

Kurdish Power Holders in Seventeenth-Century Bidlīs:

A Brief Introduction*

Mustafa Dehqan and Vural Genç

To Thomas A. Sinclair

şāhib al-‘aqlayn

Abstract

This article reconsiders the political organisation of Bidlīs, a leading Kurdish emirate of the Ottoman Empire, during the seventeenth-century, mainly on the basis of Ottoman archival documents. It scrutinises the conventional depiction of Bidlīs as lacking any effective central authority and shows that the Ottoman Kurdish officials in fact exercised significant power. However, there were recurrent conflicts, both between the emir of Bidlīs and the tribal chiefs in the emirate, and also between the emirate and the central power in Istanbul. These tensions were situated within the context of Ottoman-Safavid frontier conflicts, and endemic local warfare, which generated new resources that upset the existing balance of power.

Keywords: Bidlīs; early modern history; Ottoman Empire; Safavids; Kurdish emirates

Abstract in Kurmanji

Di sedşala 17an de li Bidlîsê xwedan-hêzên kurd: destpêkeke kurt

Ev gotar rêxistinbûna siyasi ya Bidlîsê, mîrektîyeye kurd a sereke ya împaratoriya osmanî, ya dema sedşala 17emîn, bi esasî li ser bingeha dokumentên arşîva osmanî ji nû ve dinirxîne. Gotar, pênaseya giştî ya Bidlîsê wek mebrûmbûyîna ji hêzeke navendî ya bibandor ji nêzîk ve dikole û nişan dide ku ya rast memûrên kurd ên osmanî hêzeke girîng temrîn kirine. Lê, pevçûnên berdemam hebûne hem di navbera mîrê Bidlîsê û serokeşîrên di mîrektîyê de, hem jî di navbera mîrektî û hêza navendî ya Stenbolê de. Ev nerîbetî di nav çarçoveya pevçûnên sînorî yên osmanî-safewîyan û şerên herêmî yên endemîk de bi cih bûne yên çavkaniyên nû afirandine ku hêseniya hêzê ya beyî beravajî kirine.

Abstract in Sorani

خواوەن دەستەلاتدارانی کورد لە سەدەی حەفدەهەمدا لە بەدلیس: پێشەکییەکی کورت

بە پشەبەستێن بە بەلگەنامە ئەرشیفییهکانی عوسمانیهکاندا، ئەم ووتارە پێداچوونەر بە ریکخستنی سیاسی بەدلیسدا دەکات، کە میرنشینیکی پێشەنگی کوردی ئیمپراتوریەتی عوسمانی بوو لە سەدەی حەفدەهەمدا. بە لیکۆلێنەرەوی وورد لە وێنەکردنی باوی بەدلیس وەکو میرنشینیکی بێبەش لە دەستەلاتی کاربگەری ناوهنددا، ئەم ووتارە ئەوە نیشان داوەت کە بەرپرسیاری کوردی عوسمانی لە راستیدا دەسەلاتیکی بەرچاویان پەڕهوەکردووە. بەلام ناکۆکی بەردەوام هەبوو لە نێوان ئەمیری بەدلیس و سەرۆک خێڵەکان لە میرنشینهکەدا، وە لە نێوان میرنشینهکە و دەسەلاتی ناوەند لە ئەستەنبۆل. ئەم گرژیانە لە چوارچۆیە مەملانێی سنووری نێوان عوسمانی و سەفەویەکان و شەری درێژخایەنی ناخۆیی دا ڕوویانداوە و بوونەتە هۆکاری دەرکەوتنی سەرچاوەی نوێ، و تیکچوونی هاوسەنگی هیزی لیکهوتوتەر.



Abstract in Zazaki***Hukmdarê kurdî yê Bidlîsê seserra hewtêsine: destpêko kilmek***

Na meqale awanîya Bidlîsî ya sîyasîye, yew mîreyîya serekî ya Împeratoriya Osmanîyan, bi bîngeyê belgeyanê arşîvîkîyan ê osmanîyan ra newe ra erjnena. Teswîro tradîsyonel o ke Bidlîs wayîrê otorîteya merkezîya tesîrdare nêbîyo, yeno çîpersayene. Ser o kê yeno nawmayene ke raştîye de memurê osmanîyan ê kurdî wayîrê hêz û selahîyetêkê muhîmî bîyî. Labelê, hem mabênê mîreyê Bidlîs û sereşîranê mîreyîye hem kê mabênê hukmê Îstanbulî yê merkezî de têkewtişê tekrarî gewimîyayêne. Nê tengîyayîşî zereyê kontekstê têkewtişanê osmanî-sefenîyan û cengdarîya cayîya zereyîye de ca gêne ke înan çîmeyê neweyî yê ke hemsencîya hêzdarî ya ê wextî herimmaye, viraştî.

Introduction

Located in eastern Anatolia, in the steep valley of the Bidlis River, a tributary of the Tigris, Bidlis was one of the most important Ottoman Kurdish emirates, which also included the districts of Mush and Akhlāt.¹ Through the supply of agricultural products, it played a significant part in sixteenth-century Ottoman trade,² and became even more prominent in Armenian trade in the seventeenth-century, as the Armenian community constituted the emirate's main minority population and its members were the main actors in the expansion of trade into Eastern Anatolia.³ The Bidlis emirate was also a significant military power, engaging in both Ottoman and Safavid expansionist wars, and extending its control over several frontier districts.⁴ But while the history of Bidlis in the sixteenth-century has been the subject of a fair amount of academic study, including most recently by Sacha Alsancakli, and the authors of this work,⁵ the seventeenth-century has not attracted comparable attention.

* We are grateful to Henry R. Shapiro, Metin Atmaca, and Mehmet Demirtaş for both their comments on the manuscripts and for their suggestions for further reading. We also owe special acknowledgment to Victor Ostapchuk, Georgios C. Liakopoulos, and especially Sacha Alsancakli who corrected our English and helped us develop a wider perspective on seventeenth-century Bidlis. Special thanks are also due to Janet Klein who copy-edited the text. Any errors that remain are our own responsibility.

¹ For more geographical data on these areas, see Shihāb al-Dīn Abī ‘Abd Allāh Yāqūt b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Himawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān, Jacut's Geographisches Wörterbuch*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld (Leipzig: In Commission bei F. A. Brockhaus, 1866-1873), i, 526; Zayn al-‘Abidīn Shirwānī, *Bustān al-Siyāḥa* (Tehran: Inḫibā‘āt, 1891), 132; H. Hübschmann, “Die altarmenische Ortsnamen”, *Indogermanische Forschungen* 16 (1904): 324; and Orhan Kılıç, *730 Numaralı Van, ‘Adilevâz, Muş ve Bitlis Livaları Tımar İcmal Defteri* (MA dissertation, Elazığ Fırat Üniversitesi, 1989).

² See Emine Altunay, *1540 (H.947) Tarihlî Tabirî Defterine Göre Bitlis Sancağı* (MA dissertation, Samsun Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi, 1994); and Ahmet Yılmaz, *413 Numaralı Mufassal Tapu Tabirî Defterine Göre Bitlis Sancağı (1555-1556)* (MA dissertation, Konya T. C. Selçuk Üniversitesi, 2010); both should be used with great caution.

³ Compare Vahe Baladouni and Margaret Makepeace, *Armenian Merchants of the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries: English East India Company Sources* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1998), 246-247 and Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, “Liquid Frontiers. A Relational Analysis of Maritime Asia Minor as Religious Contact Zone in the 13th-15th Century”, in *Islam and Christianity in Medieval Anatolia*, eds. Andrew Peacock, Bruno De Nicola, Sara Nur Yıldız (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2015), 117-146.

⁴ For details, see Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont, “Un rapport de Fil Ya’kûb Paşa, beylerbey du Diyar Bekir en 1532”, *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 76 (Festschrift Andreas Tietze) (1986): 35-41; idem, *Les Ottomans, les Safavides et leurs voisins : contribution à l’histoire des relations internationales dans l’Orient islamique de 1514 à 1524* (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1987); idem, “Cinq lettres de Hüseyin Paşa, beylerbey du Diyar Bekir (1522-1532)”, *Journal Asiatique* 289 (1991): 239-265; idem, “Quinze lettres d’Uzun Süleyman Paşa, beylerbey du Diyar Bekir (1533-1534)”, *Anatolia Moderna* 1 (1991): 137-186; idem, “Quatre lettres de Biyıklı Mehmed Paşa”, *Bulleten* 56 (1992): 703-725.

⁵ For a general study of Kurdish emirates, see Metin Atmaca, “Negotiating Political Power in the Early Modern Middle East: Kurdish Emirates between the Ottoman Empire and Iranian Dynasties (Sixteenth to Nineteenth Centuries)”, in *Cambridge History of the Kurds*, eds. Hamit Bozarslan, Cengiz Gunes, Veli Yadirgi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 45-72. For the

During the sixteenth-century, a growing number of chronicles and documents related to Bidlīs started being produced. There were countless letters, including those of Idrīs-i Bidlīsī, written about the political situation of Bidlīs, transitions of power, or the proper way to ask the sultan for an instruction, often considered a symbol of status.⁶ Historical accounts by Sharaf Khān Bidlīsī, the author of the *Sharaf-nāma*,⁷ and Shukrī Bidlīsī, the author of the *Selīm-nāme*,⁸ and the Ottoman *tahrir* registers of Bidlīs⁹ can give us a clearer picture of the sixteenth-century political and social history of Bidlīs, as well as inform us about Ottoman-Safavid frontier conflicts.

After the end of the sixteenth-century, the number of primary sources penned about the Bidlīs emirate began to decline rapidly, dropping by 70 percent between 1601 and 1697. The post-sixteenth century decline in primary sources was part of a broader pattern of reduced political frontier violence that went unnoticed in the Ottoman and Safavid sources. This period only includes Evliya Çelebi's detailed account on the social and cultural life of Bidlīs under the rule of Abdāl Khān.¹⁰ But our lack of knowledge on events before and after Abdāl Khān reminds us that there is no significant primary source on the political history of Bidlīs in that period. This article seeks to address this neglect by exploring the contexts discussed in archival documents on Bidlīs in the seventeenth-century.

It should be noted that non-archival sources are also important for writing the seventeenth-century history of Bidlīs. However, it must be admitted that these non-archival sources of the seventeenth-century are fewer in number and more superficial compared to those of the previous century. First of all, the interest of the imperial authorities decreased because the emirate no longer constituted a “border” between Ottomans and Safavids as it was in the previous century. Likewise, Safavid court historians almost never mentioned the Bidlīs principality, since it had ceased to be a regional power party to the Ottoman-Safavid conflict and was fully integrated into the Ottoman administration. This naturally led to a decrease in the number of documents produced on Bidlīs in the Safavid realm.

Mühimme, *Şikâyet*, *Ruus*, *Timar & Ruznamçe* and *Tabrir* registers in the Ottoman Archives and the documents belonging to various sections affiliated with the Imperial Council (*Divan-ı Hümayûn*) constitute our main archival resources. *Mühimme* and *Şikâyet* registers, which

emirate of Bidlīs in particular, see Sacha Alsançaklı, “Matrimonial Alliances and the Transmission of Dynastic Power in Kurdistan: The Case of the Diyâdinids of Bidlīs in the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Centuries”, *Eurasian Studies* 15/2 (2017): 222-249; idem, “Historiography and Language in 17th-century Ottoman Kurdistan: A Study of Two Turkish Translations of the *Sharafnāma*”, *Kurdish Studies* 6/2 (2018): 171-196, especially for the Ottoman Turkish translation of the *Sharaf-nāma* produced in Bidlīs. The translator was Muḥammad Bayg b. Aḥmad Bayg, a great-great-grandson of Sharaf Khān. Also, Mustafa Dehqan and Vural Genç, “Darwish Maḥmūd: An Unknown Sixteenth Century Kurdish Notable”, *Journal Asiatique* 306/1 (2018): 35-39; idem, “Mirlivā of Malāṭya: A Correction of Sharaf Khān's Statement Concerning his Father”, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 169/1 (2019): 235-238. The work by Sedat Ulugana, “Bitlis Mirligi Tarihinde Abdal Han Dönemi (1618-1664)”, *Kürt Tarihi* 20, 52-57 should be used with great caution, as dating and the use of some historical materials therein are particularly problematic.

⁶ See TSMA, E. 3165, TSMA E.5675, TSMA E.6627; TSMA E.8333; and Vural Genç, “İdris-i Bidlīsî'nin II. Bayezid ve I. Selim'e Mektupları”, *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 47 (2016): 147-208.

⁷ See Scheref, Prince de Bidlis. *Scheref-nāme ou Histoire des Kourdes*, ed. V. VéliaminoF-Zernof (Saint-Petersbourg: Commissionaires de l'Académie impériale des sciences, 1860-1862).

⁸ See Şükri-i Bidlīsī. *Selīm-nāme*, ed. M. Argunşah (Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi, 1997).

⁹ See Mustafa Dehqan and Vural Genç, *Surveying an Ottoman Borderland: The Registers of Bidlīs* (forthcoming).

