

⁴ A medal or award conferred as an honour.

⁵ Clayton, a British colonial officer in the region, reports to his superior, Trotter that “Sheikh Obeyd Ullah is working hard to extend his influence. He is ingratiating himself with the Christians and large numbers of the latter have migrated from Gever into the Sheikh’s immediate neighbourhood in order to enjoy his protection from other Kurds. There can be no doubt that he still meditates throwing off the Turkish rule. On the other hand Bahri Bey, Samih Pasha’s aide-de-camp, is to start this week to the Sheikh the decoration that the Sultan has bestowed upon him” (FO 195/1315 No. 20, Van, 25th May 1880).

⁶ Apparently the news about the establishment of the Kurdish league very much troubled the Armenian nationalists in Istanbul and outside the Ottoman territories. The Armenian nationalist elites were trying to paint it as a threat to the Armenians. That is why the British Parliament held an official session to make an inquiry about this league by requesting explanation from members of the British cabinet. See, *Tercüman-ı Hakikat*. No. 673 and 678 (1880). They seem either to have understood or tried to portray the formation of the League as an “instigation of the Central

union of Ottoman and Persian Kurds, the Sheikh took control of major parts of Kurdistan that were under Qajar rule. However, at a time when the Kurdish-Qajar war increasingly became understood as a *Shi'i-Sunni* conflict, the Sheikh was defeated and squeezed between the Qajar and Ottoman armies amidst rumours of the possible arrival of Russian troops to support the Persians (*Vakit*, No. 1860. 1880). Later on, the Sheikh, particularly upon Qajar insistence, was removed from his own region and sent to exile in Istanbul. After his escape and return to Hakkari, this time the Ottomans sent him into exile to Hijaz, where he remained until his death in 1883.

It is important to note that in the Sheikh's poetic work, the portrayal of the two communities, the "*Romîs*" (Ottoman Turks) and the Kurds, as two distinct groups of people is clear. The "us" versus "them" dichotomy is defined in both religious and ethno-nationalistic terms. The Ottomans were also generally suspicious of the nature of peripheral Islam.⁷ The Kurdish reaction to the centre's religiosity as suspicious, contaminated, and inauthentic is repeatedly expressed, even by Sa'îd Nursî, the most renowned Northern Kurdish religious scholar in the first half of the twentieth century (2009: 169-71). Simultaneously, the subtexts of these claims to purity, superiority or authenticity of religious interpretation were connected to each group's claim to some sort of ethnic or cultural superiority. Hence, the religious understanding and devotion of the "in-group" is celebrated and that of the "out-group" is condemned or its authenticity is strongly questioned. The fusion of religion and nationalism is visible in these groups' criticism of their others, especially of the states, who are blamed for their failings or lack of desire to educate the Kurds.⁸ The Sheikh's *Mesnevi* and his views on Ottoman Turks are significant as they reveal the shortcomings of some aspects of the existing scholarship on Sheikh Ubeydullah's revolts against the Ottoman and Qajar states in 1879 and 1880. As noted earlier, students of Kurdish nationalism have generally overlooked the Sheikh's distinct religious self-referentiality and his unequivocal questioning of the authenticity of non-Kurds' Islam and therefore they dismiss his nationalism. For instance, scholars such as David McDowell who, without sharing any credible evidence,⁹ calls the Sheikh's enterprise "a scheme cooked up in Istanbul which offered Sheikh Ubayd Allah undisclosed official sponsorship to form a movement that could act as a counterbalance to the Armenian threat" (2004: 58). Similarly, Hakan Özoğlu attempts to portray the Sheikh's revolt as a mere religious reaction that is only connected to Istanbul (2011: 203-15).

Government, which desires to stifle the Armenian question by raising a new one that of the Kurds" (Letter from Monseigneur Krimian, Turkey No.5. 1881. Inclosure in No.6).

⁷ For more on the difference between the centre and the peripheral Islams see Makdisi (2002 and 2002), Dringlé (1998 and 2003).

⁸ Some of these criticisms are reiterated decades later in 1925 Sheikh Saïd's proclamation of a Kurdish caliphate in which he blames the Turkish state's purposeful abandonment of Kurdish education, see Strohmeier (2003).

⁹ See for instance the following state document that stands in a clear contrast to McDowell claims: BOA. Dosya No: 5; Gömlek No: 99/2; Fon Kodu: Y. PRK.ASK. 10/21/1880).

The existing Ottoman state records present a contrasting picture to what has been portrayed by the aforementioned scholars. The Ottoman records explicitly report that there was state anxiety over the possible consequences of the Sheikh's revolt on the Ottoman side of the border. For instance, the Ministry of Defence reported that the Sheikh, with 70,000 armed men under his command, had secured the control of entire West Azerbaijan and declared Kurdish independence. The report also predicted that the Persian State was unable to defeat the Kurds. Hence, "considering *this event's enormous impact on our side of the border*,"¹⁰ as per the report, "necessary measures must be taken instantly. The local officials must immediately gather and dispatch a reinforcement that is *solely composed of [ethnically] Turks and Laz*."¹¹ The Ottoman documents also indicate further complications that the Sheikh created for the state. In order to spur groups who were only half-hearted in their support for the revolt, the Sheikh spread rumors that the Ottoman government was supportive of anti-Qajar agitation. Therefore, the Ottomans found those rumours dangerous and believed they had to repudiate the Sheikh's claim in every possible way.¹² Some British officials in the region also believed that the Sheikh's "movements ought to be narrowly watched, as being likely to cause embarrassment for both the Persian and Turkish Governments."¹³ Also, in one of his reports Captain Clayton writes that the Sheikh "has a comprehensive plan of uniting all the Kurds in an independent state. [The current] circumstances have turned his attention first to the Persian side. [He will later] turn to this side and try to obtain the same from the Turks."¹⁴ Perhaps the situation was best described by Major Trotter when he stated "that the Sheikh's...move into Persia [was probably made] under the impression that the Persian Government was more rotten than that of Turkey, and it would be easier to obtain independent authority there than in Turkey."¹⁵

