

Allusions to the Kurdish Community in Shiite Classical Literature*

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Introduction

In Shiite classical books the term “al-Kurd” is quite well established. It designates a felon, a criminal, an unreliable person etc. The status and social structure of the Kurdish community during the early Safavid period, and certainly earlier, are something of a puzzle. This statement may sound paradoxical. The early Shiite period is one of the best-documented epochs in Islamic religious history, and it may seem strange that there should be any uncertainty about such a prominent issue related to it. Nevertheless, the fact remains that a fundamental aspect of Kurdish community as reflected in the Shiite classical sources is clouded by ambiguities.

The index of passages from the Shiite literature in which the Kurdish community appears as a dilemma makes the article suitable for students as well as for readers who wish to acquaint themselves with Shiite *fiqh* and the “Kurds” and some of the many problems in that *fiqh*.

This work has grown slowly and originated in a card-index of passages begun in the writer’s own student days. For my first direct information on this subject, three years ago, I am personally indebted to the Shiite Traditionalist H. Khendeghabadi, of Tehran, whose kindness I cordially appreciate, and whose suggestions I gratefully acknowledge. It is hoped, in any case, that the article will in fact be an almost complete dictionary of references to Kurds in Shiite classical literature.

Alphabetic List of Authors and Works

The allusions are arranged according to subject-matter, with Old Arabic (*faṣīḥ*) and New Arabic intermixed. They are lettered consecutively according to the Roman alphabet, a–z. There follows in each

* I want to thank my friend Dr. Loqman Turgut, of Kurdish Studies in the University of Göttingen, for reading the first draft of this article and making some grammatical suggestions to make it reader-friendly, all of which I have gratefully incorporated.

case a reference to the place where the passage has been previously published, and such notes as seem necessary to explain its bibliographical citation. We are concerned here with the historical data to be gained from the sources, rather than with the ideological exegesis of the texts or Arabic linguistic questions of vocabulary, grammar or syntax:

1. A/Irbilī, ‘Alī ibn Īsā, d. 1292 or 3. *Kashf al-Ghummah fi Ma‘rifat al-A‘immah*. 2 vols. Tabrīz : Maktabat Banī Hāshimī, 1381. Reprinted, with unimportant omissions (vol. 1. pp. 43–44, vol. 2. p. 361).
2. Hillī, Taqī al-Dīn ibn Najm al-Dīn (Abū al-Ṣalāḥ al-Ḥallabī), 984 or 5–1055. *Taqrīb al-Ma‘ārif fi al-Kalām*. Qom, 1404 (p. 144).
3. Ḥurr al-‘Amilī, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan, 1624–1693. *Wasā’il al-Shī‘ah ilā Taḥṣīl Masā’il al-Sharī‘ah*. 29 vols. Qom : Al-al-Beit Institute, 1409. The special pages which are of interest in connection with Kurdish community are the following: (vol. 7. p. 416, vol. 20. p. 84, vol. 21. p. 190, vol. 24. p. 51, vol. 28. p. 382).
4. Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī, Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī, 918 or 19–991 or 2. *Ilal al-Sharā‘i‘*. Qom : Maktabat al-Dāwarī, 1400. (gives some very interesting allusions to the Kurdish community, onward from the ninth century of our era (p. 527 et seq.).
5. Ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsā‘ī, Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī, d. ca. 1473. *Awālī al-La‘ālā al-‘Azīzyah fi al-Aḥādīth al-Dīnīyah*. Qom : Maṭba‘at Sayyid al-Shuhadā’, 1405. Cited under Bāb al-nikāḥ. (vol. 3. p. 302).
6. Ibn al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī, al-Ḥasan ibn Yūsuf, 1250–1325. *Tabṣīrat al-Muta‘allimīn fi Ahkām al-Dīn*. Edited by Mehdi Salihi, Tehran, 1411 (gives a brief account of the Kurdish community and it has often been quoted above (p. 95).
7. Ibn al-Rāzī, Muḥammad (date unknown). *al-Wisāṭah bayna al-Adyān*. Edited by ‘Alī Akbarī. Qom, 1409 (p. 135).
8. Khalīl ibn ‘Alī, Fāḥil (C.E. sixteenth century). *Risālah fi al-Āsār*, Arabic Manuscript, Tabrīz Library, 619037. This monograph gives abundant bibliographical material (fol. 32r.–fol. 39v.).
9. al-Khiḏr, Sayf al-Dīn (C.E. seventeenth century?). *al-Maqālah fi al-Firaq al-Shī‘ah*. Baghdad, 1972. In the preface to al-Khiḏr, there is a passage relating to Kurdish community and their religion which is perhaps worth recording amongst the allusions to this people found in Arabic-Shiite literature (p. 44 seq.).

10. al-Kulī/aynī, Muḥammad ibn Yaʿqūb, d. 939. *al-Kāfī fī ʿIlm al-Dīn*. 8 vols. Tehran : Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmīyah, 1365 (vol. 5. p. 158 and p. 352).
11. Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir ibn Muḥammad Taqī, 1627 or 8–ca. 1699. *Bihār al-Anwār*. 110 vols. Beirut : al-Wafa Institute, 1404 (vol. 27. pp. 248–249).
12. al-Qazī, Hishām al-Dīn (date unknown). *Tazkirat al-Muʾminīn*. Arabic Manuscript, Tehran University, 36542. al-Qazī incidentally mentions ‘al-Kurd’ as responsible for the heretical views as to the origin of the *jinn* (fol. 38r.).
13. Shahīd al-Awwal, Muḥammad ibn Makkī (al-ʿAmilī), 1333 or 4–1380. : *al-Lumʿah al-Dimashqīyah*. Edited by ʿAlī Ḥamidī. Qom : 1411 (cited under Bāb al-matājir) (pp. 124–125).
14. Shahīd al-Thānī, Zayn al-Dīn ibn ʿAlī, 1506–1559. *al-Rawḍah al-Bahīyah fī Sharḥ al-Lumʿah al-Dimashqīyah*. Edited by Badr al-Wāṣil, Beyrouth : 1966 (cited under Bāb al-mutājir) (p. 226 et seq.).
15. Taqī al-Dīn al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī ibn Dāwūd al-Ḥillī, 1249 or 50–1339 or 40. *al-Jawharah fī Naẓm al-Tabṣirah*. Edited by Ḥusayn Dargāhī. Tehran, 1411, abridged verse account of *Tabṣirat al-Mutaʿallimīn fī Aḥkām al-Dīn* (p. 95).
16. Ṭūsi, Muḍammad ibn al-Ḥasan, 995–1067?. *al-Istibṣār fī-mā Ikhtalafa min al-Akḥbār*. 4 vols. Tehran : Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmīyah, 1390 (vol. 4. p. 81).
17. Yūsuf Karīm (C.E. seventeenth century), Ahmad, *Sharḥ al-Aḥkām*. Arabic Manuscript, Marʿashī Library, 3318. (gives a series of statements regarding Kurdish community) (fol. 57r. et seq.).

