

Historical Geography of Fars during the Sasanian Period

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There are few studies in existence which explore the Sasanian historical geography. The pioneering work of Marquart on the historical geography of the Sasanian Empire in the book of Ps.- Moses of Chorene is one of the earliest studies of its kind¹. Later discoveries of numismatic and sigillographic finds, as well as publications on and editions of literary and material evidence, relevant to the historical geography and administrative organization of the Sasanian Empire did not change things dramatically, but did help to complete and in some cases correct early impressions. During the last decades R. Gyselen and Ph. Gignoux have significantly contributed to the field of Sasanian historical and administrative geography through their publications and scrutiny of the sigillographic, numismatic and written sources².

The present paper aims to reconstruct the historical geography of Fars province³ during the Sasanian period according to the available literary and material evidence.

Sources

There are not a large amount of direct or original informative contemporary Sasanian sources available about Iranian provinces from a geographical and administrative point of view. As stated by Gyselen, the chronological gap in the available sources is a major obstacle to the reconstruction of the administrative and historical geography of the Sasanian Empire. On the one hand there are the 3rd century inscriptions and on the

¹ Marquart, 1901/1373Š

² Gyselen 1988, 1989, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004; Gignoux 1971, 1984a, 1990a, 1990b, 2004

³ Historically, the term 'Fars' was applied to a larger area than it now comprises. It was bordered by Khuzestan (west), Kerman (east), Isfahan (north), and the Persian Gulf (south). In the present paper, this broad historical definition is used.

other there are the later, mainly 6th-7th centuries, sealings and literary sources. For the intermediary period, there are only a few inscriptions as well as the numismatic data⁴. This lack of information does not allow us to draw a comprehensive picture of the historical geography of the Sasanian Empire. Except for one treatise – *Šahrestānīhā ī Ērānshahr* (Provincial Capitals of Iran) - which is strictly about the geographical description of Sasanian Iran, no major written source is available on this subject yet. Even this text, in its current form, was composed or re-composed during the Abbasid period in the 8th century A.D.;⁵ nevertheless, other sources from the Sasanian period provide basic data with which to reconstruct the system of Sasanian settlements throughout the empire in general and in Fars in particular. These include Sasanian royal and other Pahlavi inscriptions, Pahlavi or Middle Persian and non-Persian texts, rock reliefs, coins, seals and sealings, as well as archaeological data collected during surveys and excavations. Another major informative source of later date is the corpus of early to middle Islamic historical and geographical accounts, which provide more data for the study of Sasanian history, culture and administrative geography.

In particular, the following sources are used in this research to reconstruct the historical geography of Fars during the Sasanian period: the Pahlavi treatises of *Xusraw ud rēdag*, *Kārnāmag ī Ardašīr ī Pābgān*, *Šahrestānīhā ī Ērān* and *Mādigān ī Hezār Dādīstān*, Syrian *Acts of the Persian Martyrs*, Armenian book of *Armenian Geography*, Ammianus Marcellinus's *History*, as well as the early Islamic histories, such as those of Tabari and Baladhuri. Shapur I's inscription on the Ka'aba Zartosht can also be included in this list. The only material evidence that provide information on toponyms are Sasanian coins and sealings. These do not, however, provide a large number of place names and primarily include the major otherwise known toponyms, many of which are attested to in other sources.

⁴ Gyselen 2002: 180

⁵ Daryaei, 2002: 2

Sasanian Toponyms

The Sasanian toponyms in Fars that are recorded in the aforementioned sources, mostly shown on Map A, are presented in the format of an alphabetical catalogue following this section. There is an appropriate issue that is worth a brief discussion here. The place names that are recorded in the early Islamic literature and included in this catalogue may not have necessarily been Sasanian settlements. At least three hundred years separates the invasion of Fars in the 7th century and the writing of these books in the 10th century. This may have had a significant impact on details pertaining to specific incidents, such as where an event took place, when there is a mention of a toponym. Contemporary localities may have replaced the original ones; or else these places could have, in fact, been pre-Islamic settlements, but they had not necessarily been called by the names given to them by the Islamic writers. Alternatively, these sources may refer to other place names that are known to have been Sasanian towns, or to other places that are assumed to be identical to certain Sasanian mint signatures like Jahrom or Gurreh/Jerreh (see entry under these toponyms below). Thus, it is very hard, if not impossible, to identify which of these place names mentioned actually had a Sasanian background. Furthermore, in a few cases, such as in Fasa, the Sasanian background of recorded towns is confirmed through archaeological evidence. Until it is proven wrong, the most convincing idea to follow is that since some of these places were actually or are very likely to have been Sasanian towns, other places that are mentioned (such as Kazerun or Fostajan) could also hypothetically be considered Sasanian settlements.

On the other hand, many of the minor place names (contrary to major Sasanian towns like Istakhr, Bishapur, etc.) recorded in the early Islamic toponyms might have actually existed as Sasanian settlements. The *Mādigān ī Hezār Dādīstān* provides evidence in support of this assumption. The MHD names the towns of Kovar and Khabr in Ardashir *Khurrah* (MHD A19.13-16), both of which are recorded in early Islamic

geographical sources as flourishing towns and districts in this province (Ist. : 106, 120; Hoq. : 275; Bal. 175-6). Many other early Islamic towns and districts, therefore, may date to the Sasanian period, if not before. A lack of sufficient literary or material evidence, however, makes this impossible to clarify.