Kurds vs. Romîs

As indicated earlier, the goal here is not to rewrite the chronology of the historical events of the 19th century, which has been extensively dealt with by several scholars (Ateş, 2006; Jwaideh, 2006; Olson, 1989), but to show how nationalist discourse fuses with Kurdish religious discourse into the "narration of the nation" in the Sheikh's poetic work. (It should be noted that such a fusion was taking place in various places and forms. By the late 19th century the interplay between religion and nationalism is observable in sporadic writings of

¹⁰ (halen bizim terafa olacak sui-te'siratı pek büyüktür). Emphases added.

¹¹ Cf. BOA. Dosya No: 5; Gömlek No: 99/2; Fon Kodu: Y. PRK.ASK. 10/21/1880). Emphasis added.

¹² Cf. BOA: Dosya No: 486; Gömlek No: 62; Fon Kodu: A.MKT.MHM Tarih: 29/Ca/1298 (Hicrî) [28.04.1881].

¹³ Parliamentary Papers. Turkey. No. 5. (1881. Inclosure 2 in No.8).

¹⁴ Ibid. (Inclosure 3 in No.54).

¹⁵ Ibid. (Inclosure in No. 22).

Kurdish intelligentsia in Istanbul with their emphasis on ethnic Kurdish contribution to Islamic civilisation,¹⁶ Kurdish migrants and religious leaders from Iran¹⁷ and by Sheikh Ubeydullah himself, particularly in his poems). The Sheikh's poetic oeuvre is providing us with ample evidence on how he regarded non-Kurdish Islam as questionable. He therefore believed the Kurds needed to create a state of their own to live their "true religiosity." After over a century, his poetic work, *Mesnevi*, has been rediscovered and is now available to Persian readers.

In his introduction to the Sheikh's *Mesnevi*, the editor, Seyid Islam Duagû (2000) explains how after years of research he was able to locate three copies of the manuscripts, each of which had been reproduced from earlier copies that were only available to the family and followers of the Sheikh. The entire collection is a little over 6,000 couplets composed in Persian. Until 1920s, Persian was one of the common languages of instruction in Kurdish *medreses* (Kurdish religious schools). In writing his poetry, Nehri imitates and tries to reintroduce the *Masnavi* of the famous thirteenth century Sufi poet Jalal al-Din Rumi (Nehri: 129). Rahman (2002) describes Rumi's *Masnavi* as a "great poetic work of surpassing beauty and, in part, equal depth has achieved immense popularity and has, indeed, been hailed as the "Qur'an of the Sufis (164)." In his introduction, Duagû notes that this published version of the Sheikh's *Mesnevi* is the very same as a copy of the manuscript that was first replicated in 1962. Disparities with other unpublished versions are rendered in the footnotes.¹⁸ The section that reflects the Sheikh's political perception consists of over four hundred couplets through which he narrates his and his followers' interaction with the Ottoman army. The Kurdish-Ottoman interaction during the War seems to have had a very negative impact on the Sheikh's views about the Ottoman Turks in general.

In this poetry book, the Sheikh attends to political issues with some degree of hesitation since, he informs us, the book is strictly about religious matters. It is supposedly an instruction for the revival of Islam in Kurdistan, with a clear Naqshbandi inspiration (Nehri: 126). Whenever there is a discussion about worldly matters (*ahvâl-e donya*), claims the Sheikh, it is hardly void of ill intent (ibid). However, he contends that he discusses "such issues to tell the story of the Kurds and the *Rumîs* [Ottoman Turks]" (ibid). "I could be accused," he states, "for backbiting, which is of the grave sins (Ibid)." However, "the *mazlum* (the oppressed or the subject of injustice) has the right to talk about the oppressor (*zalem*), especially if what s/he says is identical to what actually happened (*tebq-e mujarâ*)" (Ibid). The Sheikh further explains his intention for relating his experience during the War, in the last two couplets of his poem (on this story) as he writes, "it is for the sake of the beloved (*vidad*) Kurds that I

¹⁶ See Soleimani (forthcoming, 2016).

¹⁷ See Celil (2007: 56).

¹⁸ See the introduction to Nehri (2000: 1-2).

allowed my pen to suffer, write, and [for their story] to be inscribed on the pages of time (*ruzaqr*) to become a memory (*yadgar*) for the world (*'alam*)” (ibid: 127). The Sheikh’s poems about the Russo-Ottoman War and preparation for it, some of which must have been composed after the war,¹⁹ illustrate his admiration for Abdulhamid II (ibid: 110). Unlike his personal letters to Abdulhamid II, in his poetry the Sheikh does not refer to the Sultan as the caliph.²⁰ According to the Russian Officer, P. I. Averyanov, the Sheikh did not believe in the legitimacy of the Ottoman claim to caliphate (1995: 214-216). This, Averyanov claims, was also accepted by the Kurds whom generally believed that “the Ottomans had taken the Islamic caliphate by force and violated the law of Islam” (ibid: 214-216). Nonetheless, the Sheikh did not hesitate to call him an *imam*²¹ or as the promulgator of the religion and of justice (Nehri: 130).