¹⁰ For example, see Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatname*, vols. I-VI, ed. A. Cevdet; vols. VII-VIII, ed. K. Rifat; vols. IX-X, ed. Anonymous (Istanbul: İkdām, 1896-1938); Richard Hartmann, “Zu Ewlija Tschelebi's Reisen im oberen Euphrat und Tigrisgebiet”, *Der Islam* 9 (1919): 184-224; Robert Dankoff, *Evliya Çelebi in Bitlis. The Relevant Section of the Seyahatname* (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 53-54; and Christiane Bulut, *Evliya Çelebi's Reise von Bitlis nach Van: ein Auszug aus dem Seyahatname; interpretierende Transliteration, kommentierte Übersetzung und sprachwissenschaftliche Bemerkungen* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997).

constitute the principal *defter* series of the Ottoman bureaucracy, form the main backbone of the existing documents on seventeenth-century Bidlīs. Various issues raised in petitions from Bidlīs to the Imperial Council were recorded in these registers. It is seen that these records sometimes cover the various problems connected with the rulers of Bidlīs, their political conflicts, preparations for war and expeditions, and the petitions of their subjects. Such registers can be expected to contain more detailed information about certain localities. Without these registers, it would probably not be possible to fully understand the relations of the Bidlīs emirs with the center and the periphery. Tribal activity, internal conflicts, and the debts incurred by the rulers with various circles are reflected in these documents. *Ruus* registers, which include the dates of appointment and dismissal of rulers of Bidlīs and the motives behind these decisions, are essential to establish a proper chronology. A few *icmal tahrir* registers from the beginning of the seventeenth-century uncover the nature of the principality's revenues, and thanks to *Niṣan Tabvīl*, *Maliyeden Mūdever* and *Timar Ruḫnamçe* registers, we also have information about the emirate's expenses. In these records, the bestowal of *timar* and *ze'amet* among the emirate's ruling class is documented, as well as the ruler's and the sultan's own portions from these revenues. A better understanding of the struggle over sources of income and the financial frictions visible in the seventeenth-century depends on the careful examination of these registers, which indicate among which powers the principality's revenues were divided. The control established by the ruler over the emirate's sources of revenue, and the efforts made to gain political influence through this control, are indeed one of the most contentious issues arising between the principality and the central authorities in this period.

Archival registers dealing with seventeenth-century Bidlīs mostly focus on the emirate's rulers, their politics, and relations with the center and periphery. The lack of 'awārız and (*seriyye*) court registers of Bidlīs prevent us from presenting a more colourful picture that includes the social and economic life of the principality.

The documents that are used here are located in the Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi in Istanbul. Most of the documents were written in a script known as *sıyakat* and *divānī*, although the script of some documents cannot be considered *divānī* in the full sense of the word. These are rather semi-*divānī* and, in some cases, are *sıyakat*. A peculiarity of the documents' script used here is a deviation of the *divānī* standard (for example roundness in the curves of several letters) as well as absence of strict horizontality of lines. Most often in such documents there is no indication of where the copy was made, but, judging by the paper, the script and other indirect evidence (for example, seals and datings), it is possible to say that they were produced in Istanbul, Vān, Diyārbakr, and Bidlīs. Lesser numbers of documents are given in separate collections, including many documents from earlier and later centuries. Delving more into these collections, we came to identify some patterns of bindings which constitute a veritable body of characteristics. The most striking feature of these types of bindings is the suppression of the whole background with closely set small circular stamps (not bigger than 2 mm), which render the actual design in bold relief.

While we lack any broader statistics, we can present some characteristics of the collections of the Ottoman Archives related to the emirate of Bidlīs in the seventeenth-century: among 12,754 unpublished documents we considered there are fewer than 200 copies with *basmalas*, no more than 2.1% of the entire collection. The paper appears to be somewhat thin and finely made but, as most are mounted, a complete examination was not possible. Most papers were

made from linen or linen and hemp, with exceptions made from an unidentified material. The length of these documents differs according to the contents and importance. The main physical size of the documents, however, is almost the same in both the early and later decades of the century: 23x34 cm. Pigments and inks used in the documents were not very diverse. The main ink was carbon-based black which was always applied as black ink, while vermilion, a mixture of vermilion and red lead, and, in some cases, organic red, were rarely used as red ink. Some documents are rather translucent, which is typical of degradation in historical and archival documents. These rare cases were caused by transparency or seeping of ink from the reverse side of the folio.

At present, the collection in question numbers about 20,000 items, although the number of documents' titles has never been counted. Needless to say, the cataloguing of such a significant number of documents is a difficult and time-consuming work.

Power Transition

One of the problems posed by power transitions in late-sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century Bidlīs was the emergence of major power challengers who felt that the status quo of their relations with the Ottoman central authorities did not correctly represent their rising position in the power hierarchy. This gap could generate, or exacerbate, grievances that encouraged the challenger to seek changes to that status quo, just as their growing power gave them the capacity to try and modify it. As this dynamic continued and the challenger rose to a power almost equivalent to that of the Ottoman hegemon, the risk of a hegemonic war grew closer and closer. The underlying logic of power transitions in Bidlīs, however, does not necessarily apply only to hierarchical relations. The archival documents that detail the dangers of power transitions within the hierarchical order can equally apply to power transitions among the elder members of a family.¹¹ In other words, when a power transition occurred between the Ottoman and Safavid representatives of these two empires, the risk of conflict would increase. The people of Bidlīs alone, independently from the greater politics of the two empires in the region, were better able to take power and overcome the chaos that occurred. In fact, whether the succession had been previously applied to regional Turkish hierarchies,¹² the succession this time was couched in the interactions between Khalaf Bayg¹³ and Դիյā' al-Dīn Bayg, who were the brother and the son of Sharaf Khān, the author of *Sharaf-nāma* and the last emir of sixteenth-century Bidlīs. In other words, the succession remained in Sharaf Khān's family and the Ottoman and Iranian official representatives were removed from power. Also, we would argue that the power transition from the sixteenth-century to seventeenth-century, in its earliest couple of years, helped the Ottomans to gradually and imperceptibly expel the Safavids from this region. After about a few years, the Safavid Empire lost its influence and the Ottoman Empire played a more important role in regional politics.

¹¹ See A.DVN. 3/95.

¹² Compare the sixteenth-century interregnum period of Bidlīs (43 years) and the Turkish Ottoman representatives as emirs of Bidlīs. For example, see KK 1764, 249, 253.

¹³ He was the second son of Shams al-Dīn Bayg and a brother of Sharaf Khān, author of the *Sharaf-nāma*. During the rule of Shah Tahmāsp, he was a *qurchi* and emir of some frontier districts. This is why Ottoman documents present him as “a former beg of the Ajam” (“*sabika Acom'de bey olan*”). In August 1591, he was the Ottoman emir of Mālāzgird, and also responsible for collecting *ciğye* from the Armenians; see A.RSK.d.1473, 118, 150; MAD.d.7439, 16-17.

Khalaf's Shaky Period: 1601-1605

Any discussion of the early seventeenth-century emirs of Bidlīs would be difficult without understanding the historical ties entertained by the emirs with Sharaf Khān, the author of the *Sharaf-nāma*. When Sharaf Khān was killed by the governor of Vān, Aḥmed Pasha,¹⁴ sometime between late 1599 and early 1600,¹⁵ the city of Bidlīs was plunged into chaos. Interestingly, Sharaf Khān was first succeeded by a certain Farhād Bayg, who was directly appointed by the sultan as *beylerbeyi* of Bidlīs.¹⁶ Farhād Bayg had the misfortune to be killed by Celalī rebels in Kayseri when he was travelling to Bidlīs in order to succeed Sharaf Khān.¹⁷ From 1598 to 1601, there was a series of Ottoman raids by Aḥmed Pasha against the region of Bidlīs, during which he plundered and burned the city, took prisoners and slaves, and killed Sharaf Khān and many members of the Rōzhikī tribal confederacy.¹⁸ Some documents portray the shock and horror felt at the Ottomans' arrival at a series of places in Bidlīs.¹⁹ Khalaf Bayg, as temporary emir and responsible for the affair of Bidlīs in early 1601, also records Ottoman incursions by “the cruel Aḥmed Pasha,” and some other local rebellions in Mush.²⁰ However, he seems to regard the Ottomans as a passing threat and not as permanent conquerors, saying, in the context of a request to the sultan, that the people of the city must keep their heads down and wait for the passing of the storm.²¹ Khalaf Bayg was clearly on cordial terms with both the Ottomans and the people of Bidlīs, his ancestral town. It is unclear however what role he had played in the conflict between Sharaf Khān and the sultan. After the murder of Sharaf Khān, he was the first to succeed his brother, and so became the first Kurdish emir of seventeenth-century Bidlīs after a temporary (less than eight months) loss of control.

For two months, command of the emirate was also in the hands of Dīyā' al-Dīn Bayg. But this does not mean that Khalaf Bayg was fully out of power. Both the son and the brother of Sharaf Khān had control over some distinct districts of Bidlīs, but the sultan refused to award Dīyā' al-Dīn the right to rule Bidlīs as this right (as a *hükümet* emirate) had been granted for life to the brother of the previous emir.²² It is true that after the murder of Sharaf Khān, Bidlīs became a normal *sancak* with no *hükümet* status, and among Sharaf Khān's supporters, reactions may have varied from anger and defiance to disappointment and resignation. There were probably a number of reasons that Dīyā' al-Dīn lost the emirate in a dyadic competition with Khalaf Bayg. The most important one was legitimacy: if Dīyā' al-Dīn, who was not the elder son of Sharaf Khān, emerged as the emir of Bidlīs, thousands of Bidlīsīs would likely have believed that the elder son and the hereditary successor of the great Sharaf Khān had been robbed. However, the legitimacy of Khalaf Bayg's very short-lived rule in the earliest

¹⁴ He had also attacked and looted Arabgir; see Vural Genç, *Kim Bu Mülke Kondu Bundan Ezzeli: Arabgir (Yerleşim, Vakfı, Toplumsal Hayat ve Ekonomi 1518-1874)* (Istanbul: Kerem Aydınlar Vakfı, 2020), 114.

¹⁵ See Mustafa Dehqan and Vural Genç, “Why Was Sharaf Khān Killed?”, *Manuscripta Orientalia*, 21/2 (2015): 14-15, 19, n.15.

¹⁶ See MAD 7439, 20.

¹⁷ See A.DVN.8/15, dated May 1601.

¹⁸ See the account of the fall of Bidlīs in BOA A.AMD 1/4, dated 1601. For details on the Rōzhikī, the main Kurdish tribe of Bidlīs, see Scheref, *Scheref-nameh ou Histoire des Kourdes*, i, 431-438; L. S. Xaç'ikyan (ed.), *XV Dari Hayeren Jeğageri Hişatakaraner 1401-1450* (Yerevan: Haykakan SSH GA Hratarakch'ut'yun, 1955), i, 329, 331-333.

¹⁹ For example, BOA A.DVN,12/54; A.DVN,12/85; and A.NŞT, 9/26.

²⁰ In September 1601, Khalaf Bayg defeated a certain Aḥmad in Mush who rebelled against his emirate: A.NŞT. 9/26. For some economic activities of Khalaf Bayg in Bidlīs, and the castles of Mush and Küfündür, especially on the improvement of their military capabilities, see MAD.d.7316, 9.

²¹ See Mustafa Dehqan and Vural Genç, “Reflections on Sharaf Khān's Autobiography”, *Manuscripta Orientalia* 21/1 (2015): 46-61.

²² See A.DVN.MHM.d.32/168.

months of the seventeenth-century was increasingly seeping away, and the question of who to appoint in Bidlīs was, for the Ottoman court, even more problematic. They tried to invest Farhād Bayg as their own loyal representative, but, after the latter's murder, they finally designated Khalaf Bayg as the legal emir of Bidlīs.

There was no other rival to the throne of Khalaf Bayg, as Dīyā' al-Dīn was not the elder son of Sharaf Khān. Hence, mention of Sharaf Khān's elder son, Shams al-Dīn Bayg, is necessary. Of all the sons of Sharaf Khān, it is only Shams al-Dīn Bayg whose name is mentioned in the *Sharaf-nāma* as the legal successor to his father.²³ It is, however, unclear what happened to Shams al-Dīn, as we were unable to locate him in the Ottoman archives, which means that he might have passed away before his father.

Aḥmad Bayg, another influential son of Sharaf Khān, was the emir of Mush, a dependency of Bidlīs. Aḥmad is first mentioned as the *sancakbey* of Mush on 24 February 1579,²⁴ but it seems that, from 1584 onwards, the *sancak* of Mush was only considered as a kind of adjunct of Bidlīs. In that year, Aḥmad was called *mīr-i liva-ı Şeref Han* or *veled-i Şeref Han*, but he is simply called the *sancakbey* of Mush in 1585. Details on what happened in Mush are given elsewhere,²⁵ the point is that Aḥmad is unrelated to the succession of his father in Bidlīs, as he was dead in 1588.²⁶ In other words, Aḥmad and Shams al-Dīn were naturally removed from the list of Khalaf Bayg's rivals to gain central power in the emirate.

