



BAND-E BAHMAN

BAND-E BAHMAN, an ancient dam built on the Qara Āgāj river nearly sixty km south of Shiraz. The river, known in classical sources as the Zakān, is the longest river in Fārs, beginning in the mountains west of Shiraz and, after sprouting several tributaries, ending near the Persian Gulf port of Kangān as the Mond or Mand river. Though Band-e Bahman is an ancient monument of considerable size, it has been ignored by all but a few classical writers. According to Mostawfī (*Nozhat al-qolūb* I, p. 119), “Bahman b. Esfandiār built a dam across this river to raise its waters for the irrigation of the villages of Kavār.” The most detailed description of Band-e Bahman comes in *Ātār-e ‘ajam* (pp. 15-16), which places the dam “nine *farsaks* south of Shiraz and one *farsak* west of the village of Kavār” and gives its length as “twenty-five *zar’s*” and its width as “3 1/2 *zar’s*.” Also according to this description, “the height of the dam varies from four to five *zar’s* owing to the repairs made on it over the years . . . but the river behind the dam is only about one *zar’* deep. In the middle of the dam, there is a sluice (*kaḷ’-e āb*) with two gates Two water channels have been dug, one old, the other new, behind the dam to irrigate the cultivated lands of Kavār. The mountain to the rear of the dam is known as Kūh-e Bahman and a half *farsak* to the southwest in a pass there is a mound of stones in which Bahman is said to be buried.” It is not known when Band-e Bahman was constructed, but the name alone would suggest that it is of great antiquity, perhaps originating in Achaemenid times. Whatever the case, the base of the dam is certainly pre-Islamic. It is still in use, providing water to farmland in the Kavār district.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

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G. Kuros, *The Art of Irrigation in Ancient Iran*, Tehran, 1348 Š./1969, p. 228.

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