It can be inferred that in the beginning of Russo-Ottoman War the Sheikh felt a significant amount of respect towards the Sultan. This becomes particularly clear in the Sheikh’s narration when he hears that the Sultan could not control his outburst of emotions when he read the Sheikh’s letter calling on Kurds to join the *jihad* against Russia in 1877 (Nehri: 110). The Sheikh had been told that the letter was so moving that the Sultan was incapable of reading the letter in its entirety. Therefore, Abdulhamid asked an *imam* to sit next to him to read the rest of the letter to him (Ibid). It is clear that Ubeydullah perceived the Sultan’s reaction as a sign of his great religious devotion and piety. The Sheikh thought that Abdulhamid concurred with him and that the calamities that had befallen the Ottoman state were the result of the abandonment of Islamic laws and traditions and the spread of a great moral laxity (*bar Kaba’er moşerr*).²² However, he was of the opinion that the Ottoman state was too corrupt for Abdulhamid to reform it. It was beyond his ability to make the required and necessary structural changes (*tabdil in hay’at*) (Nehri: 110). Nehri claims that the spread of this non-Islamic culture had reached a point where Abdulhamid could no longer exert his power or rule affectively.²³

¹⁹ He indicates that he delayed finishing the book because of the War (Nehri: 104).

²⁰ In some of his personal letters to the Sultan, the Sheikh uses the commonly employed term *Khilafet-panabi* (the refuge of *Khilafa*) Cf. BOA: Dosya No: 1525, Fon Kodu: PRK.ASK. Tarih: 7/ Temuz /1296 (Hicri) [7.19 .1880]. There are other letters in which the Sheikh does not even use this term. Cf. BOA: Dosya No: 1492, Fon Kodu: PRK.ASK. Tarih: 20/Haziran /1296 (Hicri) [7.1.1880].

²¹ Unlike *Shia* Muslims, *Sunnis* have used the term *imam* very loosely. Mostly *Sunnis* consider the word *imam* to have a general (*'aam*) application. However, the word *khilifa* (caliph) has particular (*'akhas*) applicability. Many prominent *Sunni* scholars contend that title caliph cannot be used for any ruler other than the first four successors of the Prophet. It is worthy of noting that Seyyid Bey, a prominent scholar of Islam and a staunch anti-caliphate Turkish Justice Minister in 1924, reminded his pro-caliphate colleagues in the Turkish parliament that “the ‘ulama of Kurdistan had never took the Ottoman caliphs very seriously.” See, TBMM Zabıtları (Turkish Grand National Assembly’s Debates). VII. 1 Mart 1340 (1924): 55-65.

²² (*garbe sultan ma’jay-e fath ve zafar---did dar ebra-ye shar’-e nammar*). (Nehri: 110).

²³ (*kardeh bidinan salbe ikhtiyar---bar sare mellat ze daste shariyar*) (ibid; 110).

Such assertions not only illustrate the Sheikh's great disappointment with the entire Ottoman state apparatus, but also shed light on the incompatible appropriation of Islam by the centre and by the periphery, which in turn signifies ethnic and communal differences as well. Such incompatibilities become clear in the Sheikh's encounter with the Ottoman army, which to him manifestly represented the state apparatus' lack of real ties with Islam. Even though the Ottoman elite usually viewed Islam of the "Oriental peoples" in a negative light, they tolerated some aspects that could be put into the service of more effective governance.²⁴ Necib Ali, an Ottoman official in 1873, in remarking on Sheikh Ubeydullah's Kurdish religiosity showcases this dual approach to religion in the periphery on the part of the elites:

[the Sheikh] works *to bring the Kurds, who are inclined toward idolatry, onto the straight path of Islam.* The township [*nahiye*] of Shamdinan where the Sheikh lives is on the path of tribal migration routes and on the border [i.e., on the periphery of the Ottoman domains]. *The order and security of this locality would have required three or four battalions. However, because of the Sheikh's presence and help ... only a local supervisor [mudir] and eight police forces [şabtiye] are enough to govern and collect all ... [the] taxes on time (rendered in Ateş, 2006: 332. Emphasis added).*

The passage above, as emphasised in the text, denotes how certain views and perceptions regarding the Kurds become even more negative when expressed by Persian *Shi'i* elites. For instance, an Iranian bureaucrat, Askandar Qurians, describes the Sheikh as "the religious leader of the nomadic tribes that are ignorant of any tradition and religion" (Ateş, 2006: 332). The Kurds were seen as a group of people which lived on the borders of the sublime Qajar and Ottoman states. In his memoir Alikhan Afshar, who personally fought against the Sheikh, writes that this "imprudent, ignoramus-like, vile, and ungodly people are nomadic *Sunnis*, residing in high and unreachable mountains, most of whom blindly follow the misguided Sheikh Ubeydullah" (2007: 30, 221).