As the last possible reason for the Ottomans to choose Khalaf Bayg as the emir of Bidlīs, one may mention the latter's governorship in 'Adiljawāz.²⁷ 'Adiljawāz, Mush and Akhlāt were all counties in Bidlīs, but their early-modern populations did not have a sense of their Bidlīsiness (however one may define it), and it is thus not the reason for grouping them together. They did share certain terms, including elements of a legal vocabulary, that point to common institutions, but one cannot posit a relationship in any real sense.²⁸ They were different societies with shared experiences that lived in close geographical contact, but reacted diversely to political events, all the while profoundly influencing each other. Also, all experienced Ottoman aggression as a decisive force in their history. As a former emir of 'Adiljawāz, Khalaf Bayg was able to extend his influence and power over all of the emirate's districts; thus, his power was distributed territorially but articulated hierarchically, and derived from a single source – the murder of Sharaf Khān. The complex mixture of exhortation to rule firmly, injunction to be a loyal Ottoman representative, to extend royal power and income, and the constant harping on the potent model of Ottoman governorship would have had a strong impact on the successful succession of Khalaf Bayg, who was then building up the provincial governorship that dominated Ottoman policies towards Bidlīs from January 1601 until 1605.

²³ See Scheref, *Scheref-nameh ou Histoire des Kourdes*, i, 456: *hükumat-i murūthi dar taşarruf-i faqir ast agar chi bi al-ṭab' az in amr-i kbaṭir ijinab nimuda ishtighal-i an ra dar 'ubda-yi walad-i arshad wa farzand-i amjad muvaffaq bi akhlaq-i nik Abu al-Ma'ali Shams al-Din Bayg ṭanwala Allah ta'ala umrubu wa da'afa jalala qadrubu kard.*

²⁴ See Kāmil Kepeci Tasnifi 262, 186.

²⁵ See Dehqan & Genç, "Reflections on Sharaf Khān's Autobiography"; Kılıç, 730 *Numaralı Van, 'Adilcevaz, Muş ve Bitlis Livaları*.

²⁶ According to a tombstone inscription at the Sharafiya Complex in Bidlīs, Aḥmad passed away in 1588. The inscription reads: *اللهم اغفر و ارحم الساكن هذا المقبر [كذا] [المرحوم المغفور احمد بك ابن الحاكم الاعدل الاشراف الاكمل شرف خان عمدة الامرا خلف العظام الحكام الكرام فى شهر ٢٨ ذى الحجة لسنة ٩٩٦*. Based on field work at Sharafiya Complex, Bidlīs, November 2020. For other tombstones of Bidlīs, the reader may refer to a general study by Kadir Pektaş, *Bitlis Tarihi Mezarlıkları ve Mezar Taşları* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2001); it should be noted, however, that it is quite erroneous and defective.

²⁷ See MAD.d.7316, 9.

²⁸ See MAD.d.7319, 11; MAD.d.9825, 53; A.DVN.15/81.

During his four-year governorship, Khalaf Bayg tried to keep the peace in Bidlīs, and he especially strived to bring back the looted properties of his defunct brother, Sharaf Khān.²⁹ He had close relations with the Ottoman court and he tried to make use of them to restore what Bidlīs had lost, and even sent his *ketbhūda*, Budak Çavuş, to Istanbul in order to reclaim Sharaf Khān's properties, goods, and library.³⁰ He did this in vain and Ḍīyā' al-Dīn succeeded him in 1605.

Ḍīyā' al-Dīn (1605-1618): Maker of Seventeenth-Century Bidlīs

Any leader depends on supporters to perform his role and stay in power, but these supporters are also possible challengers and potential successors. Thus, Ḍīyā' al-Dīn Bayg and his supporters, who had initially protected his brother Shams al-Dīn Bayg, could also use these very resources to overthrow him and install Ḍīyā' al-Dīn as successor to his father. As the most powerful member of the political elite in Bidlīs, Ḍīyā' al-Dīn not only defeated his uncle Khalaf Bayg but also planned to usurp the legal succession of Shams al-Dīn Bayg and other possible rivals. Similar relationships existed in local organisations between chief Ṛōzhikī officials and other tribesmen lower in Bidlīs's hierarchy. To maintain his position, then, Ḍīyā' al-Dīn and his supporters had to find the right balance and compensate their tribal officials sufficiently so that the temptation to overthrow him remained without an incentive.³¹

There were two cases of political succession in late sixteenth-century Bidlīs: Shams al-Dīn Bayg succeeding Sharaf Khān and Khalaf Bayg succeeding Sharaf Khān. Because of his more influential role and power, however, it was Ḍīyā' al-Dīn who was selected as the successor to the chaotic early seventeenth-century Bidlīs emirate in Istanbul, in 1605, and the succession became public as a final imperial decision for the strategic emirate of Bidlīs. Thus, after a period of regional conflicts and struggle by political supporters of either Khalaf Bayg or Shams al-Dīn Bayg, Ḍīyā' al-Dīn became the only Kurdish power holder in Bidlīs to rule in hereditary succession accepted by both the Ottoman Empire and the main part of the Bidlīsī population.

During the career of Sharaf Khān, the author of the *Sharaf-nāma*, Ḍīyā' al-Dīn was the *timar* holder of Kārchikān, in Bidlīs.³² For some time Ḍīyā' al-Dīn was a symbol of barbaric mayhem and murderous plunder, and a threat to the tradesmen and sedentary population of Bidlīs.³³ The following years demonstrate that this early depiction of Ḍīyā' al-Dīn as the enemy of tradesmen and merchants of Bidlīs is simply erroneous. Ḍīyā' al-Dīn did achieve the distinction of uniting the Kurdish tribes under his rule and was able to bend them to his will and he attained the status of undisputed and indeed unchallenged ruler of the Bidlīs emirate from 1605 and for many years hence.

The first of his actions that is recorded took place in the Ḥazzō emirate.³⁴ Tensions had been brewing throughout Bidlīs, especially in the troubled final years of the sixteenth-century and for some years before the transition of power actually began. The Kashāghī Kurdish tribe of

²⁹ See MAD.d.7439, 16-17; A.NŞT.d.1171, 71; A.NŞT.d.1172, 6; A.DVN.3/95.

³⁰ See A.DVN.14/70; A.DVN.14/72.

³¹ See A.DVN.MHM.d.79, hkm.1228.

³² See Dehqan and Genç, "Reflections on Sharaf Khān's Autobiography", 52-53.

³³ See A.DVN.14/72.

³⁴ On Ḥazzō, also known as Şāşun, which is overlooked from the north by Mush and the south and east by Bidlīs, after crossing the river of Batman bridge, see Wilhelm Tomaschek, "Sasun und das Quellengebiet des Tigris", *Sitzungsberichte AdW, Philosophisch-historische Klasse AdW* 133 (1896): 1-44.

Bidlīs had no choice but to seek safety and immigrate to Ḥazzō. With the support and help of Ḍīyā' al-Dīn, the Kashāghī tribe and other emigrants returned home to Bidlīs, where they were known as 'original residents'.³⁵

One of the other tasks upon which Ḍīyā' al-Dīn set his heart was the restoration of Bidlīs's economy as the capital of a frontier emirate. For over half a century, Bidlīs had been subjected to progressive economic development strategies through the efforts of Sharaf Khān, the author of the *Sharaf-nāma*, and several *bass* and financial advantages he had received from the Ottoman sultan.³⁶ After decades of well-intentioned economic developments, the emirate had suffered heavily from the Ottoman invasion and the murder of Sharaf Khān, and it then continued to exhibit widespread poverty. According to a 1610 financial report, more than half of the military officials of Bidlīs, Mush and the castle of Kūfündür were low-income or poor.³⁷ With regard to the Armenians of Bidlīs, the Ottoman archives reveal that some Armenians lived in economically distressed conditions and were unable to pay the *cizye* to Ḍīyā' al-Dīn.³⁸

The imperial financial crisis, made worse by Ottoman-Habsburg conflicts and the Celalī rebellions, badly hit the economy of Bidlīs as a remote frontier area. These sharp effects were unexpected and Bidlīs was not prepared for this contingency. In fact, Ḍīyā' al-Dīn sensed a state of emergency and empowered himself to provide a process of economic mobilisation. It is clear that he succeeded to reach what he was looking for. But it was not an easy case. In January 1615, Ḍīyā' al-Dīn put pressure on Hāce Lâlā and Can Beg, two merchants related to the governor of Diyārbakr, Naṣūḥ Pasha, and his *kethüda* Bahrām Bayg, who complained to the Ottoman court about Ḍīyā' al-Dīn.³⁹ Another case was the economic struggle between Ḍīyā' al-Dīn and the governor of Vān, who twice attacked Bidlīs in 1620. The main goal of Vān's governor was to achieve good economic growth in Amurik and especially in Mush.⁴⁰

Bahā' al-Dīn Bayg, the very capable ruler of Bārgīrī at this time, became responsible for some districts in Mush. He dominated the wealthy districts of Mush, the most important economic part of the emirate,⁴¹ and used their revenues and their cavalry to make himself more powerful as emir of Bārgīrī. On 14 August 1613, Ḍīyā' al-Dīn led his troops to Mush, seized the districts of Bahā' al-Dīn Bayg, killed his *kethüda*, Aḥmed, and as emir of the emirate attached them to the centre in Bidlīs.⁴² Such wealthy districts where the sultan's representatives lived and enjoyed a good situation would have royal counselors, military officers, and royal mistresses. It is noteworthy that Ḍīyā' al-Dīn was recognised by the Ottoman sultan and that, when he returned to Bidlīs, he was not challenged by Ottoman forces.

The window of opportunity for a successful resolution of Bidlīs's economic problems was closing, and it seems that this situation could halt further development of Bidlīs's economic capabilities. Even Ḍīyā' al-Dīn's initiatives to meet and talk with officials of the Ottoman court

³⁵ See A.DVN.MHM.d.79, hkm.1228.

³⁶ On some financial advantages gained by Sharaf Khān, see Scheref, *Scheref-nameh ou Histoire des Kourdes*, i, 445ff.; Dehqan and Genç, "Reflections on Sharaf Khān's Autobiography", 52ff.

³⁷ See MAD.d.3781, 8.

³⁸ See A.DVN.MHM.d.79, hkm.1195.

³⁹ See A.DVN.MHM.d.80, hkm.1028.

⁴⁰ See MAD.d.9825, 40.

⁴¹ On the economic importance of Mush, see Fatih Gencer, *Bitlis ve Muş'un Son Beyleri: Alaaddin Paşazadeler* (Istanbul: Libra Kitap, 2019).

⁴² See KK.d.71, 471.

in Istanbul, and ostensibly to explore a resolution to the poverty of Bidlīs, were received with a great dose of skepticism.⁴³ There is a list of his *hass*, including an enormous amount of 487,000 *akçes*, which is extremely close to that held by his father, the author of the *Sharaf-nāma*.⁴⁴

Through the military and diplomatic efforts of Ḍīyā' al-Dīn, the sultan officially recognized the economic rights of Bidlīs. Ḍīyā' al-Dīn's officials possessed some significant *timars* in Tātāvān, Amurik, and especially Mush, and in the struggle for the governorship of Mush, its possession became an economic and political prize.⁴⁵ The sixteenth-century Mush-Tātāvān axis brought commercial urbanism to Bidlīs, the seventeenth-century emirs used its resources to fund their ambition to rule the entire emirate of Bidlīs, and this great struggle was the leitmotiv of the economy of Bidlīs until the Ottoman attack. The main parts of Bidlīs, however, had come under Ḍīyā' al-Dīn's rule well before 1608.⁴⁶

The last point to be made about Ḍīyā' al-Dīn's rule is that he was an Ottoman representative local figure in Bidlīs for much of the time when rival political trends, and specifically Safavid sympathies, were in steep decline there. By choosing the Ottomans, Ḍīyā' al-Dīn made a political choice, all the while not remaining completely loyal to the Porte, as he sometimes acted against Ottoman interests in alliance with the Safavids. In many ways, it would not be untrue to say that in the first years of his emirate Ḍīyā' al-Dīn was a Safavid agent. According to Peçevi⁴⁷ and Turkamān,⁴⁸ insecurity in the Ottoman Kurdish frontiers and the role of Kurdish emirates in defense of the Ottoman Empire may have caused the defeat in the battle of Şufīyān in November 1605.⁴⁹ In March 1605, the Ottoman sultan sent a decree to Bidlīs asking Ḍīyā' al-Dīn to play a more important role in the Ottoman conflicts against the Safavids.⁵⁰ That Sharaf Khān's request for Ḍīyā' al-Dīn's *müteferrika* position was rejected by the Ottoman sultan was probably because of his contacts with the Safavids. In 1606, he played a part in the Nakhchiwān conflicts and paid homage to 'Abbās I.⁵¹ Also, there was the question of acculturation in Bidlīs and Ḥakkārī, so deep that neither history nor linguistics is enough to untangle the dynastic skein. We know that Ḍīyā' al-Dīn and Yaḥyā Bayg, the emir of Ḥakkārī, formed an alliance in defense of Safavid interests.⁵²

The Bidlīs emirate, however, had come under the rule of the Ottomans, an established 'superpower', under Ḍīyā' al-Dīn. He had been somewhat cautious about contacting the Safavids. Chighālazīda executed the Kurdish emir of Kīlīs Jānpulādoghlū Ḥusayīn Bayg in

⁴³ See A.DVN.14/72, where the *kethüda* of Ḍīyā' al-Dīn, Sülaymān, and other Bidlīs officials were involved in lobbying for economic advantages.

