



ḤAMĀVAND

ḤAMĀVAND (from MOḤAMMADVAND), a Kurdish tribe of northeastern Iraq which has been described as “the most celebrated fighting tribe of southern Kurdistan” (Edmonds, pp. 39-40). The Ḥamāvand reportedly moved from the Kermānšāh region in Persia to the Bāz-yān district, between Kerkuk and Solaymāniya, early in the 18th century (Edmonds, p. 40). According to George Curzon (q.v.), some Ḥamāvand remained in the vicinity of Kermānšāh (Curzon, I, p. 557), but Hyacinth Rabino does not mention them at all in her detailed list of the tribes of that province.

The Ḥamāvand supported the Bābān chiefs, who established a semi-independent principality in Solaymāniya from 1663 to 1847 in their campaign against the Ottoman government. Following the downfall of the Bābān, the Ḥamāvand embarked upon a new series of raids on both sides of the Turco-Iranian border, ranging all the way from Mosul to Kermānšāh (Edmonds, p. 40). Even the energetic Medḥat Pasha, who was governor of Baghdad from 1869 to 1872, was unable to curb their predatory activities (Ḍaki, p. 405). But, as Ottoman pressure on them mounted in the 1870s, they moved into Iran, occupying the district of Qaṣr-e Širin in the Ḍohāb region (Edmonds, p. 40). In 1886, Sultan Mas‘ud Mirzā Żell-al-Solṭān (q.v.), the viceroy of southern Iran from 1881 to 1888, appointed Jwāmer (Javānmard) Āqā, the chief of the Ḥamāvand, as governor of Ḍohāb and “guardian of the frontier,” with a salary of 3,000 tomans, “to coerce him into good behaviour” (Curzon, II, p. 276; also Edmonds, p. 40). But after the fall of Żell-al-Solṭān, the Ḥamāvand once more resumed their raids. This finally convinced the Iranian government to take



drastic action, with the result that a few months later Jwāmer Āqā was invited to attend a meeting with an emissary from Tehran, at which he was slain (Curzon, II, p. 276; also Rosen, p. 251).

Shortly thereafter, most of the Ḥamāvands returned to the Bāzyān district, where they were subdued by Ottoman forces. In 1889, the Turkish government exiled half of the tribe to Cyrenaica in North Africa and the other half to the vilayet of Adana. Those who had been transplanted to Cyrenaica fought their way back home in 1896, and a few months later, those who had been sent to Adana also returned to the Bāzyān district (Edmonds, p. 40).

In May 1918, when British forces occupied Kerkuk and Solaymāniya, the Ḥamāvand supported the efforts of Shaikh Maḥmud to set up an independent Kurdish state under British protection. But when the British, for strategic and political reasons, withdrew from the area later that year, the Ḥamāvand felt betrayed and decided to collaborate with the returning Ottoman officials. After the war, the Ḥamāvand (along with Shaikh Maḥmud) continued to oppose the British, for they resented their repeated interference in Kurdish affairs. Later they opposed the Iraqi government as well (Arfa, pp. 113-14, 116).

There are few population estimates of the Ḥamāvand. Reports indicate that in 1908 they numbered 1,200 families (Sykes, p. 456), and in 1931 some 1,000 families (Daki, p. 405). Ely Soane and Fredrik Barth both offer anthropological data on the Ḥamāvand.

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