As far as Nehri was concerned, "all the calamities that had befallen the Ottoman Empire," were the direct result of what he viewed as the cultural and moral degeneration of the state and its subjects (Nehri: 110). Thus, he contends that "the faith (*iman*) fades away when the religion (*din*) is gone and how can there be a victory (*nusrat*) when there are no faithful (*mu'min*)" (ibid). According to him, the Ottoman Turks had lost their moral compass and this was why they had sustained such a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Russians (ibid). Nehri argues that there is a direct correlation between the degree of people's religious devotion and their worldly failings and triumphs. It should be remembered that such an attitude was not uncommon among the nineteenth and twentieth century revivalists.²⁵ However, that being said, the Sheikh did not

²⁴ See Makdisi (2002: 768-96).

²⁵ Cf. Sayyid Qutb's introduction to al-Nadawi (1945: 10-11).

believe that the whole community had become “degenerate” in the same way or had strayed to the same extent from “the straight path.” He believed there were different attitudes toward Islam and morality between different ethnic groups. The Sheikh was of the opinion that the Ottoman Turks’ defeat, notwithstanding their greater numbers, more than anything else was a sign of their moral failure and “the Muslims are now controlled by thugs” (ibid: 111). He was especially harsh on the army and the bureaucrats and had no problems with defining them as “imprudently hostile to the religious people [i.e.; the Kurds]” (ibid: 120).²⁶

During the War, from the Sheikh’s perspective, the Ottoman side was composed of two opposing groups: The *Rom’s* (Ottoman Turks), “a morally lax group” and “the poised Kurds, who had strong religious devotion” (ibid: 117-23). The Kurds were portrayed as a devoted religious people, from among whom he had assembled tens of thousands of fighters as he called on them to join the *jihad* against the Russians’ invasion (ibid: 108). With the Kurds’ arrival (the only force that actually fought, according to the Sheikh), the Russian army sustained many humiliating defeats, one after another:

When in Abgha²⁷ *our fighters*²⁸ faced the Russians²⁹
 Russians sustained a mortifying defeat
 The Kurds, just like roaring lions in the fight;
 The Russians, like deer seeking a way out of sight
 The Kurds’ thunderous roars turned them into a [formless] cloud
 Down the plains streamed Russian blood,
 Russian heads, like hail began to fall (ibid: 116).

The details and the horror of the fights are explained meticulously and the fighters’ motivation is linked to their ethnicity and religious devotion. Hence, the Sheikh describes the Kurds’ role in the war as follows:

For our lions, even mountains were too small
 The bright glint of Kurdish swords
 Flashing like lighting, indescribable in words
 The enemy forces falling as they sought safe haven
 Kurdish roars echoed up to highest heaven
 The [Kurdish] *Gazis*³⁰ roars and shouts
 With the Russians’ fears and self-doubts

²⁶ (*bi muhaba bar goruh-e abl-e din*).

²⁷ A place near the city of Van, in Northern Kurdistan/Turkey.

²⁸ Emphasis added.

²⁹ It should be noted that all the poems are translated by the author from Persian to English.

³⁰ *Gazi* is someone who fights in the cause of religion. However, here the Sheikh uses the term exclusively for the Kurdish fighters who fought along the Ottomans, in the Russo-Ottoman war in 1877-78.

And the Russians' bodiless souls filled the air
For their soulless bodies turned red everywhere
As the Russians' cries reached the sky
Angels praising the *Gazîs* from on high (ibid).

The Sheikh claims that the "*Romîs*" would have been unwilling to fight, even if a soldier of theirs had dared to join the Kurds to fight against the Russians, he would have been severely punished by his superior upon sight. For instance:

One of [the Ottoman] soldiers, brave and upright
Having joined us during the Kurdo-Russian fight,
Was beaten with a stick, gravely punished
Lost his food ration, his honour tarnished
His sin unforgivable and so grave
Having joined the Kurds, so brave was he (ibid: 117).

According to Nehri, the Ottoman army's unwillingness to fight the Russians along with the Kurds exemplified their lack of religiosity, as well as their lack of regard and sympathy for the Kurds (ibid: 117-24). The reasons behind the army's displeasure with the followers of the Sheikh are unknown. What is known, however, is that the Sheikh and his followers perceived the Ottoman military as an irreligious, spineless, and corrupt army that represented the true nature of the Ottoman state (ibid). The Ottoman role is mostly seen as a destructive one. The impression they left on the Kurds was that they were full of hate for the Kurdish people. The Sheikh sees the "*Romîs*" as a group of people that did nothing but squander the Kurds' support and enthusiasm in the fight against the Russian incursion. He further states that the Ottoman army and its commanders awarded the Kurds' bravery and sacrifice with hatred, mockery, jealousy and by cutting their food rations. In this regard, Nehri notes that:

Despite that spectacular fight by the *Gazîs*
There was no support to come from the *Romîs*
...
The Kurdish reinforcements alone defeated the enemy
[Turkish] commanders awarded them with hatred and envy
They tried to get rid of the Kurds and cut their food rations
Days passed without bread, the fighters lost their patience
...
The *Romîs* hatred scarcely knew any limit
Their hatred and jealousy, who can relate? (ibid: 117-20).

The Sheikh explains how the *Romîs* represented all that was wrong with the Muslim world. He sees them as the classic example of "Muslim degeneration",

“vile (*sofleh*), lacking a heartfelt religion, and wolves disguised as shepherds (*až gorgan, ra'i pustin*)” (ibid: 111). The Turkish army’s mockery and ridicule of the Kurds, whom are described by the Sheikh as the *qom-e pak din* (the people of the true religion), made them consequently leave the battlefield. The Sheikh saw the above as signs of Ottoman hostility towards the Kurds, whom in his view had shown a great deal of bravery and displayed their moral superiority.

