



BĀNA

BĀNA, a *šahrestān* in the province of Kurdistan, located in a mountainous, well-forested region of western Iran at 35°59' north latitude and 45°53' east longitude, 1,529 m above sea level, with an area of 794 km². The *šahrestān* of Bāna consists of one town of the same name and seven rural districts (*dehestān*): i.e., Alūt, Poštārbabā, Pahlavīdež, Dašta Tāl, Sabadlū, Ševī, and Namašīr. It is bordered on the east by Saqez and Marīvān, on the west by Sardašt, on the south by Iraq, and on the north by Saqez and the Gaworg region (a dependency of Mahābād). Bāna is 260 km from Sanandaj and 21 km from the Iraqi border. Animal husbandry is the principal occupation of the inhabitants of Bāna, and tobacco and wild fruit gathered from nearby forests are its main crops. Most of the inhabitants are Muslims who follow the Sunnite (Shafē'ite) rite; they speak the dialect of south Kurmanji (Sōrānī) Kurdish.

Part of Kurdistan for centuries, Bāna owed its political and strategic importance to its common border with the Ottomans and its location among the three large Kurdish tribal confederations, namely, the Ardalān, the Bābān, and the Mokriān.

Old Bāna consists of two citadels, Barožakūn and Ševī, and the area of Bāna. The government of the region was generally in the hands of the Ektīār-al-Dīn family, who along with secular power also maintained religious authority. During the Safavid period, members of this family were held in high esteem and received the title of sultan. The first virtually independent ruler of the area was Mīrzā Beg b. Mīr Moḥammad, who was the son-in-law of Bega Beg (1494-1535), the ruler of Ardalān. Protection of the border areas between Iran



and the Ottomans from Koy to Kermānšāh was generally the responsibility of the rulers of Bāna. Until the death of Nāder Shah Afšār in 1747, the rulers of Bāna governed under the direct supervision of the kings of Iran with relatively broad discretionary powers. After Nāder's death, during the time of Kosrow Khan Bozorg Wālī-e Ardalān (1754-91), Bāna's rulers came under the supervision of the wālīs of Ardalān; by order of the kings of Iran the two groups were always to be united by marital ties (*Šarḥ-e ḥālāt*, p. 21).

In the 18th and 19th centuries, plague epidemics wiped out a considerable proportion of Bāna's inhabitants. In 1944 the entire region was embroiled in the turmoil caused by the revolt of Moḥammad-Rašīd Khan Dārūkānī. More recently, during the Iran-Iraq conflict, many in Bāna have fallen victim to the aerial bombardment of both sides; much of the region has been destroyed, and its inhabitants have become refugees, most taking refuge in Iraq. For this reason it is very difficult to estimate Bāna's present population; however, according to the 1976 census (*Saršomārī-e nofūs wa maskan CXXI*, p. 2), the town of Bāna had 15,552 inhabitants.

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