



BAHDĪNĀN

BAHDĪNĀN (Kurdish Bādīnān), name of a Kurdish region, river, dialect group, and amirate. The region comprises roughly the largely mountainous northern *qazās* of Mowşel *lewā* of Iraq (according to the pre-1973 administrative division) including 'Amādīya, 'Aqra, Dahōk, Zākū, Zībār (divided between Arbīl and Mowşel *lewās* in 1944), and Šaykān. The first four *qazās* were regrouped into a new administrative division, Dahōk *moḥāfaẓa*, in 1973. The majority of the population are Kurds (see figures in Edmonds, p. 439) and speak Kurmanji, the major Kurdish dialect group, also called Bādīnānī (see, among others, Jardine and Blau). The dominant religion is Islam (Shafi'ite Sunni), although the area, especially Šaykān and Jabal Senjār, has been the stronghold of the minority religion Yazīdī. Other sizable, but declining, minorities are Christians (Chaldean/Assyrian) and Jews. The Zēy Bādīnān river is a stretch of the Great Zab River (*Times Atlas*, pl. 34) between its two tributaries, Kāzer River and Rūbār-ī Rawāndez. It forms the eastern boundary of Bahdīnān territory.

The Bahdīnān amirate, one of the more powerful and enduring Kurdish principalities, was founded by the eponymous Bahā'-al-Dīn, originally from Šams-al-Dīnān (q.v.; Kurd. Šamzīnān, region now forming part of Hakkari province in Turkey), who established his hereditary rule in the town of 'Amādīya (Bedlīsī, pp. 145-46) in the wake of the decline of Zangid power (7th-8th/13th-14th centuries). Threatened by the expansionist and centralizing efforts of the Ottoman and Safavid empires, Bahdīnān princes were drawn into prolonged confrontations with these two rival powers. Inseparably linked with these external wars was the endless conflict with other Kurdish



principalities, tribal chiefs, and religious and ethnic minorities. In spite of these upheavals, Bahdīnān survived until the mid-13th/mid-19th century when Moḥammad Pasha of Rawāndūz, the conqueror amir of the neighboring Soran principality captured ‘Aqra and ‘Amādiya and deposed the rulers Esmā‘il Pasha and Moḥammad Sa‘īd Pasha (1248/1832). Bahdīnān authority was, however, restored under Esmā‘il Pasha soon after the Ottoman government succeeded in defeating the Soran amir and putting an end to this principality in 1834. Pursuing their protracted centralization policy, the Ottomans were able to overthrow the Bahdīnān amirate in 1842 (Yaḥyā, no. 43, p. 157; Jwaideh).

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