Furthermore, there is a sense of bitterness found in the Sheikh’s narrations of Kurdish-Ottoman interactions during the Russo-Ottoman War. Accordingly, the Sheikh sees the Ottomans as nominal Muslims; in their hearts they lacked strong religious feelings. He contends that the Ottomans or *Romîs*, as he refers to them, were *münafiq*, lacking any faith, while pretending to be Muslims. He recounts a *hadîth*, attributed to the Prophet of Islam, of whose content the Sheikh believes the Ottomans’ religiosity to be an embodiment (ibid: 109, 127). According to this *hadîth*, the Prophet declared that there were three criteria by which one can tell if a person is a *münafiq*: a) if s/he is untruthful when speaking b) if s/he breaks a promise made c) if s/he deceives another person that trusted her/him.³¹ In this regard, the Sheikh explains how he feels about the Ottomans:⁷

No matter how much I say about their injustices, it would not be more than a tiny bit of what actually took place. The *Romîs* dishonored every single promise they made to us at the beginning of the War. They squandered all that we had done for them. They promised to take care of the Kurdish fighters’ food rations, and they broke their promise... The *Romîs*’ actions rendered all the Kurdish sacrifice to be in vain (ibid: 127).

While the Ottomans’ religiosity is painted by the Sheikh as almost non-existent, pretentious, and insincere; the Kurdish religiosity is said to be otherwise. Only the Arabs’ bravery and piety was equivalent to that of Kurds since, according to the Sheikh, they have a common origin.³² In this vein, he notes that:

They are born with natural sagacity
 They are lions, symbols of bravery
 Epitomes of heroism in warfare
 They are Hatims,³³ icons of generosity

³¹ *'Alamatul munafiqi thalathatun: 'idha hadatha kadhiba, wa 'idha wa'ada 'akhlafa, wa idh[a] 'utmi'una kbana.*

³² This is not uncommon for the Kurds to claim that they have common origin with Arabs. Even Said Nursi (2009: 579) had a similar claim. These views, however, change among the Kurds in the face of Arab nationalism; especially after the creation of Iraq.

³³ Hatim al-Ta'i, is a symbol of generosity in Arabic literature and culture.

‘d’ in Kurd stands for *dîn* (religiosity)
 ‘k’ stands for *kamal* and perfection
 ‘r’ for *rushd*, spiritual maturation
 Only in Kurds can you find³⁴
 All these virtues combined (ibid:120-21).

The rise of Sheikh Ubeydullah signified a new era in Kurdish politics and presented a modality of its development in which the fusion of nationalism and religiosity were clearly visible. This fusion in Kurdish political movements, which in some cases lasted until 1960s, endowed them with a unique characteristic.³⁵ This is explained due to the fact that the Kurds simultaneously represented the religious and ethnic peripheral “Other”. The Kurds were generally portrayed as “backward” and “ignorant” in the late Ottoman period.³⁶ Therefore, their religiosity, in the eyes of the Ottoman elite, was also represented as a “backward” form of Islam.³⁷ This was because the Ottoman elite believed that “without receiving light from the Istanbul’s enlightenment”³⁸ no nation could possibly leap to their stage of modern comprehension of Islam. They viewed Kurdish Islam or non-Turkish Islam in general, as “outdated” and “backward”. The Shafi’i school (being one of the four major legal schools of *Sunni* Islam) had shown persistent stubbornness in its refusal to follow the officially propagated *Hanafi* school of law in the Empire: “This branch of Islam had not followed the Hanefis, the main Ottoman *mezhep* (school of law) in its supine attitude towards the state” (Mardin, 2006: 60).

A Kurdistani Islamic revivalist project

The Sheikh’s *Mesnevi* offers a first-hand account of his political and nationalist thoughts, which helps us to better grasp how his religious and nationalist views intersected. Aside from his *Mesnevi*, there is not much literature available to provide us with the specifics or particularities of the Sheikh’s revivalism. His *Mesnevi* is meant to be a religious revivalist project. He claims that he wrote his own *Mesnevi* to present a solution towards understanding and reviving the works of Rumi.³⁹ The Sheikh’s *Mesnevi*,

³⁴ *Ke nadarad hich aqnam-e degar.*

³⁵ Suh as tendencies are visible in Sheikh Said’s uprising in 1926, in Mahanadi republic in 1946 and to certain extent in Mostafa Barzani movement in 1960s.

³⁶ Such a perception of the Kurds remains influential in the later republican era (see Zeydanlıoğlu, 2008).

³⁷ These negative views had made their ways into the common Turkish proverbs and expressions. For instance, “*The God of the Kurds and dogs is one*” (*Kürt ile itin Allahı birdir*);” and “*God and the Kurds don’t like each other (Allah Kürdü, Kürd Allahı sevmez)*” (Alakom, 2010: 33-4). For more the general attitude toward the people in periphery see, Makdisi (2002 and 2002), Dringle (1998 and 2003).

³⁸ See, *Tevîman-ı Hakikat*. No: 595 (Jun 7, 1880).

