

BAŠĀKERD

BAŠĀKERD (also Bašāgerd), a roughly rectangular mountainous district (*dehestān*) east of Mīnāb and north of Jāsk. Bašākerd proper is bounded on the west by the district of Rūdān and the coastal strip known as Bīābān, by Fannūč in Baluchistan to the east, by Manūjān to the north and by the western extension of the coastal plain of Baluchistan to the south. It covers some 4,000 square miles. Its major feature is the Kūh-e Bašākerd that stretches some 90 miles east-southeast from the Mārz range in the north to the Rapč river in the east. The name is often used to designate a larger area from as far north as Manūjān and east to Ramešk.

Bašākerd may be a plural of the form Baškard (or Bašgard), which is also used. For Bešgard the *Borhān-e Qāṭeʿ* (ed. Moʿīn, I, p. 284) gives the meaning “area with abundant game” (*šekārgāh*). Schwarz suggests (p. 245) that Bašākerd may be derived from Bās, which is mentioned as a settlement to the northwest of it by Moqaddasī (pp. 52.18, 461.3, 466.15, 473.7). It is worth noting also that *baš* is Baluchi for the “summer rain” which is a significant feature of the area’s unpredictable monsoonal seasonality: *baš*, when it occurs, is a disaster for the date harvest but a bonus for the flocks—the two main economic activities of the district.

The topography and the natural conditions are similar to Makrān to the immediate east (see detailed description in [baluchistan i](#)). The entire district is mountainous. The highest peak of the Bašākerd range is Kūh-e Kūrān at 7,090 ft. Many ranges, surprisingly rough considering their moderate height, rise above terraced plains. J. V. Harrison describes them as “basin shaped or synclinal, and their solid structure is hidden under a litter of harsh angular sandstone blocks loosely set in sand and dust” (p. 2). The dominant color is a dull olive-gray, here and there penetrated by rocks of other colors. Benches or terraces along the river courses increase in height from about 1,200 ft in the south on the western side of the district to 4,500 in the north. Information on the flora and fauna may be found in Gabriel. Game was abundant in the last century, but is depleted now. Settlement, which is sparse, is confined to the narrow riverbeds.

Little is known of the history of the district. The name Bašākerd does not appear in the medieval geographers, though it is generally considered to be the designation of Kūh-e Qofš (e.g., Tomaschek, 1883, p. 184). It is included in the province of Fārs by Fasāʿī (II, pp. 180–81). The earliest first-hand description comes from the first Western traveler, Floyer, who visited Angūrān/Angohrān (locally Angōhrān), Sardašt, Šahrbāvek, Jaḡdān (Joḡdān), Darpahn, and Senderk (Sanderk) from Jāsk in 1876. He found a Raʿīs ʿAlī, in control of the

district, enjoying a close relationship with a Mīr Yūsuf, who ruled Jāsk to the south (1883, p. 152). Before 1874 the district had been “virtually independent” (Curzon, *Persian Question* II, p. 258). According to Floyer it was divided into six “provinces,” each of which paid allegiance to a Sayf-Allāh Khan who occupied the central fort at Angohrān. In 1874, in pursuit of a blood feud, Sayf-Allāh Khan violated the accepted code of honor by the heinous crime of killing a guest, which provided an occasion for the Kermān government to interfere. After a siege that lasted a year Sayf-Allāh Khan went into exile, leaving the district to Raʿīs ʿAlī (who was a relative of the murdered man) under the patronage of Kermān (p. 196). Floyer describes the partly ruined fort as a massive triangular structure, 180 by 60 yards, situated on a hill. He saw immense date plantations, plus wheat, maize, pomegranates, and other crops (p. 246). In one place on his route he passed about three thousand sheep and goats, including the breed that produces down (*kork*), which fetched a good price in Bandar-e ʿAbbās (p. 247).

Fifty years later Gabriel and his wife saw the same places as Floyer (except Šahrbāvek) and explored in addition the direct route from Darpahn to Angohrān. Gabriel (1928, p. 235) mentions that a Barakat Khan, who was prominent in Bīābān and Bašākerd at the time when the Baluch challenged Reżā Shah in 1307 Š./1928, was taken to Tehran, while his son, ʿAbd-Allāh Khan, escaped into the Sarḥadd. (A Mir Barakat Khan from Bīābān is listed by Jahānbānī, pp. 19, 47, as commanding 200 riflemen and 1,000 families.) Barakat seems to have returned by the time of Gabriel’s visit. A few years later, in 1932-33, Harrison reached Garāhven from Jāsk, and in 1937 made a trip north of Angohrān as far as Šāhkahān, across the western spurs of the Mārz range. Angohrān at that time comprised 100 reed huts, and the population of the district was estimated at 8,000 families (*Persia*, p. 392). Razmārā (*Farhang* VIII, p. 49) has 108 villages and estimates only 400 people in Angohrān and 6,700 total population; he lists it as a part of the *baḳš* of Kahnūj and the *šahrestān* of Jīroft in the province of Kermān.

In 1956 the linguist Gershevitch spent three months in the district. In addition to the places visited by the travelers mentioned above, he went to the Bīverc/Bīvarj area northwest of Angohrān. At this time Angohrān was the residence of Šāhverdī Khan, a great grandson of Allāhverdī Khan, the father of Sayf-Allāh Khan who was still remembered as the famous guest murderer. The fort was in ruins. Gershevitch includes some interesting details in his brief article, including a description of distinctive round huts (p. 218). In general, living conditions, social organization, and cultural institutions appear to differ very little from those of the Baluch to the east. What little cultivation is possible depends on drystone dams, some of which reach a height of 16 ft, built across narrow gorges to trap both soil and water. Dates and citrus are the most abundant crops,

but small patches of other fruit, vegetables, and grains are also found. Animal products, which are exported to Bandar-e ‘Abbās, provide the basis of the economy. Baškardis are Shi‘ite Muslims, and their society is stratified like that of Makrān (see baluchistan, i); the women wear masks as in the Persian Gulf.

See also [baškardi](#).

Bibliography:

E. A. Floyer, *Unexplored Baluchistan*, London, 1882.

A. Gabriel, *Im Weltfernen Orient*, Berlin and Munich, 1929.

I. Gershevitch, "Travels in Bashkardia," *Journal of the Royal Central Asiatic Society* 46, 1959, pp, 213-24.

J. V. Harrison, "Coastal Makran," *Geographical Journal* 97/1, 1941, pp. 1-17.

A. Jahānbānī, *‘Amaliyāt-e qoṣūn dar Balūčestān az Mordād tā Bahman 1307*, Tehran, 1336 Š./1957.

Kayhān, *Joḡrāfiā* I, p.57; II, p. 250.

Persia, Geographical Handbook Series, Naval Intelligence Division, London, 1945, pp. 102-03, 104, 342, 391-92.

W. Tomaschek, "Zur historischen Topographie von Persien, I," Sb. der Königl. Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Cl. 102, 1883, pp. 145-231.

Search terms:

بشاگرد	bashakerd	bashaakerd	
--------	-----------	------------	--

(B. Spooner)

Originally Published: December 15, 1988

Last Updated: December 15, 1988

This article is available in print.Vol. III, Fasc. 8, pp. 841-843

Cite this entry:

B. Spooner, "BAŠĀKERD," *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, III/8, pp. 841-843, available online at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/basakerd> (accessed on 30 December 2012).