Catalogue of Sasanian Toponyms

The toponyms are listed alphabetically. Every available record of the given toponym is described followed by a brief section on its identification. A separate section is dedicated to the records of rivers of Fars according to the Sasanian sources. Apart from these, there are a few other localities whose Sasanian backgrounds are confirmed by either archeological examinations or other pieces of evidence. These sites are described in a separate section following the catalogue and rivers description. Map A illustrates the identified toponyms discussed in the catalogue.

Abarkavan Island

- *Attestations*: Abarkavan Island is likely to have been part of Kerman province. This can be determined in light of Baladhuri's report which notes that the early Arab Muslim invaders, who attacked the northern shores of the Persian Gulf, met Kerman's Sasanian governor on this island⁶. Early Islamic geographers however, described the island as being a part of *Ardashir Khurrah*.

- *Identification*: Abarkavan is identified with the modern island of Qeshm. In the 1970's, archaeological surveys were carried out on the island by an Iranian team. Seventy-nine ancient sites were discovered, among them two dam-bridges located 3 km to the west of the district of Qeshm, along the Qeshm-Dargahan road in the Kulqan valley. These constructions were made from cut stones, clay and plaster mortar and have been

⁶ Baladhuri: 391; Potts, 2004 (Online Article)

attributed to the Sasanian period by J. Babak Rad, the surveyor. This assessment was based upon the building materials, construction techniques and methods used at the site. During the Safavid period, additional parts were attached to them⁷.

Abarsas

- *Attestations*: Abarsas was named as a district in *Ardashir Khurrah*, conquered by Ardashir I after he had gained control over Fars⁸.

- *Identification*: Unidentified

Abruwan

- *Attestations*: Tabari named Abruwan as a town on the coast of *Ardashir Khurrah*. According to him, during the reign of Shapur II in the early 4th century A.D., Arab tribes from the western shores of the Persian Gulf crossed the sea and attacked this area⁹.

Abruwan was also named as a village in the district of Dasht-e Barin in *Ardashir Khurrah* and as the birthplace of Mehr Narsi, the minister of Yazdgerd I (399-420), Bahram V (420-38) and Yazdgerd II (438-57). He built buildings and fire temples in this village, as well as in Jerreh in *Shapur Khurrah*. The fire temple in Abruwan, which was still burning in the 4th century A.H., was called Mehr Nersiyan. He also founded four villages in the vicinity of Abruwan, erecting fire temples in each, along with palm, olive and cypress gardens. These fire temples, gardens and villages were in the hands of Nersi descendants up until the 4th century A.H.¹⁰.

- *Identification*: The district of Dasht-e Barin, with its administrative center at Ghondekan during the early Islamic period, was located in the border area between *Shapur* and *Ardashir Khurrahs*. Ghondekan is identified as being equivalent to, or as having been

⁷ Babak Rad, 1350Š

⁸ Tabari, vol. V: 10

⁹ Tabari, vol. V: 51-2

¹⁰ Tabari, vol. V: 105

located near the modern village of Sar Mahshad, 48 km south of Kazerun¹¹. Dasht-e Barin, in which the village of Abruwan was located, therefore, was the area to the south of Jerreh between Firuzabad and Tawwaj. Several fire temples have been discovered in the area between Kazerun and Firuzabad, supposedly old Dasht-e Barin. Vanden Berghe identified the Farrashband area with the region in which Mehr Narsi's 5 fire temples (including the Mehr Nersiyan) were located, i.e. near Abruwan, which was itself further to the north. The architectural similarities between these five fire temples suggest that they were all built in the same period. Besides the geographical location and the number of fire temples, Vanden Berghe has also suggested that a link exists between the modern name of the district to the southwest of Farrashband -Mahal-e Arba'eh (Four Localities/Districts) - and the four villages founded by Mehr Narsi¹². It is possible that the village of Abruwan and the town of Abruwan represent a single location; although, Dasht-e Barin is not located precisely in the coastal region.

Alar and Alavad

- *Attestations*: Alar was recorded as a village in the district of Kujaran along the coast of Ardashir Khurrah¹³.

- *Identification*: Unidentified. Modern town of Lar ?

Ardashir Khurrah or Gur

- *Attestations*: Islamic geographers reported that at the site of Gur there had previously been another town at the time of the Kiyanids (Achaemenids); one which had been destroyed and flooded by Alexander. After Ardashir I had established his power in Fars and its neighboring provinces, he ordered the town of Gur to be built at the site of the disappeared town. According to Tabari, it was the foundation of this royal town by

¹¹ Savaqeb, 2006: 192; Whitcomb 1979b: 50, 64, fig. 5

¹² Venden Berghe, 1961: 190-1

¹³ Tabari, vol. V: 16

Ardashir that infuriated Artabanus V, resulting in the decisive battle of Hormozdegan¹⁴. *Kārnāmag ī Ardašīr ī Pābgān*, however, recorded that Gur was a town that had been founded by Ardashir *after* his victory over Artabanus (KAP. V.13, IX. 13)¹⁵. Gur was the center of a district with the same name and the capital of Ardashir *Khurrah*.

