



## GURĀN

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**GURĀN**, a tribe dwelling in the *dehestān* of Gurān, between QasĀr-e Širin and Kermānšāh (Bāktarān), in Kurdistan. Šaraf-al-Din Bedlisi mentioned the Gurān as one of the four divisions of the Kurds, but Vladmir Minorsky has convincingly shown that the Gurān belong to a Persian-speaking people inhabiting a sizable area on the southeastern and southern fringes of Kurdish territory (pp. 75-76, 86). According to Minorsky (pp. 86-87), they originated in the Caspian provinces, but they had been residing in Kurdistan already for a very long time. They were first mentioned by Šehāb-al-Din Aḥmad ‘Omari around 744/1343 in his list of “Kurdish tribes,” but Minorsky (pp. 83-84) maintained that they “must have lived there for centuries before that date. For many years, the Gurān tribe was very powerful and its chiefs ruled over a vast area from their center, Gahvāra, located at 60 km west of Kermānšāh. During this period of affluence, the rich literature of the Gurān in the Persian dialect known as “Gurāni” (see below) was widely disseminated. During the 20th century, however, the Gurān lost most of their power owing to weak leadership, as a consequence of which they have become overshadowed by their more aggressive Kurdish neighbors, in particular the Kalhor (Nikitine, pp. 172-73). According to Nikitine, by the middle of the century all the Gurān nomads had already become Kurdophone (ibid, p. 173).

In its heyday, the Gurān tribe comprised eight clans (*tira*): Gahvāra, Qolkāni Aspari, Qolkāni Bahrāmi, Tofangči, Dāniāli, ṭāyeša, Bibīān, and Nirizi. The last three have ceased to exist as separate clans. On the other hand, a new clan has emerged, the Sādāt Ḥaydari (Razmārā, *Farhang V*, p. 408). Already by the first



decade of the 20th century, half of the Gurān tribe had settled down upon the land (Rabino, p. 24). They are now mostly sedantary; the few who still migrate spend the summers in the Vālahu mountains (Komisiun-e melli, I, p. 136).

There have been many population estimates of the Gurān (Afšār, I, p. 300). According to the report by Razmārā, which appears to be the most reliable, in 1952 there were 3,420 families of them, or 18,000 individuals (*Farhang V*, p. 408). The Gurān ruling family is Shi'ite, but most of the tribesmen are 'Ali-Allāhis (Soane, p. 382; *Gazetteer of Iran I*, p. 210).

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