³⁹ The ultimate aim in writing his *Mesnevi*, maintains the Sheikh, was to explain the *Masnavi* of Rumi since “the deep meanings in the poems of the prince (Amir) of this *tarîqat* had yet to be revealed to the ‘avâm” — the common people (Nehri: 133).

however, mostly concentrates on the Naqshbandi branch of Islamic Sufism. The book is a poetic detailing of the history of the Order and a guidebook for the followers of this *Tariqat*. His new poetic account, in a sense, was a reconstruction of the Naqshbandi Order's history to differentiate "its original and uncontaminated teachings" from the existing and prevalent misrepresentations of it by the contemporary generation (Nehri: 130). According to the Sheikh, the distance of people's knowledge about the Order from its "original teachings" had reached a point where one could hardly find any resemblance between the two (ibid).

Sheikh Ubeydullah's views resemble those of other contemporary Muslim revivalists. He was disturbed by the general direction of the contemporary state of affairs. He had very pessimistic views of the Ottoman state. It is evident that the Sheikh believed that the Ottoman state's deficiencies were rooted in its indifference toward Islamic laws and its teachings. He considered the Ottoman laws to be in direct opposition to Islam and (*kebelaf-e*)-*Shari'a* (ibid: 110). To him, Islamic laws were nothing more than the Qur'anic verses and the Prophetic tradition; and therefore, anything incompatible with them was forbidden innovation (*bid'a*) (ibid: 111). This illustrates a somewhat Mohammed 'Abduh (1849-1905) and Mohammed Rashid Rida (1865-1935) type of *Salafi*-ism, conflated with Naqshbandi teachings in the Sheikh's approach to the religious revival. He even invoked the idea of commonality of the Islamic *umma's* laws when he contends that "the laws of this *umma* — which are the best of all laws — are grounded in the Qur'an and the Prophetic tradition (ibid)." Nonetheless, it seems that his brand of revivalism differed from that of figures like 'Abduh and Rida in the sense that Ubeydullah was solely focused on reviving religion among the ethnic Kurds. The Sheikh was mostly concerned with the state of affairs in Kurdistan, which is an area that separates him from other Muslim revivalists. The Arab revivalists too had their own nationalistic agenda. 'Abduh also believed that "the Ottomans had usurped the caliphate and the Turks were unable to grasp the spirit of the Muhammadan message since they were late converts" (Enayat quoted in Satan, 2008: 39). Yet, unlike Nehri, at the same time they concerned themselves with the Muslim world in general. The Sheikh, however, did not seem to pay much attention to the Muslim world beyond Kurdistan.

Sheikh Ubeydullah held particularly positive views about Kurdish religiosity but was simultaneously highly critical of the Sufi Orders, including his own Naqshbandi Order. He saw the degeneration in Kurdistan as the degeneration of the Sufi Orders. This is why he felt an obligation to revive the previous generations' Sufi tradition⁴⁰ in twofold: a) the degeneration of the Sufism itself and, b) the existence of an exceptional degree of religious enthusiasm in

⁴⁰ "The descendants have moved astray from the ancestors' tradition and they have introduced forbidden innovations (*tark karde bar kas asar-e salaf-- mukhtari' gashte be bid'at bar kehalaf*)."
Therefore, I "ventured at revealing [or reviving] those pious people works (*la 'alaj amad jasrat dar miyan-- ke konam asar-e in pakân 'ayân* [Nehri, 131]).

Kurdistan, which required guidance and spiritual leadership (Nehri: 130). Without real guidance, asserted Ubeydullah, all this religious enthusiasm and excitement could lead to a wrong path (ibid). He claimed that it is the obligatory nature of the religious (or *tariqa*'s) following that necessitates writing a second *Mesnevi* that abides by the first and revives it (ibid: 129). From the Sheikh's perspective, the Sufi tradition in Kurdistan was losing its meaning and internal dynamism. Instead of achieving higher stages of spirituality through required training and obtaining the necessary knowledge it was becoming a matter of inheritance. To pass the stages of Sufism, a Sufi no longer needed long years of study and deep personal spiritual endeavours (ibid: 130). Therefore, despite their religious passion, "the Kurds were roaming in the plains of religion (*şahr-ye dîn*)" (ibid). According to Nehri, contrary to the tradition of the pious forbearers (*Salaḥ*), which required being critical of oneself and tolerant of others' shortcomings (*be her kes ḥusn-e zann*), the contemporary Sufis regarded themselves as paragons of piety and charged others with mischief (ibid:131).

Another area that sets the Sheikh apart from other Muslim revivalist groups and figures is his approach to the Islamic past and its "golden age". The Sheikh belonged to a tradition that believed in the constancy of *tajdid* (renewal)⁴¹ in Islamic history. Therefore, he believed that, in addition to the exceptional era of the Prophet and Rashidun, Muslim history had witnessed many golden ages one of which was discernible in the recent past of Kurdistan. The Sheikh called for "the return to a pristine Islam, defined in the Qur'an and the Prophetic tradition", which was practiced and revived in "the great' Sufi tradition", including the previous generation in Kurdistan. Its memories were still vivid, only several decades earlier "*Ḥaḏḏrat*" or Mawlana Khalid, the founder of the Khalidi branch of the Naqshbandi Order, was still living. Unlike other Muslim revivalists such as Jamal ad-Din Afghani (1838/1839-1897) and 'Abduh, the Sheikh believed that the Muslim "degeneration"⁴² in Kurdistan was not rooted in the Umayyad's rule.⁴³ Rather, it began with the death of his own father and of Mawlana Khalid in the first half of the nineteenth century. He believed Kurdistan was going through a two way process of degeneration: at first, Kurdistan's loss of vigour that began over a half a century earlier when,

⁴¹ Concepts such as *ihya'* and *tajdid* have long roots in Muslim history. Imam al-Haramayn al-Juwayni (1028–1085) and Abū Ḥāmed al-Ghazālī (1058–1111) are considered to be precursors in introducing those concepts. However, it was Jalaluddin Al-Suyuti (1445–1505) who became the major exponent of these concepts. For more see Al-Suyuti (1972).