It has been suggested that Gur may correspond with Ptolemy's Gabra, one of the 30 villages or towns recorded by him as having been located in Persis (Book 6.4.6)¹⁶. Although similarities exist between the words Gur and Gabra, there is no other evidence to support this proposition. On the other hand, Ammianus Marcellinus did not record Gabra in his list of the four most important towns in Fars in his time. According to him, these towns were Ardea, Persepolis (Istakhr), Habroatis, and Tragonice (Book XXII. 6. 42). All these names are found in Ptolemy's book. If Gabra is Gur, which was certainly one of the important and large towns of Fars by the mid 4th century, it would have been included in Ammianus's list. Besides, Ammianus named only four towns in his list. These probably acted as capitals within the provinces of Fars. Firstly, Persepolis is certainly identical with Istakhr, which was in fact a provincial capital. Secondly, the reference to four towns fits perfectly with the pre-sixth century division of Fars into the four provinces of Istakhr, Ardashir, Bishapur and Darabgerd *Khurrahs* before the establishment of Veh-az-Amid-Qobad *Khurrah* as the fifth province by Qobad I in the early 6th century.

The name of Ardashir *Khurrah* is recorded on sigillographic remains from the late Sasanian period as being the seat of a *driyōšān-jādagōw ud dādwarand, mogbed and andarzbad*. Three districts/towns in this province, Gur, Shiraz and an unreadable third district, were also recorded on the sealings of *maguh*¹⁷. The financial affairs of Ardashir *Khurrah* were controlled by an *āmārgar*, a figure who was at the same time also in charge

¹⁴ Tabari, vol. V: 11

¹⁵ Asha, 1999: 28-9, 42-3

¹⁶ Frye, 1973b: 52; Gyselen, 1989: 44

¹⁷ Frye, 1973b: 52, (Qasr-e Abu Nasr Sealing Drawing no. D177, D212 for Gur and Shiraz); Gyselen, 1989: 29, 31, 33, 44, 2002: 62, 117, 131



of the financial offices of other provinces. The sealings of the *āmārgar* of Ardashir *Khurrah*, Bishapur, Nev-Darab¹⁸ and the *āmārgar* of Darabgerd, Ardashir *Khurrah* and a third unreadable place have been so far discovered¹⁹. Gur was also an important mint town. Based on the current collection of Sasanian coins, Gur appears to be the first mint town in Fars that had placed its signature on coins from the late 4th century A.D. This mint remained in operation until the fall of the Sasanians.

It is probable that, during the late Sasanian period, Karazin or Qobad *Khurrah*, which seems to have acted previously as a separate district, was included in Ardashir *Khurrah* (See entry under Karazin)²⁰.

It is believed that, in the 4th/10th century, Azod al-Dawlah had changed the name of the town from Gur to Firuzabad, building a number of palaces there²¹. On the contrary, numismatic evidence indicates that the name Firuzabad existed even before the Buyid monarch had changed the name of the town, with an Arab-Sasanian coin from the late 7th century bearing the mint abbreviation *pylwj'b'd* or Piruzabad²².

- *Identification*: The ruins of the circular town of Gur (Firuzabad) are located about 3 km to the west of the modern town of Firuzabad. The Sasanian town of Gur was in fact part of a larger collection of structures and monuments built by Ardashir I in the Firuzabad region. They included the palace-fortress of Qal'eh Dokhtar, the larger palace in the Firuzabad plain, two magnificent rock reliefs below Qal'eh Dokhtar and the hydraulic structures, reported both in *Kārnāmag ī Ardašīr ī Pābgān* and in the Islamic sources, to the southwest of the circular town. An archaeological survey of the Firuzabad plain also led to the discovery of the remains of other Sasanian period sites all over the plain²³.

¹⁸ Frye, 1973b: 53, (Qasr-e Abu Nasr Sealing Drawing no. D191); Gyselen, 1989: 56

¹⁹ Gyselen, 1989: 35, 45, 59, 62

²⁰ Gyselen, 1989: 44

²¹ Muqqaddai: 432; Whitcomb, 1979b: 66

²² For details about this coin refer to the American Numismatics Society online database: <<http://www.numismatics.org/lookup.cgi?string=1985.43.2>>

²³ Huff, 1974, n.d. (Online Article); Stein, 1936: 116-27; Vanden Berghe, 1961: 163-98

Arrajan

See entry under Veh-az-Amid-Qobad

Bahrain

- *Attestation*: According to Tabari, Ardashir I conquered Bahrain in the early years of his reign²⁴. Tabari, in relation to events which had occurred during the early years of Shapur II's reign, mentions a large group of raiders who had invaded the shores of Ardashir *Khurrah*. These raiders are reported as having come from the territory of the Abd al-Qeis tribe, Bahrain, and Kazemeh, via the [Persian] sea²⁵. Oval or modern Bahrain Island was also part of Ardashir *Khurrah* during the early Islamic era²⁶.

- *Identification*: The term Bahrain, was applied to the eastern shores of the Arabian Peninsula, not to the modern island of Bahrain. The island of Bahrain was referred to as Oval during the early Islamic period and probably before.