⁴⁴ See MAD.d.7439, 20; MAD.d.3781, 8.

⁴⁵ See MAD.d.32, 326-327; KK.d.71, 595.

⁴⁶ See MAD.d.7439, 20: "*mukata'a-yi hassba der kaza-i Bitlis der 'ubde Ziyaeddin bakim-i liya-yi Bitlis, ber vecb-i makta' 487.000*". Ḍīyā' al-Dīn enjoyed this *mukata'a* by March 1611. See MAD.d.3781, 8.

⁴⁷ See İbrahim Peçevi, *Tarih* (Istanbul: Amire, 1866), ii, 258.

⁴⁸ See İbrāhīm Bayg Turkamān, *Tarikh-i 'Alam-ara-yi 'Abbasi*, ed. İ. Afshār (Tehran: Amir Kabir, 2008), ii, 860.

⁴⁹ See Colin Imber, "The Battle of Sufiyān, 1605: A Symptom of Ottoman Military Decline?", in *Iran and the World in the Safavid Age*, eds. Wilhelm Floor and Edmund Herzig, 96-97 (London: I. B. Tauris, 2012).

⁵⁰ See A.DVN.MHM.d.77, hkm.85. Compare also Pietro della Valle, *Viaggi di Pietro della Valle, il pellegrino, descritti da lui medesimo in lettere familiari all'erudito suo amico Mario Schipano, divisi in tre parti cioè: la Turchia, la Persia, e l'India, colla vita e ritratto dell'autore, volume primo* (Brighton: G. Gancia, 1843), 125.

⁵¹ See Turkamān, *Tarikh-i 'Alam-ara-yi 'Abbasi*, ii, 721; Dehqan and Genç, "Reflections on Sharaf Khān's Autobiography", 49.

⁵² See ibn Nūḥ, *Van Taribi*, MS 630, Ali Emiri Tarih Kitapları Koleksiyonu, Millet Yazma Eserler Kütüphanesi, Istanbul, flos.88r.-90v.

Vān, in 1605; the Kurdish emir of Khōshāb and Māzgird, Allāhvirdī Bayg, experienced the same fate at the hands of Ottoman regional troops.⁵³ Although there was some collaboration between Ḍīyā' al-Dīn and the Safavids, he continued to hold onto his border emirate despite the aggression of the Safavid Empire.⁵⁴ For example, Ottoman documents point to a settlement of Kurdish emirs in Chāldirān and Sökman Ābād in September 1610, and subsequently to a union of the Kurdish emirs, including Ḍīyā' al-Dīn, against the Safavids.⁵⁵ In the same year, Murād Pasha began a new campaign against Safavid Iran in which Ḍīyā' al-Dīn was the main provider of supplies for the Ottoman army in Erzurum.⁵⁶

What we know about the fate of Ḍīyā' al-Dīn is very little and vague. What is certain is that he was executed by the Ottomans in late 1618. The reason clearly was his cooperation with the Safavids alongside the emir of Ḥakkārī, who was himself executed by the governor of Vān for the same reason, in 1617.⁵⁷ Ḍīyā' al-Dīn's sympathies for Safavid Iran, especially as a frontier commander of a strategic emirate, was not a forgivable offense. In early 1617, he fled from Tekeli Mehmed Pasha, the governor of Vān, but the sultan's regional officials finally arrested him and executed him.

Sharaf Khān b. Ḍīyā' al-Dīn (1619-1622)

According to the tombstones of the Sharafiya Complex in Bidlīs, Ḍīyā' al-Dīn had three sons: the elder son Sharaf (known as *Şeref Han*), Shams al-Dīn, and Abdāl. In the seventeenth-century, Ottoman officials from Istanbul played crucial roles in establishing the legitimacy of the Bidlīs emirate, bolstering political opposition to the Safavid agents, and fostering the political development in Bidlīs of a substantial Ottoman agent like Sharaf Khān. With the acknowledgement of the Ottoman sultan and Ḥusayn Pasha, the *beylerbeyi* of Vān, who once mentioned *Şeref, hükümet-i mezbûra müstehakdır*, he appointed him as ruler of the emirate some months after his father's execution, in the early summer of 1619.⁵⁸

After the execution of Ḍīyā' al-Dīn, the sultan took all the *hass* of Bidlīs (including Mush, Tātvan, and Amurik) back from Sharaf Khān. As the state of Bidlīs's economy was very worrying, Sharaf Khān sent his senior *ağa* to Istanbul for a final effort at getting it back. That hope was in vain: the sultan clarified that the *hass* of Bidlīs and other benefits would never be bestowed upon the emirate.⁵⁹

In Sharaf Khān's times, the only pious foundations which had enjoyed relative independence were those of Bidlīs. For the rest (Mush, Tātvan and Amurik), Kurdish officials held sway over Ottoman representatives within their ancestral territories. Sharaf Khān was responsible for internal discipline, which meant that he still supervised some significant *hass*,⁶⁰ but not the appointment of new Ottoman representatives. Moreover, as administrator of emirate property

⁵³ See A.RSK.d.1478, 66, 70.

⁵⁴ When the troops of Shah 'Abbās were much more active in the Bidlīs and Mush areas (in 1607 and 1609), the Ottoman sultan sent a *khal'at* to Ḍīyā' al-Dīn. See A.DVN.MHM.d.78, hkm.1247: "Ekrad-ı sadakat-nihadın eban ceddin Devlet-i Aliyye'ne sadakatta sabit kadem üzere sarf-ı iktidarların gelmiş ocak ihtiyârî".

⁵⁵ See A.DVN.21-41; compare also A.DVN.MHM.d.79, hkm.1194.

⁵⁶ See A.DVN.MHM.d.79, hkm.1061.

⁵⁷ See ibn Nūh, *Van Tarîhi*, fol.91r.-v.

⁵⁸ See DFE. RZ.d.381, 681.

⁵⁹ See DFE.RZ.d.381, 680. Also compare Gencer, *Bidlīs ve Mus'un Son Beyleri*, 23-26.

⁶⁰ See DFE.RZ. d. 381, 678, 683, 693.

he had to oversee the economic management of urban and tribal possessions, though Ottoman orders prohibited his outright ownership of some lands, in June 1620.⁶¹

Sharaf is mentioned on a funerary inscription in 1622 as *al-amīr al-kabīr al-shahīd Sharaf b. Dīyā' al-Dīn*.⁶² According to another reliable record, we know that Sharaf Khān did not live long, dying of natural causes in the early summer of 1622.⁶³ Thus, it is unknown why his epitaph includes the term *al-shahīd*.

Abdāl Khān (1622-1664): A Scholar-Rebel

After the demise of Sharaf Khān, Abdāl Khān emerged as a powerful figure on 15 June 1622,⁶⁴ personifying the possibility for a junior son of his father to attain prominence within the local state structure of the nascent Bidlīs emirate. Previous researchers who have worked on Abdāl Khān all thought of him as a grown man ruling Bidlīs. However, documents reveal a different story about his governorship, with Abdāl Khān as an emir being crowned as young as about eight to ten years old.⁶⁵ After Abdāl Khān, the next powerful member in line to rule over Bidlīs was Abdāl's *ketbūda*, 'Othmān. Interestingly, he was a *çavuş* of the central court, which means he was appointed by the sultan to curb the influence of the rulers of Bidlīs. The *ketbūda* was the second person in the political line of Bidlīs but he traditionally was a Rōzhiki official with no affiliation to the central Ottoman government.⁶⁶ Ottoman officials believed that 'Othmān was, in fact, the main ruler of Bidlīs.⁶⁷ We will return to 'Othmān, who helped rule Bidlīs until Abdāl Khān was old enough to do it himself. But what was Abdāl Khān's occupation at the time?

Traditionally, heirs to the throne were educated privately by tutors. It is certain that Abdāl Khān, as a possible heir to the Bidlīs throne, had received a good education including all Islamic traditions when his father was still alive. In the early years of his governorship, however, Abdāl Khān received a new education, especially in the years preceding the siege of Baghdad (1638), during which the emirate was primarily under 'Othmān's rule. In other words, this political challenge made education increasingly important for the young Abdāl Khān.⁶⁸

He balanced a number of influences, most particularly his Kurdish ethnicity,⁶⁹ his Muslim background, and his belief in the objectives of the Ottoman system.⁷⁰ We may, however, agree with Evliya Çelebi that Abdāl Khān was a cultured emir, and Na'īmâ also considered him to

⁶¹ See MAD.d.9825, 40. Since the period of rule of Dīyā' al-Dīn, Abdāl Khān, the younger brother of Sharaf Khān, was a *çe'amet* holder in Akhlāṭ and Mush. See DFE. RZ. d. 381, 691-692, which is entitled *Ze'amet be-nām-ı Abdal 'an tabvīl-i Şeref b. Ziyaeddin*.

⁶² Based on personal field work, Bidlīs, Sharafiya Complex, December 2020.

⁶³ See DFE.RZ.d.412, 376.

⁶⁴ See KK.d.257, 105, where it is confirmed that *...Diyarbekir muhafazasında olan Vezir Ahmed Paşa'nın 'arzu mucibince emekdarlardan olan Abdal Beg'e Bidlīs hükümeti verildi...*

⁶⁵ See A. DVN.MHM. d. 941.4, hkm.74, which reads *...Bitlis bākimi sağır olmağa...*

⁶⁶ It should be mentioned that the *beylerbeyi* of Vān had provided political support to Osman Çavuş as the *ketbūda* of Bidlīs. He was also a former *çe'amet* holder in Mush. See DFE. RZ. d. 412, 383-384; DFE. RZ.d.412, 413; DFE. RZ. d. 437, 554, 561, 579.

⁶⁷ See DFE. RZ.d. 412, 375-377.

⁶⁸ See A.DVN.MHM. d. 941.4, hkm.74.

⁶⁹ See what Evliya Çelebi says on his interest in the Kurdish language: Marin van Bruinessen, "Les Kurdes et leur langue au XVIIème siècle: Notes d'Evliya Çelebi sur les dialectes kurdes", *Studia Kurdica* 5 (1998): 13-34.

⁷⁰ Abdāl Khān had wed a woman bearing the title Khānim Sultān, great-granddaughter of the Ottoman Sultan Selīm II, which indicates that he was aware of the importance of a good relationship with the Ottoman court. See Dankoff, *Evliya Çelebi in Bitlis*, 76-77, 154-155, 262-263, 303-313, 318-319, 326-327, 336-339, 342-354, and 352-355.

be a distinguished scholar in 1635.⁷¹ He initiated some philanthropic institutions offering help in the fields of education and development in Bidlīs. Some of the *medreses* established by his ancestors and the incomes paid to them were determined and recorded in the Sharafiya Complex.⁷² Evliya notes that Abdāl Khān was fluent in Persian, Kurdish, Turkish, and Arabic, and that he commissioned several translations of Persian works into Ottoman Turkish, some of which are extant.⁷³ Based on Evliya's description of daily life of Bidlīs and Abdāl Khān and also his mention of the *Sharaf-nāma* among the books looted from the library of Abdāl Khān, one may easily guess that the emir of Bidlīs was a very highly educated emir.⁷⁴ The library's stacks were filled with classical works on *hadīth*, the Qur'ān, *tafsīr*, literature, logic, natural sciences, and other subjects. Its empirical standards were applied in one of the first and certainly strongest homes of serious textual criticisms in Kurdistan.⁷⁵

It is also interesting that Ḥamd Allāh Mustawfī's groundbreaking book, *Nuzḥat al-Qulūb*,⁷⁶ was translated by Abdāl Khān from Persian into Ottoman Turkish. According to Abdāl Khān, he was interested in providing a significant text for a considerable Ottoman audience who were unable to read Persian.⁷⁷ The translation captures the energy, texture, and voice of Mustawfī and replicates them in Ottoman Turkish. It is also certain that he translated *Ṣanāyi' al-Ṣunū'āt* 'The Compendium of the Arts' into Ottoman Turkish, as Evliya does speak of him as a prolific author and versed in alchemy and magic and several hundred occult philosophical sciences.⁷⁸ The manuscript's copyist writes in red ink, ahead of the main text, that: this book is the *Ṣanāyi' al-Ṣunū'āt*, written by Abdāl Khān who was a Turkish [*şî*] Bayg.⁷⁹

Throughout the early years of Abdāl Khān, 'Othmān defeated all rivals and established his master's power in Bidlīs. He also maintained a local military rivalry with Istanbul for a large part of his career from 1622 to 1625. In July 1625, 'Othmān as the ruler of Bidlīs, expelled the Ottoman representatives (i.e. the Janissaries) from the castle of Bidlīs.⁸⁰ He protested vigorously against the Ottomans, but his upheavals attracted no effective attention from the sultan; hence 'Othmān made more allies among regional power holders. For example, he loaned money to the emir of Khīzān,⁸¹ but the latter refused to pay back both the money and

⁷¹ See Na'imā, *Tarih-i Naima*, ed. M. İpşirli (Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu, 2007), iii, 822.