⁴² Even when it was not explicitly stated, the idea of degeneration was already embedded in attempts for revival. In the 19th century, this sense of Muslims' digression from the right path was one of the major explanations for the European military, technical and scientific superiority over the Muslim world. In the 1940s, Abu al-Hassan al-Nadawi wrote a book on the same subject, which very well represents this view of degeneration and Muslims' distance from the golden age of Islam. Sayyid Qutb himself wrote a forward to al-Nadawi's book in which he states that this book was the best work he had ever read on the subject (al-Nadawi, 1945: 10).

⁴³ For the representation of this approach to Islamic history that seeks to locate "the genesis of Muslim degeneration" in history see, Maududi (1985).

according to the Sheikh, Kurdistan was a centre of learning attracting all those in pursuit of knowledge from around the world. Kurdistan was a garden of knowledge, people “from every region and every ethnic origin (*qawm*, Arabic, and *qowm*: Persian)” came to Kurdistan to harvest its fruits of knowledge. Undoubtedly the Sheikh’s claim contains some elements of truth about Kurdistan being a centre of scholarship. The Ottoman historian, Katib Chelebi, recounts that:

the market for learning in Turkey slumped, and the men of learning were nigh to disappearing. Then the novices of scholars who were working in some outlying places, here and there in the land of the Kurds, came to Turkey and began to give themselves tremendous airs. Seeing them, some capable men in our time became students of philosophy. As a student, I, the humble writer of these lines, in the course of discussion and study, was encouraged by some men of talent, as Plato was encouraged by Socrates, to acquire knowledge of the truths of things (1957: 26).

According to the Sheikh “those seas of knowledge and illumination” have faded away and what is left is nothing but a façade (Nehri: 130). The spirit of the previous generation’s legacy had been lost and, as previously mentioned, many of the existing Sheikhs and *kehalifas* are accused of being ignorant and of indulging in “nonsensical claims of having access to the unseen world” (ibid). They are described as lacking in any real mystical experience or spiritual acquisitions. This is how, in the Sheikh’s view, Kurdistan lost its vibrancy and “its seas of light are dried up” (ibid). The second aspect of this process of degeneration, to which Jwaideh devoted close attention, is the absence of a sovereign Kurdish state and the overall deterioration of the socio-political situation. The Sheikh does not say much about whether or not the first situation was caused by the second. However, the scholarship on Ottoman Kurdistan during the nineteenth century unveils the devastating impact of the destruction of the Kurdish principalities on the socio-political conditions in Kurdistan.⁴⁴ The Sheikh not only viewed the state as an institution that could establish order and security, but also as a civilising or modernising agent. To him, one of the most important roles that a state could play is to educate the populace. This aspect of the state’s role is almost always alluded to in the Sheikh’s statements, letters, and poems. It is one of the most important factors to sway the Sheikh in his drive for an independent Kurdish state.⁴⁵ This approach to the state becomes evident particularly in the following excerpt from the Sheikh’s letter to the American missionary Dr. Cochran:

⁴⁴ For more on Kurdish principalities see, Jwaideh (2006).

⁴⁵ Cf. The Sheikh’s letters to Iqbal ad-Dowleh in Celil, *Kürt Halk Taribinden 13 İlginç Yaprak/Thirteen Interesting Pages of the Kurdish Nation’s History*: 38-43.

Among other evil things, you have probably heard of the [Kurdish] tribe of ... Shikak, who are famous for their evil and ruin-causing deeds... and [who] will *remain in their savage state...* The Ottoman Government also, like the Persian, either *has not the means of civilizing these people or else neglects them.* Kurdistan has got a *bad reputation and has been disgraced, distinction is not made between peaceable and evil-disposed persons.*⁴⁶ (Emphasis added).

In the above letter, the Sheikh contends the Ottoman and the Persian governments intentionally avoided educating those Kurdish tribes. He argues that by keeping the Kurdish groups in “their savage state” it could help the two respective governments perpetuate their policies in Kurdistan. Therefore, he accused the Ottoman and Qajar states of doing two concurrent things against the Kurds. On the one hand, they refrained from educating Kurdish people while also allowing some tribes to commit all sorts of crimes; on the other, they used this to “*paint all the Kurds as savage.*”⁴⁷ This is why, argues the Sheikh, all Kurds are infamously known as “savages.” Thus:

[b]e it known to you for certain that this has all been caused by the laches of the Turkish and Persian authorities, for Kurdistan is in the midst between these two countries, and both Governments, for their own reason, do not distinguish between good and evil characters. It is thus that bad characters remain unreformed, respectable people get an ill repute and become ruined.

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In this regard, it can be argued that the Sheikh saw the creation of a state as instrumental to the success of his revivalist project as well. He not only saw the state as the provider of law and order but also as the grantor of an educated nation. It is evident that to the Sheikh, education was a panacea for the Kurdish plight. In addition, to him, the lack of public education in Kurdistan was the principal reason for Kurdish exclusion. In his letter to Iqbal ad-Dowleh,⁴⁹ the Sheikh writes “we admit that there are bad Kurds along with the good ones but there is no one *who even thinks of educating*⁵⁰ [the bad and therefore it is impossible] for the Kurds to right their wrongs without education” (Celil, 2007: 42). Accordingly, the Sheikh saw public education held the key to a more decent and humane life and a way for the Kurds to escape from their present miseries.