Bayza

- *Attestation*: Tabari recorded Beyza or Nesa as the seat of King Juzhir, the ruler of the province of Istakhr during the early phases of Ardashir I's reign in Fars²⁷.

- *Identification*: The modern village of Beyza, called Tel-e Bayza today, is situated 63 km southeast of Ardakan in the district of Bayza, to the northwest of Shiraz. Archaeological evidence, including Sasanian coins found in burials, a Sasanian pottery kiln, and other surface evidence from the nearby site of Tal-e Malyan indicate that the site was occupied during the Sasanian period. It may represent the site of the Sasanian Beyza.

Bishapur

²⁴ Tabari, vol. V: 15

²⁵ Tabari, vol. V: 51

²⁶ Istakhri: 107; Ibn-e Howqal: 267

²⁷ Tabari, vol. V: 6

- *Attestations*: Sigillographic evidence recorded Bishapur as a *šahr*, under the control of a *šahrab*²⁸. The province was under the financial control of an *āmārgar* who was also in charge of Ardashir *Khurrah* and Nev-Darab. In another sealing Bishapur is named together with Istakhr and Veh-az-Amid-Qavad²⁹.

The mint of Bishapur was the most productive mint of Fars, using the BYŠ, BYŠHPW, BŠHP, BŠHPW signatures. This mint town probably issued coins from as early as the late 3rd century A.D., when it was established by Shapur I (240-270 A.D.)

- *Identification*: Ruins of the Sasanian and early Islamic town of Bishapur are located 20 km northwest of Kazerun. Bishapur was the main residence of Shapur I in Fars. It has a rectangular plan and is laid against a mountain range. A series of stone reliefs are located a short distance from the town at Tang-e Chowgan, and on the banks of the Shapur River. A fortress is located at the top of the mountains overlooking the town, which was in turn surrounded by a fortification wall. The ruins of Bishapur were excavated for the first time in the 1930s by Ghirshman. This was followed by a series of excavations up until the 1970s, revealing different parts of the Sasanian and early Islamic parts of this great city³⁰.

Bokht-Ardashir

- *Attestations*: *Kārnāmag ī Ardašīr ī Pābgān* (KAP. V. 10)³¹ named Bokht-Ardashir as a town founded by Ardashir I along the coast of Ardashir *Khurrah*.

- *Identification*: It has been suggested that Bushehr may be a modified form of Bokht-Ardashir. While the Sasanian remains near the village of Rishahr on the Bushehr peninsula are identified as the site of Rew-Ardashir (see entry under Rew-Ardashir)³²,

²⁸ Frye, 1973b: 63, (Qasr-e Abu Nasr Sealing Drawing no. D216); Gyselen, 1989: 45, 2002: 108

²⁹ Gyselen, 1989: 35, 45

³⁰ Ghirshman, 1938, 1945, 1956, 1971; Mehryar, 1378Š; Sarfaraz, 1970; Wynen, 1972-1974; Yasi, 1971

³¹ Asha, 1999: 26-7

³² Lockhart, 1960: 1341; Whitehouse and Williamson, 1973: 40: footnote no. 48

no Sasanian archaeological remains exist near the town of Bushehr itself to suggest its identification with Bokht-Ardashir.

Chupanan (Jubanan)

- *Attestations*: Chupanan is recorded as a place in Darabgerd *Khurrah*, conquered by Ardashir I after he had become the castellan (*argbed*) of Darabgerd³³.

- *Identification*: Chupanan is named in the early Islamic geographical texts as a village located near Lake Bakhtegan or Tashk, approximately 36 km to the west of Abadeh (the modern town of Abadeh of Tashk) on the Istakhr-Sirjan road³⁴. During the early Islamic period, however, Chupanan was part of the province of Istakhr. The location of Chupanan in Darabgerd may either indicate that this province had been larger during the Sasanian period or it may be a mistake by Tabari, who recorded it as being in Darabgerd.

Darabgerd

- *Attestations*: The foundation of this town is attributed to Dara in the Islamic sources. Given that city names composed of a personal name followed by the suffix *gerd* were common after the time of Alexander, Dara is likely to have been a Parthian foundation³⁵. The Parthian background of Darabgerd is attested to in the story of Ardashir's ascendancy. Ardashir was sent to Darabgerd, developing there and becoming its *argbad* or castellan before expanding his power from the town³⁶.

According to sigillographic evidence, the province of Darabgerd was under the financial control of an *āmārgar* who was also in charge of the neighboring province of Ardashir *Khurrah* and another illegible province. An *ostāndār* took care of administrative

³³ Tabari, vol. V: 7

³⁴ Qudamat ibn-e Ja'far: 195; Istakhrī: 131; Ibn-e Howqal: 284

³⁵ Bosworth, 1999: 7 (footnote no. 23)

³⁶ Tabari, vol. V: 6-7



issues within Darabgerd. In another sealing, Darabgerd is named, along with Istakhr, as being under the jurisdiction of an *āmārgar*³⁷. The name of Darabgerd, appearing in the abbreviated forms DĀ, DAL, and DALAPKR, is also recorded on Sasanian coins from the late 4th century up until the end of the Sasanian era.