⁷² Based on a personal visit to the Sharafiya complex. See also Birgül Açıkyıldız, "Sharafiya Complex in Bidlis: Rethinking of Local History in Islamic Architecture", *e-Şarkiyat İlmî Araştırmalar Dergisi* 10/3 (2018): 1183-1196, though the author does not provide information on the seventeenth-century tombstones and other inscriptions there.

⁷³ See Dankoff, *Evliya Çelebi in Bitlis*, 96-97.

⁷⁴ See Wilhelm Köhler, *Die Kurdenstadt Bitlis nach der türkischen Reiseverke des Evliya Tschelebi* (München: Roth, 1928); Armenak Sakisian, "Abdal Khan, seigneur kurde de Bitlis au XVII^e siècle et ses trésors", *Journal Asiatique* 229 (1937): 252-270; Martin van Bruinessen, "Kurdistan in the 16th and 17th Centuries, as Reflected in Evliya Çelebi's Seyahatname", *The Journal of Kurdish Studies* 3 (2000): 1-11; and Haydar Işık, *Bitlis Bey Abdal Han'a Gönderilen Kanlı Ekmek* (Istanbul: Peri Yayınları, 2005).

⁷⁵ For the list of books gathered in Abdāl Khān's library and more details, see Ziya Avcı, "Evdal Xan (...-1657)", *Kovara Lékolîn û Legerinê Bîr* 9 (2008): 27-34; Yasemin Beyazıt, "Evliya Çelebi'nin Sunduğu Önemli Bir Portre: Bitlis Hani Abdal Han", *Pamukkale Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 10 (2011): 67-82.

⁷⁶ For this, see Ḥamd Allāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī, *The Geographical Part of the "Nuzḥat al-Qulūb"*, ed. G. Le Strange (Leiden: Brill, 1915).

⁷⁷ See Ḥamd Allāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī, *Nuzḥat al-Qulūb*, MS A 957, Milli Library, Ankara, fol.1v., 7-8); idem, *Nuzḥat al-Qulūb*, MS A 979, Milli Library, Ankara, f.1r., 12-13.

⁷⁸ See Dankoff, *Evliya Çelebi in Bitlis*, 92-105.

⁷⁹ See Abdal Khān (fol.1v., 1-3). According to Alsancaklı, "Historiography and Language in 17th-century Ottoman Kurdistan", 177, n.25, on the book's fore edge, we also read the mention صنایع الصنوعات لأبدال خان.

⁸⁰ See A.RSK.d.1492, 32.

⁸¹ For Khīzān or Eski Hizan, a few miles northeast of the modern town of Hizan (to the south of Bidlīs and west of Muks), see Şemseddin Sāmi, *Kāmusü'l-A'lām* (Istanbul: Mihran, 1889-98), ii, 1240.

his own share of imperial taxes. ‘Othmān’s letter of complaint to the sultan opened the whole question of the emirate’s future. The emir of Khīzān was deposed and ‘Othmān apparently gave a pledge to pay Khīzān’s taxes as well.⁸² Even after ‘Othmān won the conflict, peace was a long time coming. ‘Othmān never tried to make good his politics as Bidlīs’s head and as frontier protector of the empire. How was he able to expel the Yeniçeris and kill the *dişdar* of Bidlīs castle? The details of the boundary line between the Ottoman and Safavid empires, with its abrupt shifts of direction, can sometimes be attributed to particular interests: for instance, it was probably Safavid help and supplies that made ‘Othmān able to attack Ottoman regional representatives. In the summer of 1625, the Ottoman sultan tried to capture ‘Othmān but he fled from Bidlīs.⁸³ It is unclear what happened to him, as Murād IV dispatched a *müteferrika* named ‘Alī to Bidlīs in order to take possession of ‘Othmān’s property.⁸⁴

These developments support the opinion according to which Abdāl Khān and his *kethüda*, from the beginning, never tried to be honest Ottoman followers. The main reason for Bidlīs’s expansion can be considered a joint result of Abdāl Khān’s social dynamics, legitimacy, the domestic relations of the political system, and a conviction of inner strength in Bidlīs.⁸⁵ In 1635, the military conquests of Abdāl Khān extended the frontiers of the Bidlīs emirate, which by then stretched formally from the emirate to Khīzān, thus ensuring the status of Abdāl Khān as the emir of Khīzān as well.⁸⁶

Abdāl Khān had joined the sultan in 1632 during the siege of Vān, which had long been a strategic locale in Eastern Anatolia. On this campaign, Murād IV and the dominant figures in his *serdars*’ entourage had received some help from Bidlīs,⁸⁷ in the form of a relief operation in which Abdāl Khān tried to keep imperial unity.⁸⁸

Abdāl Khān’s prestige remained high in the eyes of Ottoman and provincial neighbours; archival evidence shows that he provided food supplies for the Ottomans or increased the amounts of food given to those who could make little contribution to the war effort, so that the Janissaries and those who supported the fighters continued to have the health and energy necessary for efficient performance. It is hard to say for which part of the Ottoman mobilisation in Vān Abdāl Khān was responsible. It is, however, possible that Bidlīs’s supply of food was adequate for the needs that were apparent at the time. On the other hand, there was the seditious Abdāl Khān whose prime interest was possibly in either a more independent emirate or in rallying the Safavid Empire. In 1636, Abdāl Khān disobeyed the Sultan several times and refused to send wheat and oat to the castle of Vān. The Sultan felt extremely angry that he had refused his orders. In his letter to the *beylerbeyi* of Diyārbakr, Murād IV asked the latter to consider what Abdāl’s reason was for disobeying him.⁸⁹

⁸² See A.DVN.MHM.d.941.4, hkm.38.

⁸³ The huge *hass* of Abdāl Khān, which is similar in size to those of Dīyā’ al-Dīn, is also a proof of his extensive regional power. See MAD.d.3458, 50; MAD.d.3458, 77; and DFE.RZ.d.675, 197.

⁸⁴ See A.DVN.MHM.d.941.4, hkm.43, 74-75.

⁸⁵ Compare the *ferman* A. DVN.MHM.d.941.4, hkm.36, in which the Sultan commands the tribal *ağas* of Bidlīs to obey *cenāb-ı emāret-meāb Abdal Han* (dated 1625).

⁸⁶ See C.DH.122/6095, 5, which reads: ...*Hükümet-i Bitlis der tasarruf-ı Abdal b. Ziyaeddin. Hükümet-i Hizān der tasarruf-ı Abdal el-meşhūr...*

⁸⁷ This happened after a *ferman* from the Sultan to Abdāl Khān which warned him about the importance of Vān. See A.DVN.MHM.d.942.1, hkm.10: ...*Van serhaddinin hüç u buraseti ebem-i mübimmāt-ı din ü devletten...* (dated 1634).

⁸⁸ Especially during the restoration of the Vān castle, see A.DVN.MHM.d.942.1, hkm.102-103 (dated April 1634).

⁸⁹ See A.DVN.MHM.d.86, hkm.38-39, 94.

In late 1637, Abdāl Khān also became the strongest enemy of the Kurdish emirs of Khīzān. With the help of the emir of Ḥakkārī, the emirs of Khīzān and its dependencies, that is Sayyid Khān of Muks and Qūrchī Bayg of Karnī, initiated a military operation against Khīzān and laid siege to the region which traditionally was an independent Kurdish emirate (not a dependency of Bidlīs). In response to a letter by Abdāl Khān, the Sultan commanded the Kurdish emirs of Shirwī, Zirqī, Girdikān and Ḥazzō, and the *beylerbeyi* of Diyārbakr to help him. Together, they crushed the Kurdish rebels who were trying to reach the castle of Khīzān⁹⁰.

After several fruitless attempts since 1624, in 1638, Sultan Murād IV decided to recapture Baghdad from the Safavids. How much had Abdāl Khān's governorship, and in the longer run the Bidlīs emirate in general, been influenced by the events of 1638? Abdāl Khān's absence in the Ottoman campaign against Baghdad was noticed by Ottoman officials throughout the empire; and the absence of any taxes for the same year in Bidlīs has been taken to show a loss of imperial authority. On his return from Baghdad, however, as Murād IV stayed in Diyārbakr, Abdāl Khān refused to go and tell the Sultan that he was pleased about his achievements in Baghdad, as other Kurdish emirs had done. Murād IV was greatly saddened by his act. He ordered Melek Aḥmad Pasha⁹¹ to take his revenge on Bidlīs's disloyal emir. For Abdāl Khān, possibilities for plunder by the Ottoman army, which was very close to the gates of Bidlīs, seemed to remain open on the negotiations with the Ottoman *serdārs*. He gave a huge bribe to the *serdārs* in return for keeping their army back: Abdāl Khān's excuse was that Bidlīs was part of Vān and not Diyārbakr, where the sultan stayed after the siege of Baghdad.⁹²

According to archival evidence, Abdāl Khān was still emir of Bidlīs and Khīzān in 1642. He continued to rule not only Khīzān but also some of its dependencies, especially Karkar. In the same year, he appointed his young son, Mīrzā Muḥammad Bayg, as viceroy in Karkar.⁹³

The Great *Rebellion*: Against and Inside Power

In the early spring of 1655 and prior to Abdāl's great rebellion, the famous traveler Jean-Baptiste Tavernier visited Bidlīs and was entertained upon Abdāl's expenses. There he finds himself describing Abdāl's intention to a circle of listeners: "Abdāl Khān feels no fear of the Sultan," says Tavernier, "he is able to offer resistance to [him]."⁹⁴ This description immediately reminds us of the scribe of a *Sharaf-nāma* manuscript produced with the support of Abdāl Khān, who wrote of him, "God may prolong his government and sultanate."⁹⁵ Along with Tavernier's evidence and other seditious acts of Abdāl, another spur to this (possibly) independent desire and *sultanate* was an event that occurred in a neighbouring emirate. Given the wealth of independent echoes that existed throughout Kurdish emirates, it does not seem

⁹⁰ See DFE.RZ.d.206, 284-285; A.DVN.MHM. d. 86, hkm.136-139; A.DVN.MHM.d.87, hkm.344.

⁹¹ For more information on him, see Robert Dankoff, *The Intimate Life of an Ottoman Statesman: Melek Aḥmed Pasha (1588-1662) as Portrayed in Evliya Çelebi's Book of Travels* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991); Fikret Sarıcaoğlu, "Melek Aḥmed Paşa", *Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 29 (2004): 42-44.

⁹² See A.DVN.MHM.d.87, hkm.343, 406-422.

⁹³ See KK.d.266, 97.

⁹⁴ See Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Les six voyages de Jean-Baptiste Tavernier* (Charleston, SC: Nabu Press, 2010), 246; idem, *Tavernier Seyahatnamesi*, ed. A. Berktaş, trans. T. Tunçdoğan (Istanbul: Kitap Yayınları, 2010), 289.

⁹⁵ See Alsancaklı, "Historiography and Language in 17th-century Ottoman Kurdistan", 176. It should also be mentioned that a contemporary Armenian chronicler, Davit Balişets'i, also writing in the 1650s, complains of Abdāl Khān's depredations "for the past forty-three years". See M. Zulalyan (ed.), *Arevmtyan Hayastanē XVI-XVIII DD* (Yerevan: Haykakan SSH GA Hratarakch'ut'yun, 1980), 213-214.

unlikely that Abdāl Khān should also have considered the Khōshāb emir's rebellion in a Kurdish context when he responded to his quest for help. In response to the Ottoman attacks against the Kurdish emir of Khōshāb, Abdāl Khān conducted a military campaign against the *beylerbeyi* of Vān. After several struggles, however, the Ottoman army defeated Abdāl in Bārgīrī and he was forced to flee to Bidlīs.⁹⁶

Yet as Evliya Çelebi and the Armenian chronicles disclose, this position was sometimes unstable. Evliya Çelebi visited some Kurdish emirates but he spent most time in, and writes most about, Bidlīs, suggesting that Bidlīs was the most advanced of the emirates. Also, Evliya's most elaborate description of a Kurdish emirate is that of Bidlīs, which has become well-known through Dankoff's translation.⁹⁷ During his third trip, in 1655, Evliya went to join his uncle Melek Ahmed Pasha, who was appointed as the governor of Vān. When Evliya reached Bidlīs, he was the guest of Abdāl Khān, whom he highly praises. Later he accompanied a punitive expedition from Vān against Abdāl Khān, observes how the khan is deposed, his rich library looted, and his son elected in his stead. A year later Evliya passes another time through Bidlīs, finds Abdāl Khān at the head of the emirate again and spends some time with Abdāl Khān as a hostage. What is not mentioned in the *Seyabatname*, however, is the interesting and important account by Aṛak'el of Tabriz. In his report on the year 1655, Aṛak'el writes that in that year, the governor of Baghesh (Armenian for Bidlīs), Abdāl Khān, rebelled and wanted to become a Celalī.⁹⁸ The pasha of Vān came to Baghesh with a large army, put Abdāl Khān to flight, and placed Abdāl's son, named Diadin (Ḍīyā' al-Dīn),⁹⁹ in his place. According to Aṛak'el of Tabriz, Abdāl Khān came and, through trickery, killed his own son, Diadin, and once again became the *khān* of Baghesh.¹⁰⁰

The Armenian allusions to the Celalī tendencies of Abdāl Khān might strike outsiders as an *ad hoc* patchwork of ill-fitting and sometimes senseless details. Celalī, as far as we understand it, was a general label attached to a wide range of unruly people in the provinces away from the capital and does not refer to a specific religious conviction. However, if analysed with regard to the chaotic history of the region, and especially the Celalī encounters of Abdāl Khān's grandfather, Sharaf Khān,¹⁰¹ this account proves to be a repository of the chaotic religious inheritance of seventeenth-century Bidlīs. The *Seyabatname* is also a good source for seeing how Abdāl Khān was viewed at the time of his rebellion by Evliya Çelebi and possibly some of the religious authorities of the Empire. According to Evliya, Abdāl Khān was a *rafizī*, which refers to the Shiites who refuse to accept the legitimacy of the first caliphs. Therefore, the Armenian claims that Abdāl Khān was a Celalī, in its religious sense are not based on a misinterpretation of the available evidence. Information from the Ottoman archives makes it clear that Abdāl Khān was at different points in his life an anti-Ottoman Kurd, and probably

⁹⁶ See ibn Nūh, *Van Tarihi*, fl.r.104.