The instrumental role of education is frequently reiterated, to a degree that even the Sheikh’s surrogates seem to subscribe to the importance of public education. In his meeting with the British General Consul Abbott, Khalifeh Sayyid Muhammad, the Sheikh’s brother-in-law, also echoed his concern and

⁴⁶ Parliamentary Papers. Turkey No. 5. (1881. Inclosure 3. No 5/61).

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ The governor of Urmia in the 1880s.

⁵⁰ Emphasis added.

declared that Ubeydullah, “if successful, undertook to suppress brigandage, restore order within the borders of Turkey and Persia, place Christians and Muslims on equal footing of equality, *promote education*,⁵¹ and allow churches and schools to be built” (Jwaideh: 85).

It is apparent the Sheikh believed that the materialisation of the aforementioned projects would necessitate state power. Undoubtedly, he also believed that the objectives must be appealing to Europeans, and thus, “modern.”⁵² Khalifeh Sayyid Muhammad, while asking for the moral support of the Europeans in creating a Kurdish state, presented these stated strategic goals. He went as far as to say that if Ubeydullah reneged from the *promises* he made, “he was prepared to be judged by the tribunal of Europe, and to abide by the consequences” (Turkey No. 5; 1881. Inclosures in No. 56). Simultaneously, the Sheikh was making the case, through his surrogate, that neither the Persians nor the Ottomans were willing to take such important steps for the welfare of the Kurds and the Christians. As can be inferred from the above documents, the Sheikh sees a direct correlation between the lack of public education and the existence of such a phenomenon as brigandry that the Sheikh, if successful in creating a state, promised to eradicate. In his *Mesnevi*, in which he had no foreign interlocutors, there is no acknowledgement for the existence of Kurdish brigandry. However, he asserts that no matter how great one’s capabilities are or how noble one’s ancestry (*aşl-e najîb*) might be, one needs a proper education to fulfil one’s potential (Nehri: 121). Gold is thus used as an analogy to represent the Kurdish people, where he states that despite the fact that raw gold is the same substance that is made into jewellery, it needs refinement to take on lustre and value (*ibid*). To him, the Kurds are a ‘unique ethnic group’ (*qovm*) in terms of their “mastery in art and in their sophistication (*fażl u honar*): No one can be as talented as the Kurds if they are properly educated” (*ibid*). If they were “united under one leadership, they would have had a unique state (*bî-masal va bî-nażîr*)” (*ibid*). Here the Sheikh’s emphasis on the unity of the Kurds under a Kurdish leadership commensurate with his more outright nationalistic views found in his personal letters (see Celîl, 2007: 45-58). This is particularly significant since in his call for political unity, the Sheikh overtly excludes non-Kurdish Muslims.

There is a dearth of information concerning the details in which the Sheikh conceptualised a modern state and the scope of his grasp of it. However, the above denotes that the Sheikh believed in the necessity of a state in order for the Kurds to obtain an education, defend themselves against foreign aggression, and to ensure their internal security and overall safety (see, Nehri: 121).

⁵¹ Emphasis added.

⁵² All the evidence indicates that the Sheikh had a fair understanding of what was going on in the world. Dr. Cochran remarks that the Sheikh “seemed to enjoy conversing on all subjects with me. During the week that I stayed at his house, I had many very pleasant talks with him. He was very much interested in hearing about the new inventions and other wonders of the Western world (quoted in Speer, 1911: 80).

Conclusion

To conclude in this regard, the impact of ethnic background and cultural context are visible in the Sheikh's understanding of Islam. In many ways, the boundaries of his Islamic interpretation coincide with his ethnic and his "imagined", as per Benedict Anderson, national boundaries. The Sheikh redrew his religious boundaries in accordance with that of the Kurdish ethnicity. The Sheikh's previously unexplored poetic work, provides us with rare information about the Sheikh's perception of the Kurds and their Others. It helps to settle the dichotomous approaches to his uprising as his poetry evidences that his religious views were compatible with his nationalism. The Sheikh was a Kurdish Muslim revivalist. Yet, his religious revivalism was an exclusionary one. Unlike most anti-colonial Muslim revivalists, *Islamic umma* had no place in his political imagination. His imagined state was a religious one of some sort. Yet, it would have been created only to deal with the Kurdish predicaments. At most, it would be a state only for the Kurds and Armenians. According to the Sheikh, it was better for the Kurds to have a state of their own.

Despite the vagueness of the Sheikh's concept of the state, like many modern Muslims, he viewed the state as the main agent for change. Such an approach signifies the main characteristic of modern Islamic revivalism, which differs from other pre-modern and medieval forms. Moreover, the Sheikh has also attached great value to the role of the state in educating the populace. He deemed the state not only as a grantor of security and law and order, but also as an instrument for the dissemination of his "true" form of Islam. However, as indicated, the Sheikh's interest in reviving and spreading "true" Islam only occurred within limited ethnic and geographic boundaries, that is, Kurdistan. Such emphasis on the ethno-national boundaries of his "imagined" Islamic state was indicative of the rise of nationalism in Muslim societies and the impact this rise had on Muslim political thought.

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