- *Identification*: The ruins of the Sasanian and early Islamic town of Darabgerd are located a few km to the southwest of the modern town of Darab.

Dih

- *Attestations*: In his account of Piruz's time in power, Tabari names Dih as a district in Ardashir *Khurrah*³⁸.

- *Identification*: Unidentified

Fasa

See entry under Nev-Darab.

Fostajan

- *Attestations*: Fostajan is recorded as having been one of the major towns of Darabgerd *Khurrah* in accounts of the Arab invasions of Fars³⁹.

- *Identification*: According to the early Islamic geographers, Fostajan was located along the Shiraz-Kerman road, 7 *farsakh* or about 54 km to the east of Fasa, and 4 *farsakh* or about 24 km to the west of Darabgerd. The site of Fostajan has not been identified with any degree of certainty.

Gowaym

³⁷ Gyselen, 1989: 35, 45; 2002: 30, 106-9

³⁸ Tabari, vol. V: 112

³⁹ Baladhuri: 389; Ibn-e Balkhi: 133

- *Attestations*: The mint signature GW/GWDMY is thought to be representative of the town of Gowaym in Fars⁴⁰. Although the location of the mint with this signature in Fars has been confirmed through die linkages, the question of its identification with Gowaym has not yet been proven. On the other hand, two localities with this name are located in Fars, one in Ardashir *Khurrah*, northeast of Shiraz, which is called Guyom today, and the other one in Darabgerd, now referred to as Jowaym. However, based upon its importance in the early Islamic period, as well as its location along the major caravan routes, Mochiri has suggested that the Jowaym of Darabgerd was the mint town with the GW signature⁴¹.

- *Identification*: The modern town of Jowaym (Jowaym of Darabgerd *Khurrah*) is located 69 km southeast of Jahrom⁴². Remains of a Sasanian fire temple, pointing to the existence of a Sasanian settlement in this area, are located about 40-50 km from Jowaym near the village of Fishur⁴³.

Gur

See Entry under Ardashir *Khurrah*

Gurreh

- *Attestations*: Jorreh, along with Kazerun and Nobandegan, was recorded as an important town in Shapur *Khurrah*, which had been captured by the Arabs in the year 16/637⁴⁴. The mint signature GWR on the coins of Yazdgerd I is also thought to be representative of Gurreh (Islamic period Jorrah or Khorrah), although it may also represent Gur as well. Mochiri argues that Gur, the provincial capital of Ardashir

⁴⁰ Mochiri, 1996: 71-2

⁴¹ Schindel, 2004: 159

⁴² Le Strange, 1912: 880

⁴³ Schipmann, 1971: 94

⁴⁴ Ibn-e Balkhi: 132

Khurrah, used ART as its mint signature, not GWR. He suggests that GWR is, in fact, an abbreviated form of Gurreh, an important district and town in Shapur *Khurrah*⁴⁵.

According to Tabari, Mehr Narsi, the minister of Yazdgerd I (399-420), Bahram V (420-38) and Yazdgerd II (438-57) built fire temples in the village (?) of Jarreh in Shapur *Khurrah*. He also founded four other villages in this area, such as the village of Abruwan (see entry under Abruwan), erecting fire temples in each along with palm, olive and cypress gardens. These fire temples, gardens and villages were in the hand of Nersi descendants up until the 4th century A.H. One of these fire temples, referred to as Mehr Nersiyān, was still burning at Tabari's time⁴⁶. The fire temple of Jerreh was also still among the important fire temples of Fars in the 4th/10th century (Ist: 118; Hoq: 273; Hod. : 129)

- *Identification*: The modern village of Jerreh, the center of a district with the same name, is located 64 km southeast of Kazerun. The Jerreh fire temple is located 11 km northeast of the village of Bala-Deh near Jerreh⁴⁷.

Alexander Island

- *Attestations*: Alexander Island is named in the Armenian Geography⁴⁸, and by Ammianus Marcellinus (Book XXIII. 6. 42), who, following Ptolemy (Book 6.4.8), considered it an island belonging to Pars. Based on the coordinates given by Ptolemy, Alexander Island was the eastern most of the three islands named off the coast of Fars.

- *Identification*: Unidentified. Abarkavan or Qeshm Island?

Fara Island

⁴⁵ Mochiri, 1996: 72

⁴⁶ Tabari, vol. V: 105

⁴⁷ Schippmann, 1971: 139

⁴⁸ Hewsen, 1992: 74

- *Attestations*: Ammianus Marcellinus names Fara Island as an island belonging to Pars (Book XXIII. 6. 42). Ptolemy had named it as Sophta in the 2nd century A.D. (Book 6.4.8). This island was the middle in a chain of three islands off the coast of Fars, based on coordinates given by Ptolemy.

- *Identification*: Unidentified. Kish Island?

Irahestan⁴⁹

- *Attestations*: Irahestan is named in *Kārnāmag ī Ardašīr ī Pābgān* as the territory of one of Haftan Bokht's sons (KAP. VII.12). Haftan Bokht, whose residence was in the castle of Kujaran on the coast of Fars, was one of Ardashir's enemies within the province (KAP. VII). The army of the lord of Irahestan was composed of Arabs and Omanites (*tāzīgān ud Mazūnīgān*), an indication of the location of Irahestan on the coast, probably opposite Oman.