⁹⁷ See Dankoff, *Evliya Çelebi in Bidlīs, passim*.

⁹⁸ That prior to his revolt there were many regional complaints against Abdāl Khān may indicate his seditious character, and he has been described as a Celalī. See A. RSK. d. 1529, 39; A.DVN.MHM.d.90, hkm.246; A.DVN.ŞKT.d. 2, hkm.1555.

⁹⁹ He was appointed emir of Bidlīs on 11 January 1656. See A.RSK.d.1529, 166.

¹⁰⁰ See Aṛak'el of Tabriz, *The History of Vardapet Aṛak'el of Tabriz (Patmut'wn Aṛak'el Vardapeti Dawrızhets'woy)*, trans. G. A. Bournoutian (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2005-2006), ii, 531. Two other seventeenth-century Armenian chroniclers, David Baghishets'i and Vardan Baghishets'i, have the same information but they put the story under the years 1657 and 1654, respectively. See V. A. Hakobyan (ed.), *Manr Zhamanakagrut'yunner XIII-XVIII DD.*, 2 vols. (Yerevan: Haykakan SSR Gitut'yunneri Akademiai Hratarakch'ut'yun, 1951), i, 395-396; ii, 361.

¹⁰¹ See Dehqan and Genç, "Why Was Sharaf Khān Killed?", 18.

a Safavid follower as well. His religious affiliation secretly served him well in his career as the temporary Safavid representative of frontier areas.¹⁰²

Abdāl Khān's "independent-mindedness finally seems to have cost him his position" as, according to Köhler, he was demoted in 1665 and exiled to Istanbul, where he was executed in 1667, at the command of Mehmed IV.¹⁰³ The reason for his demotion is unknown, although "it might be related to the ousting of Abdāl Khān's son, Badr al-Dīn Khān, nominated in his stead by the Porte in 1076/1665, and the coming to power of his other son, Sharaf Khān III, possibly as a result of a revolt against Badr al-Dīn Khān".¹⁰⁴ According to Alsancaklı, some support for this assumption is provided by the inscription on Badr al-Dīn Khān's tombstone, in which the word *shahīd* ('martyr') has been written next to the prince's name.¹⁰⁵ We mentioned, however, that the word *al-shahīd* sometimes had a useless meaning in the case of Bidlīs tombstones. It is also not easy to accept this assumption as there are so many tombstones of the emirs of the Bidlīs's ruling family bearing the word *al-shahīd*.¹⁰⁶ Is it possible to accept all these princes were killed in local wars? There are many usages of the epithet *al-shahīd* in the Qur'ān, not all of which refer to people who may be killed in defense of God. Meanwhile, some important tombstones inscriptions of Bidlīs indicate *al-marbūm al-shahīd*, indicating that the prince in question has first died of natural causes. It is clear that *shahīd* here means a simple ideological good personality whose relative tried to connect him to the followers of the Prophet and Islamic *sunna*.¹⁰⁷ In terms of exceptions, there are a few cases in which it has been used in the same classical meaning, 'martyr'.

The period after Abdāl's rebellion is convoluted but it is possible to address the claims made by former scholars and restore its true history. Köhler claims to have found the final destiny of Abdāl Khān in the form of his execution in Istanbul. There is a general wish in his report to be able to present an "end" to Abdāl Khān, just like other seditious emirs. It is true that the Sultan ordered for him to be arrested and sent to Istanbul, but he was never killed in Istanbul. From the Ottoman archives we learn more on what was the reason of his rebellion, some more details on its process, and what happened to him thereafter.

¹⁰² For the Ottoman-Safavid borders as potential places where Ottoman subjects forged alternative identities under the influence of Safavid disciples, or *halifes*, eventually tying their loyalties to the Safavid shah, see Dehqan and Genç, "Kurds as Spies: Information-Gathering on the 16th-Century Ottoman-Safavid Frontier", *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 71/2 (2018): 197-230, esp. 202 and the references there; Ayşe Baltacıoğlu-Brammer, "Those Heretics Gathering Secretly...": Qizilbash Rituals and Practices in the Ottoman Empire according to Early Modern Sources", *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 6/1 (2019): 39-60.

¹⁰³ See Alsancaklı, "Historiography and Language in 17th-century Ottoman Kurdistan", 173; Köhler, *Enliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesinde Bitlis ve Halek*, 39-40; Dankoff, *Enliya Çelebi in Bitlis*, 11, n.2.

¹⁰⁴ See Alsancaklı, "Historiography and Language in 17th-century Ottoman Kurdistan", 173. This is the version given in the *Seyahatname*. He is only known as *Badr Han* in the Ottoman archives.

¹⁰⁵ See Alsancaklı, "Historiography and Language in 17th-century Ottoman Kurdistan", 173, n.8. Compare also Ulugana, "Bitlis Mirligi Tarihinde Abdal Han Dönemi", 53-54.

¹⁰⁶ Based on field study in the castle of Bidlīs, Sharafiya, Gökmeydan, İkhlaṣiyya *medrese* and other historical sites. Compare also Pektaş, *Bitlis Tarihi Mezarlıkları ve Mezar Taşları*.

¹⁰⁷ Aside the Qur'ān and its several allusions to the term *al-shahīd* in different meanings, see ibn Mājjā, *Sunan ibn Mājjā*, ed. M. Fuad 'Abd al-Baqī (Cairo, Turāth, 1954), i, 68; Muslim b. Ḥajjāj, *al-Jami' al-Sahih* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, n.d.), vi, 33-34.

As it is well-known for all researchers of Bidlīs history, the most characteristic feature of its ruling family is the simultaneous existence of independent tendencies in Bidlīs's ruling style. This holds, or at least used to hold, true for Abdāl Khān as well, as some Ottoman allusions to his activities confirm, and travelers of the past have noticed. With the beginning of Abdāl's rebellion a new development appeared. Ottoman records started to indicate the independent tendencies of Abdāl Khān as the only correct and authentic reason. Abdāl Khān acquires the nature and reputation of a Kurdish powerful emir known as *Kürdistan begleriniün buzurğvârî*.¹⁰⁸

According to Ottoman interpretations, when Abdāl Khān refused to obey the Sultan, despite having been ordered to do so, he rebelled against regional Ottoman officials and went to Ḥazzō, where his son-in-law Murtaḍā Khān was the formal emir. For two months, the Kurdish troops were relatively isolated and had limited contact with hostile Ottoman officials, and even less with the world outside the Ḥazzō mountains. With the help of the emirs of Khīzān, Khoshāb, and Ḥakkārī, Yūsuf Pasha, the *beylerbeyi* of Vān, made an expedition against Ḥazzō and arrested Abdāl Khān. Murtaḍā Khān and his father-in-law both were deposed from power but there is no mention of their murder. It is very interesting that Abdāl Khān came back to Bidlīs, after having become the emir of Partak (a dependency of Chamishgazak). His third son Ḍīyā' al-Dīn (younger than Badr al-Dīn and Nūr al-Dīn) was killed¹⁰⁹ and the latter's son, 'Izz al-Dīn (surprisingly not mentioned in the *Seyahatname*), was appointed as emir of Bidlīs.¹¹⁰ Some months later Abdāl Khān again was appointed as the emir of his own ancestral emirate, Bidlīs. In this manner, the Ottomans not only forgot Abdāl's rebellion and all of his anti-Sultan activities but also related that Abdāl Khān had a deeper understanding of the emirate that had only just become known to the greater masses. The Ottomans even lied by presenting him as a Kurdish emir who participated in the conquest of Baghdad.¹¹¹ It is clear that there were some questions on Abdāl Khān's legitimacy and actions but he was the person who, in regard to his abilities in the Bidlīs area, received the emirate for a second time.¹¹²

There is another striking motif in the rebellion of Abdāl Khān which is fully neglected in Evliya Çelebi's text. It is an unknown fact that it was Melek Aḥmad Pasha and not the Sultan who decided to attack Bidlīs. The Ottoman archives recount that Abdāl's legal authority over the Bidlīs emirate had been acknowledged by Istanbul exactly at the time Melek Aḥmad Pasha and his army were at Rahvā (near Bidlīs), in the middle of July. Even after the governor of Vān defeated Abdāl and forced him to flee to Mudkī (31 July), the central Ottoman government was unaware of Melek Aḥmad Pasha's personal act against Abdāl. It is interesting that the Sultan had again appointed Abdāl as the emir of Bidlīs on 13 August of the same year.¹¹³ It is possible to say that there was a personal enmity between Abdāl and Melek Aḥmad

¹⁰⁸ See A.RSK.d.1529, 320.

¹⁰⁹ Ḍīyā' al-Dīn's *keḥūda* was Ḥaydar Aḡa. For his *hass* which was the same as Abdāl Khān, see Kumiko Saito, "16. ve 17. Yüzyıllar Doḡu ve Güneydoḡu Anadolu'su'nda Tımarların Çeşitli Biçimleri: Farklı Uygulamalara Tek İsim Koymak", *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 51 (2018): 63-113, esp.95.

¹¹⁰ See A.RSK.d.1526, 320.

¹¹¹ See A.RSK.d.1529, 320.

¹¹² In his second period of governorship, he is normally mentioned as *cenâb-ı emâret-meâb* from 1660 to 1667. See DFE.RZ.d.737, 260-261; A. DVN.ŞKT.d.5, hkm.406-408.

¹¹³ See A.RSK.d.1529, 67.

Pasha, of which the latter tried to keep himself away by describing Abdāl as an infidel who did not believe in *şerī'at* and Islam.¹¹⁴

Of the salient features of the second period of Abdāl Khān is the “loss of Khīzān.”¹¹⁵ For long years, he had a full political and economic control over Khīzān, and even over the dependencies of Khīzān. The Sultan’s decision on Khīzān affected the economy of Bidlīs but Abdāl Khān was forced to accept the bad things which happened as the consequence of his rebellion.

Economic failure aside, Abdāl’s political attempt to bolster his regional power was successful. For example, when Yūsuf Pasha attacked (for unknown reasons) Bidlīs and especially the mountainous district of Nīmrud, Abdāl Khān defeated him and his Ottoman troops. That Abdāl Khān enjoyed the help of Khōshāb’s Kurdish emir at the battle against the Ottomans confirms the importance and crucial role of Bidlīs amongst frontier Kurdish emirates.¹¹⁶

The last reference to Abdāl Khān comes from 1673. The Ottoman sources fail to give precise details of what happened to him but it is likely that he passed away from natural causes. We know that he was a co-emir of Bidlīs along with his son Sharaf Khān during his last two years of life.¹¹⁷ This may indicate that Abdāl Khān was not in the best of health.

The Last Three Decades: From Badr Khān to Nūḥ Khān

The rule of Abdāl Khān is depicted in Ottoman documents, which stress his economic successes and military victories that concluded in tremendous territorial expansion. Abdāl’s rule lasted for 42 years, approximately in the timespan from 1622 to 1664. This marks a period long enough for experiencing political and economic stability in seventeenth-century Bidlīs. In truth, once the Ottoman references in this regard and their proper juxtaposition with Armenian colophons are exhausted, the likely conclusion might be drawn that the decline of Abdāl’s dominion was confined to its final years only. Investigation may, on the other hand, indicate that Abdāl’s great power and influence did not remain intact for the last three decades following his death.

The last three decades of seventeenth-century Bidlīs, although not so marked, include four separate and sometimes semi-independent emirs: Badr al-Dīn, Sharaf Khān, Muḥammad Sa’īd Khān, and Muḥammad Nūḥ Khān, better known as Nūḥ Khān.¹¹⁸ We know very little of what may have actually happened in the decades after Abdāl Khān, but it is certain that this turbulent period, which was characterized by political instability and lack of central rule, was favorable to the unchecked growth of Ottoman influence and power in Bidlīs.

¹¹⁴ See A.RSK.d.1529, 166. This reminds us of Abdāl’s Celalī tendencies mentioned by Evliya Çelebi.

¹¹⁵ See A. DVN. ŞKT. d. 5, hkm.406-408 (dated October 1666).