- *Identification*: The early Islamic geographical sources also used the term Irahestan in relation to the coastal regions of Ardashir *Khurrah*. Ibn-e Balkhi named this district, along with Koran⁵⁰. It is likely that Irahestan has been applied to the area between Siraf and Bandar-e Lengeh (See entry under Kujaran-Ardashir).

Istakhr

- *Attestations*: Istakhr was the capital of Fars during both the Parthian and Sasanian periods, up until the early Islamic period when it was replaced by Shiraz. According to *Kārnāmag ī Ardašīr ī Pābgān*, Istakhr was the seat of the Parthian ruler of Fars before Ardashir I had defeated the troops of Artabanus and established his own capital there (KAP. V. 10)⁵¹. Sigillographic evidence records Istakhr as the seat of *driyōšān-jādaggōw ud*

⁴⁹ The word *irah* means seashore and the appendix *estan* makes it both a collective and a place name, literally meaning "seashores".

⁵⁰ Ibn-e Balkhi: 188

⁵¹ Asha, 1999: 26-7

dādwar. The financial affairs of this province were under the control of an *āmārgar* who was also in charge of the neighboring province of Darabgerd. In another sealing Istakhr is named along with Bishapur and Veh-az-Amid-Qobad⁵². In the 5th century A.D. (424 A.D.), Istakhr was also the seat of a Christian Bishop⁵³. Istakhr was also an important mint town. It was most probably the main mint used by the kings of Persis for centuries before the reign of Ardashir I. It is also likely to have minted Ardashir's early coins, issued after his coronation in Istakhr as the King of Persis in 205/206 A.D. The mint signature ST and STHL appeared on Sasanian coins from the late 4th century A.D. This mint was operated continuously up until the fall of the Sasanians.

The town of Persepolis, recorded by Ammianus Marcellinus as one of the largest cities of Pars (Book XXIII. 6. 42), has been equated with Istakhr.

- *Identification*: The ruins of Istakhr, located 32 km to the northeast of Shiraz, were excavated by E. Herzfeld and E. Schmidt in 1932-1934 and 1935-7⁵⁴. Excavations at this site revealed parts of Sasanian Istakhr to the west of the early Islamic city. The Sasanian quarter of the city was partially abandoned during the early Islamic period. The discovery of kilns in this part has led to the conclusion that the remaining population in this part were of the Zoroastrian "working-class". During the 3rd-4th / 9th -10th centuries, Istakhr was described as a large and prosperous town. However, the growth and development of Shiraz in the 4th/10th century acted as a catalyst for the decline of Istakhr, with the settlement existing as nothing more than a small village by the 6th/12th century⁵⁵.

Jahram

⁵² Frye, 1973b: 53, (Qasr-e Abu Nasr Sealing Drawing no. D99); Gyselen, 1989: 31, 35, 59

⁵³ McCullough, 1982: 126

⁵⁴ Schmidt, 1939; Whitcomb, 1979a

⁵⁵ Whitcomb, 1979a: 364-7, 1979b: 98-110

- *Attestation*: Based on die links, the GHL mint signature is believed to pertain to a location in Fars which Mochiri has identified as Jahram⁵⁶. Jahram is also named in the accounts of the Arabs invasion of Fars, along with Fasa, Fostajan and Darabgerd, as one of the major towns of Darabgerd *Khurrah* which were conquered in 20/641⁵⁷. Jahram or Jahrom town and its district was part of Darabgerd *Khurrah* according to early Islamic geographers⁵⁸.

- *Identification*: The modern town of Jahrom is located 200 km east-southeast of Shiraz and 70 km south of Fasa. Approximately 42 km east of Jahrom, 600-700 meters on the left hand side of the road leading to Jahrom from Fasa, the remains of a fire temple, known as Zahrshir, have been located⁵⁹. About 2.5 km to the south of the modern town of Jahrom, the ruins of a "hill-fort", locally known as Qal'eh Gabri (Zoroastrians' Castle), are present. On the basis of surface pottery, Stein dated this castle to the pre and early Islamic periods⁶⁰. These pre-Islamic monuments indicate the existence of a Sasanian settlement in the Jahrom area.

Jannabah Castle

- *Attestations*: Jannabah Castle is mentioned in the conquest literature⁶¹.

- *Identification*: To the northeast of old Jannabah, attached to the modern town of Jannabah, there is a mound locally known as Tall-e Gonbad. Remains of a *Chāhār Tāq*-like building are reported on the top of a low mound. Eqtedari has identified it as a Sasanian fire temple according to structural and material similarities with other examples from Firuzabad and southern Fars. Another similar structure is also located

⁵⁶ Mochiri, 1996: 72; Schindel, 2004: 158

⁵⁷ Baladhuri: 388; Ibn-e Balkhi: 133

⁵⁸ Ibn-e Khordadbeh: 46; Istakhri: 107; Ibn-e Howqal: 267; Ibn-e Balkhi: 168

⁵⁹ Schipmann, 1971: 85

⁶⁰ Stein, 1936: 133

⁶¹ Baladhuri: 388

18 km from modern Ganaveh, believed to be a fire temple among the local people⁶². Neither of these structures, however, are recorded by Schippmann⁶³.

Kariyan

- *Attestations*: One of the three major holy fire temples of the Sasanians, Azar Farnbagh (*ādur ī farnbagh*), or the fire of the priests, is believed to be identical with the Kariyan fire temple in Ardashir *Khurrah*⁶⁴. Mas'udi reported in his *Moruj al-dhahab* that, when the Muslims arrived, the Magians divided the holy fire of the Kariyan fire temple, taking some of it to Nasa (modern Beyza) following concerns that the Arabs might extinguish it⁶⁵. Nevertheless, the Karyian fire temple seems to have been operating well into the 4th/10th century, when it was recorded as one of the important fire temples of Fars (Muq. : 427; Hod. : 128). Kariyan, as one of the three major fire temples, distributed its flame to other, smaller temples, as was customary during the period⁶⁶. Another name given to this fire temple in the early Islamic sources is Nar Farra (Ist. : 118; Hoq. : 273). Interestingly, Nar means Fire in Arabic, and Farra can be seen as a shortened modified form of Farnbagh, hence together meaning Azar Farnbagh (The Fire of Farnbagh).

- *Identification*: The modern village of Kariyan is located about 50 km to the south of Jahrom. Vanden Berghe made only a brief mention of the ruins of a fire temple near Kariyan⁶⁷.

Karzin or Qobad Khurrah

⁶² Eqtedari, 1348Š: 42-6, 67

⁶³ Schippmann, 1971

⁶⁴ Jackson, 1921: 81-106

⁶⁵ Mas'udi, vol. 2: 399

⁶⁶ Christensen, 1384Š/1936: 175-6

⁶⁷ Vanden Berghe, 1959: 486



- *Attestations*: It is almost certain that the KA/KALCYDY mint signature on coins issued between the reigns of Bahram IV (388-399 A.D.) and Khosrow I (531-579 A.D.) refers to the town of Karazin in Ardashir *Khurrah*.

Early Islamic geographers referred to Qobad *Khurrah* as a district in Ardashir *Khurrah* whose administrative center was Karazin⁶⁸. Tabari provided a different arrangement, stating that Qobad *Khurrah* was a town built by Qobad I in Ardashir *Khurrah* in the district of Karzin⁶⁹. According to Yaqut, Fana Khorrah (a corrupt form of Qobad *Khurrah* فناخوره ← قبادخوره), was a single province in Fars that was later attached to Ardashir *Khurrah*⁷⁰. All these records indicate a connection between Karazin and the town/district of Qobad *Khurrah*.

It is possible that Karazin was an independent district, renamed Qobad *Khurrah* under Qobad I who attached this district to Ardashir *Khurrah*. The center of this district may have, however, retained the name Karazin, which can be used to explain why the signature of KA/KALCYDY did not change in coins issued between the reigns of Qobad I and Khosrow I. The absence of coins with this signature among late Sasanian period finds may be a result of either the aforementioned territorial changes (which may have resulted in the closure of the Karazin mint⁷¹) or of survival/discovery chance, since the mint signature *kw't-GDH* (Qobad *Khurrah*) appeared again during the early Islamic period on some Arab-Sasanian coins⁷².

- *Identification*: The modern village of Karzin (older Karazin) is located about 8 km southeast of Qir between the modern villages of Fathabad and Imam Khomeini. The ruins of what is believed to be the old city of Karazin are located around this village⁷³.

⁶⁸ Istakhri: 97; Ibn-e Howqal: 264; Jeyhani: 116

⁶⁹ Tabari, vol. V., p. 130

⁷⁰ Yaqut, vol. 4: 277

⁷¹ Gyselen, 1989: 44

⁷² Gyselen, 1989: 44, 71; 2000: 143; 2004, 137; Mochiri, 1996: 71; Schindel, 2004: 162-3

⁷³ Mohit, 1375Š: 91, 99

Kazerun

- *Attestations*: Kazerun is recorded as having been among the major towns in Shapur *Khurrah* conquered by the Arabs⁷⁴. MHD also mentions the *dātwar* (judge) of the district Kazerun (MHD 5.6-7).

- *Identification*: the modern town of Kazerun is located about 90 km to the west of Shiraz. Early Islamic geographers mention the existence of two important fire temples, known as Jofteh and Kolazan or Kovadan⁷⁵, one of which can be identified with a fire temple, 7 km from Kazerun⁷⁶. A Sasanian-early Islamic site, known as Tal-e Juyum, is also located close to the modern town, which may be the site of the pre-Islamic town of Kazerun⁷⁷.

Khabr (of Ardashir Khurrah)

- *Attestations*: Khabr (town?) was located in Ardashir *Khurrah* according to *Mādigān ī Hezār Dādīstān* (MHD 78. 13)⁷⁸. The MHD (MHD A19.13-16) includes a phrase that implies that Khabr and Kovar were close to each other. The paragraph reads as follows: "In one place it is written, that if he declares this: 'if I do not depart to Kovar and Khabr on the day Ormizd, I shall give thirty *dirhams*', then if he departed to Kovar or to Khabr, he is not obliged to pay thirty *dirhams*".