¹¹⁶ See ibn Nūḥ (fols.106r.-107v.); *1660-1664 Tarībli Ordu Mübimmesi*, Sächsische Landesbibliothek–Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden (SLUB) Eb. 387, fol.152r.

¹¹⁷ See A.DVN.ŞKT.d.7, hkm.222.

¹¹⁸ All were sons of Abdāl, except Muḥammad Sa’īd Khān, who was a grandson of Abdāl and son of Sharaf Khān. For a complete list of Abdāl’s sons, including Badr Khān, Sharaf Khān, ‘Izz al-Dīn, Nūr al-Dahr/Sayf al-Dīn, Shams al-Dīn, Ismā’īl, Ḥasan, Ḥuşayn, Arslān, Amīn and Nūḥ, see C. ML. 307/12539. Arslān is only mentioned on a tombstone of Şerefiye Külliyesi: *Arslan Bey b. emürü'l-iimerāü'l-'iżām Abdal Han* (d. June 1708).

As a *ze‘amet* holder of Mush in 1632, 1646 and 1649,¹¹⁹ Badr Khān succeeded his brother Sharaf Khān and his father Abdāl Khān when he was still alive. Abdāl was formally removed from power in 1664¹²⁰ and left his seat to his son. In 1665, Istanbul awarded Badr Khān the emirate mainly because Abdāl showed ingratitude by leading several uprisings and rebellions.¹²¹ The relationship between Badr Khān and his brother Sharaf Khān was not very amicable; thus, conflict broke out between them. In the end, they ruled Bidlīs together for a year. As was the case with the co-governorship of Sharaf Khān and his father Abdāl, there were two separate rulers during this short period. Perhaps the sultan had wanted to encourage his local opponents to divide the Bidlīs realm so that each faction had its emir: this indeed was the outcome.

After the short period in question, Badr Khān and Sharaf Khān, a former *ze‘amet* holder of Tātāvān in 1648,¹²² twice ruled over Bidlīs separately and in order.¹²³ Their periods brought a marked economic decline in Bidlīs. The turbulent period brought on by the destructive Ottoman invasion of 1655, accompanied by political uncertainty and a power vacuum was drawing to a close. Between 1666 and 1677 Bidlīs experienced a dramatic financial crisis. In some desperate attempts to pay Ottoman taxes Badr Khān and Sharaf Khān changed their place as emirs who claimed ability to pay the tax. Both borrowed several times from regional wealthy officials and they also requested and received large additional loans from Jewish and Armenian merchants and even the *tūpchi* of the Safavid Shah Sulaymān (r.1666-1694).¹²⁴ Interestingly, while there was great economic confusion, the courts of Badr Khān, who passed away in February 1674,¹²⁵ and Sharaf Khān, especially the first one, enjoyed several official positions of which we have only heard in the last three decades. Such positions, as *çaşnigir*, *silabdar*, *mirabur*, *başinedar*, and *mühürdar* are somewhat misleading as previous emirs of Bidlīs never used them extensively. However, they are also inevitable for describing a full ceremonial administration in terms understandable to sons of Abdāl.

The rulership was possible only by the power of the economy; the power of the economy by wealth; wealth by agriculture; agriculture by peace and security; and peace and security by the justice and rectitude of the Ottoman sovereign. If an emir of Bidlīs wished to keep his rulership, he needed to maintain a prosperous economy. In this circular chain of interdependence, all links were equally the cause and the effect of the preceding and proceeding links. Therefore, the economic decline mentioned above caused a very huge demise of Bidlīs.

Sharaf Khān’s second period of rulership began on 6 March 1676.¹²⁶ Whereas Sharaf Khān could not pay the salary of the troops of Vān, Muslı Pasha, the governor of Vān, invited him to Vān, in 1680, but the latter refused to go. In his letter to Shams al-Dīn, Sharaf Khān’s

¹¹⁹ See DFE. RZ. d. 619, 346; also Saito (2018, 109), where his *ze‘amet* is mentioned as “Bitlis Bedir veled-i Abdāl Bey (1) Bitlis (Muş) 50,000 1632; Bitlis Bedir (2) Bitlis (Muş) 49,300 1646; Bitlis Bedir (3) Bitlis (Muş) 49,400 1649”.

¹²⁰ See *1660-1664 Taribli Ordu Mübimmesi*, Sächsische Landesbibliothek–Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden (SLUB) Eb. 387, fol.152r.; MAD.d.9848, 97.

¹²¹ See *1660-1664 Taribli Ordu Mübimmesi*, fol. 152r.; MAD. d. 9848, 97.

¹²² See DFE.RZ.d. 631, 668.

¹²³ See A.DVN.ŞKT.d.5, hkm.406-408; MAD.d.9848, 97; İE.TCT.1/85.

¹²⁴ A Jewish merchant named Kemal, and Armenian merchants named Ohan, Andreyā, İskender, Dunabed. See A. DVN.ŞKT.d.8, hkm.115; MAD.9855, 72; A.DVN.ŞKT.d.8, hkm.271; A.DVN.ŞKT.d.7, hkm.222, 342; A.DVN.MHM.d.104, hkm.111-113, 118-119.

¹²⁵ His tombstone in İhlasiye Medresesi reads “Bedreddin Han b. Abdal Han b. Ziyaeddin Han b. Şeref Han, vefatı evvâl-i Zilkadde 1084/February 1674”.

¹²⁶ See A.DVN.76/30. For his *hass* defined in the same year, see DFE.RZ.d.852, 220.

brother, Muslı Pasha indicated, “we just want to make a cessation of hostilities, no worries”. Realizing the Ottoman intention, Sharaf Khān fortified the castle of Bidlīs and also defeated the Kurdish emir of Maḥmūdī, who was directing the Ottoman vanguard against Bidlīs. As a consequence of the Ottoman defeat and at the command of the Ottoman sultan, Sharaf Khān came to visit the pasha of Vān. After a couple of sessions in Vān, Sharaf Khān and Muslı Pasha longed for no peace. In brief, the Ottomans undertook the demolition of Bidlīs, setting fire to its houses and killing a large number of people at Meydan-ı Kebûd or Gök Meydan. Likewise they plundered the properties of the people of Bidlīs.¹²⁷

Ruling from 1666-1672 and 1674-1686, Sharaf Khān died some months before 1687.¹²⁸ Muḥammad Sa‘īd Khān’s succession to the whole of what had been Sharaf Khān’s emirate was not really so fortuitous. After the demise of Sharaf Khān, by a decree of the sultan he became the emir of Bidlīs in 1689.¹²⁹ It is tempting to view Muḥammad Sa‘īd Khān’s attack against the fortress of Shīrwān as an action which led directly to his deposition. Ḥasan Pasha, the *beylerbeyi* of Vān, who persuaded Muḥammad Sa‘īd Khān into plundering Shīrwān and provided him guns and weapons, was not able to protect his emirate. With a number of complaints about his massacre in Shīrwān, the Sultan deposed him in 1691.¹³⁰

In the year 1691, Nūḥ Khān took over the emirate of Bidlīs. In view of Murād Khān, the emir of Ḥazzō, who was a relative of the Bidlīsī emirs, Nūḥ Khān was not legitimate and his rejection opened the floodgates of battle between Ḥazzō and Bidlīs. Neither in 1691 nor in later years did Murād Khān succeed in defeating Nūḥ Khān¹³¹.

Also, the tribal confederations of Bidlīs did not act as supporters of Nūḥ Khān. Kurdish tribal chieftains and their supporters chose a ‘new khan’ (whose name is not mentioned) and asked Nūḥ Khān to turn over the fortress of Bidlīs. Out of necessity, he consented to giving up the fortress, but demanded the Sultan’s help at the same time. According to the Sultan’s decree, the *beylerbeyis* of Vān and Erzurum came upon the ‘new khan’. After a battle they defeated him, and thus the Bidlīs emirate came again under Nūḥ Khān’s jurisdiction.¹³²

It is also said that in his period Muḥammad Khalaf Khān (a brother of Muḥammad Sa‘īd Khān) set out for the Zirqī area to plunder it in 1697. He fought Jahānshāh, the emir of Zirqī, defeated him, and ruled over Zirqī for three years. Not listening to the Sultan’s decree to recognize Jahānshāh as true emir of Zirqī, Muḥammad Khalaf Khān killed large numbers of people in the region.¹³³

When the years of Nūḥ Khān’s reign reached nine in the year 1700, he passed away. After his death, his son Muḥammad ‘Ābid Khān quarreled over the emirate with Muḥammad Sa‘īd Khān. By a decree of the sultan, Muḥammad ‘Ābid Khān was known as emir of Bidlīs but the

¹²⁷ Details in A.DVN.117/38; A.DVN.145/1, 11, 43-44; A.DVN. 157/7.

¹²⁸ See A.DVN.193/42, dated Evāil-i R. 1100, where his name is mentioned as *müteveffa Şeref Han*.

¹²⁹ See A.DVN.MHM. d.98, hkm.784; A.DVN.193/42.

¹³⁰ See A.DVN.254/95; A.DVN.MHM.d.100, hkm.540-541.

¹³¹ See A.DVN.252/76; A.DVN.NHM (Nāme-i Hümayûn Defteri), d.5, 5-6; A.DVN.MHM.d.98, hkm.308; A.DVN.ŞKT.d.12, hkm.933.

¹³² See A.DVN.MHM.d.102, hkm.199, 807.

¹³³ See A.DVN.MHM. d.110, hkm.1362, 1439, 1519; A.DVN.MHM.d. 111, hkm.697.

rule of Bidlīs was finally conferred on Muḥammad Saʿīd Khān, whose tribal supporters were more effective. He ruled until the year 1715 and passed away.¹³⁴

Conclusion

In the previous pages we have shown that the ‘silent’ history of the seventeenth-century rulers of Bidlīs, which simply failed to arouse interest because it seemed too vague and confused, can be traced back to the same political issues visible in sixteenth-century Ottoman-Safavid frontier conflicts. Placed in context, the history of seventeenth-century Bidlīs no longer seems vague or senseless and confusing, but makes up a coherent, valid system, making it obvious that the Bidlīs emirate, just like any other, had its own inner power able to exert influence on Ottoman frontier issues.

If we consider how very little is known about the political history of seventeenth-century Bidlīs and about the economy and society of Kurds in the region, it must be concluded that even these few archival examples of the history of Bidlīs (not taken from the *Sharaf-nāma* or the *Seyahatname*) are very significant. The Ottoman administrative references to the history of seventeenth-century Bidlīs allow us to speculate on a neglected period that is not accessible from other sources, such as Armenian colophons representative of the situation of the population of the region in general.

The seventeenth-century developments also reflect long-running debates about Kurdish semi-independence. Chief among them is the central tension between Ottoman management and Kurdish decisional independence. On the one hand, Ottoman regional heads, such as the *beylerbeyis* of Diyārbakr and Vān, have long sought means of ex ante control over their Kurdish administrative dependencies, aware that their ability to review and reverse Kurdish decisions ex post is a resource-limited one. On the other hand, the Kurdish emirs of Bidlīs have often insisted on their right to have more political and economic advantages. Brought under Ottoman control, in the course of the seventeenth-century Bidlīs turned into one of the most independent frontier emirates, sometimes connected through frontier regions with the Safavid state via Ādharbāyjān.

Finally, and most egregiously, one of the biggest issues is the fact that seventeenth-century emirs of Bidlīs earned less of a wage for the same job as their sixteenth-century ancestors. Compared to many Ottoman-Safavid struggles in the sixteenth-century, seventeenth-century Bidlīs was quite peaceful. Bidlīs did not get much benefit from her strategic situation as it would have been more valuable had there been fighting between Ottoman and Safavid forces in the region.

References

Archival Sources

- A.AMD — Amedî Kalemî
- A.DVN.MHM — Bâb-ı Asafî, Divân-ı Hümâyûn Mühimme Kalemî
- A.NŞT — Bâb-ı Asafî Nişân (Tahvil) Kalemî
- A.RSK — Ruus Defteri
- BOA — Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi
- DFE.RZ — Tımar Ruznamçe Defteri

¹³⁴ See C.DH. 29/1430; A.DVN.MHM. d.112, hkm.210; A.DVN.MHM.d. 112, hkm.36; A.DVN.MHM.d.114-1, hkm.1455.-

KK — Kâmil Kepeci Tasnifi
 MAD — Maliyeden Müdevver Defterler
 ŞKT — Şikâyet Defteri
 TSMA — Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Arşivi

Primary Sources

- Abdal Khân. *Şanâyî' al-Şunû'ât*. Cod.Mixt 211a-d, Library of the University of Vienna.
- Aṛak'el of Tabriz. *The History of Vardapet Aṛak'el of Tabriz (Patmut'imn Aṛak'el Vardapeti Dawriḡhets'woy)*, trans. G. A. Bournoutian. Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2005-2006.
- Evliya Çelebi. *Seyahatname*, vols. I-VI, ed. A. Cevdet; vols. VII-VIII, ed. K. Rifat; vols. IX-X, ed. Anonymous. Istanbul: İkdâm, 1896-1938.
- Hakobyan, V. A. (ed.) *Manr Zhamanakagrut'yunner XIII-XVIII DD.*, 2 vols. Yerevan: Haykakan SSR Gitut'yunneri Akademiai Hratarakch'ut'yun, 1951-1956.
- ibn Mâjja. *Sunan ibn Mâjja*, ed. M. Fuad 'Abd al-Baqi. Cairo: Turâth, 1954.
- Muslim b. Ḥajjāj. *al-Jâmi' al-Şaḥiḥ*. Beirut: Dâr al-Fikr, n.d.
- Mustawfî Qazvîni, Hamd Allâh. *The Geographical Part of the "Nuḡbat al-Qulûb"*, ed. G. Le Strange. Leiden: Brill, 1915.
- *Nuḡbat al-Qulûb*, MS A 957, Milli Library, Ankara.
- *Nuḡbat al-Qulûb*, MS A 979, Milli Library, Ankara.
- Na'imâ. *Tarih-i Naima*, ed. M. İpşirli. Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu, 2007.
- ibn Nûḥ. *Van Tarihî*. MS 630, Ali Emiri Tarih Kitapları Koleksiyonu, Millet Yazma Eserler Kütüphanesi, Istanbul.
- Peçevi, İbrahim. *Tarih*. Istanbul: Amire, 1866.
- Scheref, Prince de Bidlis. *Scheref-nameh ou Histoire des Kourdes*, ed. V. Véliaminof-Zernof. St.-Petersbourg: Commissionnaires de l'Académie impériale des sciences, 1860-1862.
- Şîrwânî, Zayn al-'Âbidîn. *Bustân al-Syâḡa*. Tehran: İnṭibâ'ât, 1891.
- Şükrî-i Bitlîsi. *Selîm-nâme*, ed. M. Argunşah. Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi, 1997.
- 1660-1664 Taribli Ordu Mühimmesi*. Sächsische Landesbibliothek–Staats– und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden (SLUB).
- Tavernier, Jean-Baptiste. *Les six voyages de Jean-Baptiste Tavernier*. Charleston, SC: Nabu Press, 2010.
- *Tavernier Seyahatnamesi*, ed. A. Berktaş, trans. T. Tunçdoğan. Istanbul: Kitap Yayınları, 2010.
- Turkamân, İbrâhîm Bayg. *Târikb-i 'Alam-ârâ-yi 'Abbâsî*, ed. Ī. Afshâr. Tehran: Amîr Kabîr, 2008.
- Xaç'ikyan, L. S. (ed.) *XV Dari Hayeren Jeḡreri Hişatakaraner 1401-1450*. Yerevan: Haykakan SSH GA Hratarakch'ut'yun, 1955.
- Yâqût, Shihâb al-Dîn Abî 'Abd Allâh Yâqût b. 'Abd Allâh al-Ḥimawî. *Mu'jam al-Buldân, Jacut's Geographisches Wörterbuch*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld. Leipzig: In Commission bei F. A. Brockhaus, 1866-1873.
- Zulalyan, M. (ed.) *Arevmtyan Hayastanë XVI-XVIII DD*. Yerevan: Haykakan SSH GA Hratarakch'ut'yun, 1980.

Secondary Sources

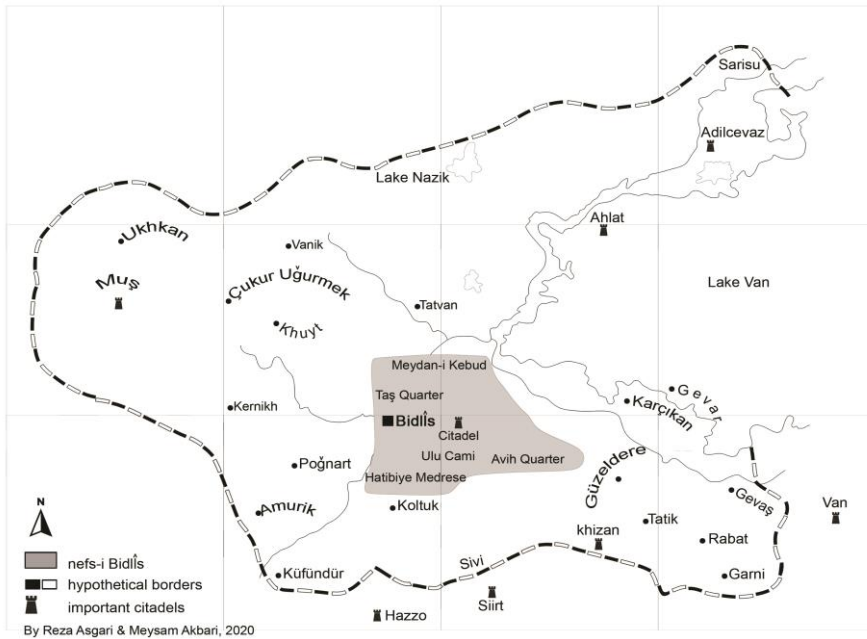
- Açıkyıldız, Bîrgül. "Sharafiyya Complex in Bidlis: Rethinking of Local History in Islamic Architecture", *e-Şarḡiyat İlmî Araştırmalar Dergisi* 10/3 (2018): 1183-1196.
- Alsancaklı, Sacha. "Matrimonial Alliances and the Transmission of Dynastic Power in Kurdistan: The Case of the Diyâdînidîs of Bidlis in the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Centuries", *Eurasian Studies* 15/2 (2017): 222-249.
- "Historiography and Language in 17th-century Ottoman Kurdistan: A Study of Two Turkish Translations of the *Şarâf-nâme*", *Kurdish Studies* 6/2 (2018): 171-196.
- Altunay, Emine. "1540 (H.947) Tarihli Tahrir Defterine Göre Bitlis Sancağı." MA dissertation, Samsun Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi, 1994.
- Atmaca, Metin. "Negotiating Political Power in the Early Modern Middle East: Kurdish Emirates between the Ottoman Empire and Iranian Dynasties (Sixteenth to Nineteenth Centuries)", in *Cambridge History of*

- the Kurds*, eds. Hamit Bozarslan, Cengiz Gunes, Veli Yadirgi, 45-72. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.
- Avcî, Ziya. "Evdal Xan (...-1657)", *Kovara Lêkolîn û Lêgerîne Bêr* 9 (2008): 27-34.
- Bacqué-Grammont, Jean-Louis. "Un rapport de Fil Ya'kûb Paşa, beylerbey du Diyâr Bekir en 1532", *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 76 (Festschrift Andreas Tietze) (1986): 35-41.
- . *Les Ottomans, les Safavides et leurs voisins: contribution à l'histoire des relations internationales dans l'Orient Islamique de 1514 à 1524*. Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1987.
- . "Cinq lettres de Hüsrev Paşa, beylerbey du Diyâr Bekir (1522-1532)", *Journal Asiatique* 289 (1991): 239-265.
- . "Quinze lettres d'Uzun Süleymân Paşa, beylerbey du Diyâr Bekir (1533-1534)", *Anatolia Moderna* 1 (1991): 137-186.
- . "Quatre lettres de Bıyıklı Mehmed Paşa", *Belleten* 56 (1992): 703-725.
- Baladouni, Vahe and Margaret Makepeace. *Armenian Merchants of the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries: English East India Company Sources*. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1998.
- Baltacıoğlu-Brammer, Ayşe. "Those Heretics Gathering Secretly...: Qizilbash Rituals and Practices in the Ottoman Empire according to Early Modern Sources", *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 6/1 (2019): 39-60.
- Beyazıt, Yasemin. "Evliya Çelebi'nin Sunduğu Önemli Bir Portre: Bitlis Hani Abdal Han", *Pamukkale Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 10 (2011): 67-82.
- Bruinessen, Martin van. "Les Kurdes et leur langue au XVIIème siècle: Notes d'Evliya Çelebi sur les dialectes kurdes", *Studia Kurdica* 5 (1998): 13-34.
- . "Kurdistan in the 16th and 17th Centuries, as Reflected in Evliya Çelebi's Seyahatname", *The Journal of Kurdish Studies* 3 (2000): 1-11.
- Bulut, Christiane. *Evliya Çelebi's Reise von Bitlis nach Van: ein Auszug aus dem Seyahatname; interpretierende Transliteration, kommentierte Übersetzung und sprachwissenschaftliche Bemerkungen*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997.
- Dankoff, Robert. *Evliya Çelebi in Bitlis. The Relevant Section of the Seyahatname*. Leiden: Brill, 1990.
- . *The Intimate Life of an Ottoman Statesman: Melek Ahmed Pasha (1588-1662) as Portrayed in Evliya Çelebi's Book of Travels*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991.
- Dehqan, Mustafa and Vural Genç. "Reflections on Sharaf Khân's Autobiography", *Manuscripta Orientalia* 21/1 (2015): 46-61.
- . "Why Was Sharaf Khân Killed?", *Manuscripta Orientalia* 21/2 (2015): 13-19.
- . "Darwish Mahmûd: An Unknown Sixteenth Century Kurdish Notable", *Journal Asiatique* 306/1 (2018): 35-39.
- . "Kurds as Spies: Information-Gathering on the 16th-Century Ottoman-Safavid Frontier", *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 71/2 (2018): 197-230.
- . "Mirlivâ of Malâtya: A Correction of Sharaf Khân's Statement Concerning his Father", *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 169/1 (2019): 235-238.
- . *Surveying an Ottoman Borderland: The Registers of Bidlis* (forthcoming).
- Gencer, Fatih. *Bitlis ve Muş'un Son Beyleri: Alaaddin Paşazadeler*. Istanbul: Libra Kitap, 2019.
- Genç, Vural. "İdris-i Bidlîsî'nin II. Bayezid ve I. Selim'e Mektupları", *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 47 (2016): 147-208.
- . *Kim Bu Mülke Kondu Bundan Ezeli: Arabgir (Yerleşim, Vakfı, Toplumsal Hayat ve Ekonomi 1518-1874)*. Istanbul: Kerem Aydınlar Vakfı, 2020.
- Hartmann, Richard. "Zu Ewlija Tschelebi's Reisen im oberen Euphrat und Tigrisgebiet", *Der Islam* 9 (1919): 184-224.
- Hübschmann, H. "Die altarmenische Ortsnamen", *Indogermanische Forschungen* 16 (1904): 197-490.
- Imber, Colin. "The Battle of Sufiyan, 1605: A Symptom of Ottoman Military Decline?", in *Iran and the World in the Safavid Age*, eds. Wilhelm Floor and Edmund Herzig, 96-97. London: I. B. Tauris, 2012.
- Işık, Haydar. *Bitlis Bey Abdal Han'a Gönderilen Kanlı Ekmekek*. Istanbul: Peri Yayınları, 2005.
- Kılıç, Orhan. "730 Numaralı Van, 'Âdilcevâz, Muş ve Bitlis Livaları Tımar İcmal Defteri." MA dissertation, Elazığ Fırat Üniversitesi, 1989.

- Köhler, Wilhelm. *Die Kurdenstadt Bitlis nach der türkischen Reiseverk des Evliyâ Tschelebî*. München: Roth, 1928.
----- *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesinde Bitlis ve Halkı*, trans. Haydar Işık. Istanbul: Alan, 1989.
- Pektaş, Kadir. *Bitlis Tarihi Mezarlıkları ve Mezar Taşları*. Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2001.
- Pietro della Valle. *Viaggi di Pietro della Valle, il pellegrino, descritti da lui medesimo in lettere familiari all'erudito suo amico Mario Schipano, divisi in tre parti cioè: la Turchia, la Persia, e l'India, colla vita e ritratto dell'autore, volume primo*. Brighton: G. Gancia, 1843.
- Preiser-Kapeller, Johannes. "Liquid Frontiers. A Relational Analysis of Maritime Asia Minor as Religious Contact Zone in the 13th-15th Century", in *Islam and Christianity in Medieval Anatolia*, eds. Andrew Peacock, Bruno De Nicola, Sara Nur Yildiz, 117-146. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2015.
- Saito, Kumiko. "16. ve 17. Yüzyıllar Doğu ve Güneydoğu Anadolu'sunda Tımarların Çeşitli Biçimleri: Farklı Uygulamalara Tek İsim Koymak", *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 51 (2018): 63-113.
- Sakisian, Armenak. "Abdal Khan, seigneur kurde de Bitlis au XVIIe siècle et ses trésors", *Journal Asiatique* 229 (1937): 252-270.
- Sâmi, Şemseddîn. *Kamusü'l-A'lâm*. Istanbul: Mihran, 1889-98.
- Sarıcaoğlu, Fikret. "Melek Aḥmed Paşa", *Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 29 (2004): 42-44.
- Tomaschek, W. "Sasun und das Quellengebiet des Tigris", *Sitzungsberichte AdW, Philosophisch-historische Klasse AdW* 133 (1896): 1-44.
- Ulugana, Sedat. "Bitlis Mirliği Tarihinde Abdal Han Dönemi (1618-1664)", *Kürt Tarihi* 20 (2015): 52-57.
- Yılmaz, Ahmet. "413 Numaralı Mufassal Tapu Tahrir Defterine Göre Bitlis Sancağı (1555-1556)." MA dissertation, Konya: T. C. Selçuk Üniversitesi, 2010.

The Bidlīs Emirate:

Central Quarters and Rural Districts



BİDLİS FAMILY TREE, 16TH-18TH CENTURY