- *Identification*: The town and district of Khabr of Ardashir *Khurrah* was also recorded by an Islamic geographer⁷⁹. The modern village of Shahr-e Khafr (Town of Khafr) is located about 50 km to the southeast of Kovar, east of Firuzabad.

Khir (of Istakhr Khurrah)

⁷⁴ Ibn-e Balkhi: 132

⁷⁵ Istakhri: 118-9; Ibn-e Howqal: 274; *Hodud al-'Alam*: 127

⁷⁶ Shippmann, 1971: 140-2

⁷⁷ Whitcomb, 1979b: 77

⁷⁸ Perikhanian 1997: 191, 282-3

⁷⁹ Istakhri: 120; Ibn-e Howqal: 275

- *Attestations*: Khir, in which the birth village of Ardashir I –Tir or Tirudeh- was located, is named as a district in Istakhr *Khurrah*⁸⁰. The district of Khir may be identical with Khobar of Armenian Geography, a district in which the town of *Parsa* (Pasargade or Persepolis?) was located⁸¹. Islamic geographical sources recorded it as Khabr of Istakhr *Khurrah*⁸² (خير ← خبر).

- *Identification*: The district of Khir or Khabr in Istakhr *Khurrah* has been identified with the area to the northwest of Lake Bakhtegan where the modern *Dehestan* of Khafrak is located. See also entry under Tirudeh.

Khorrām-Ardashir

- *Attestations*: Khurrām-Ardashir was a village (*deh*) in the district of Khabr or near the town of Khabr in Ardashir *Khurrah* according to *Mādigān ī Hezār Dādīstān*, which also mentions a fire temple in this village (MHD 78.11-14)⁸³.

- *Identification*: This village cannot be accurately identified. Nevertheless, based on its location in the district of Khabr, it may have been located in the vicinity of the Kirata fire temple, approximately 40-50 km east of Firuzabad, 500 meters west of Kirata village⁸⁴, and south of Shahr-e Khafr (identified as Khabr, see entry under Khabr).

Khunapakan

- *Attestations*: Khunapakan was named as a *tasug* or district in Ardashir *Khurrah* in the *Mādigān ī Hezār Dādīstān* (MHD 100. 15)⁸⁵.

- *Identification*: Unidentified.

⁸⁰ Tabari, vol. V: 3-4

⁸¹ Hewsén, 1992: 74

⁸² Istakhrī: 102; Ibn-e Howqal: 266

⁸³ Perikhanian 1997: 191

⁸⁴ Schippmann, 1971: 94-6

⁸⁵ Perikhanian 1997: 227

Kovar

- *Attestation*: Kovar is named in the *Mādīgān ī Hezār Dādīstān* (MHD A19.13-15; A20.2) as a town in Ardashir *Khurrah*, close to Khabr (see also entry under Khir or Khabr)⁸⁶.

- *Identification*: The village of Kavar is located about 30 km north of Firuzabad

Kujaran-Ardashhir

- *Attestations*: Kujaran is recorded as having been a district or a fortified town along the coast of Ardashir *Khurrah*. The town was the seat of a local chieftain called Haftan Bokh or Haftwad. After achieving victory over him, Ardashir I demolished the Kujaran fortress, founding the new district and town of Kujaran-Ardashir and a Bahram Fire temple (KAP. IX. 13)⁸⁷.

- *Identification*: It is suggested that Kujaran-Ardashir may have been located near the modern port-town of Bandar-e Lengeh⁸⁸.

Kun.s and L.r.wir

- *Attestations*: Kun.s and L.r.wir were two localities, conquered by Ardashir I after he had captured Chupanan⁸⁹.

- *Identification*: The location of these towns (?) can not be exactly identified. Tabari's narration implies that these places were situated near Chupanan, which was located north of Lake Bakhtegan in Istakhr *Khurrah*, according to the early Islamic geographers, not in the province of Darabgerd (See entry under Chupanan). Based on the location of

⁸⁶ Perikhanian, 1997: 282-3

⁸⁷ Tabari. vol. V: 16; Asha, 1999: 42-3. Whitehouse and Williamson mentioned that Hamzah also named Kujaran-Ardashir as a town founded by Ardashir I (Whitehouse and Williamson 1973: 32) but I was not able to find any reference to Kujaran Ardashir in Hamza's book.

⁸⁸ de Cardi, 1972: 306

⁸⁹ Tabari, vol. V: 7

Chupanan in Istakhr *Khurrah*, Widengren has argued that Kun.s and L.r.wir are likely to have been located in Istakhr *Khurrah* as well, perhaps to the east of Chupanan⁹⁰.

Mand

-*Attestations*: *Kārnmāg ī Ardashīr ī Pābgān* named Mand as a village, where Ardashir halted on his way to Ardashir *Khurrah* after his defeat against his enemy at Kujaran (KAP. VIII. 7)⁹¹.

-*Identification*: The village of Mand mentioned in the *Kārnmāg* may be identical to the locale known as Mandestan present during the early Islamic period. The name Mand was, and still is applied to the lower course of the Sakkan River. Ibn-e Balkhi named Mandestan as a station along the road from Shiraz toward Najirom, 18 farsakh south-southwest of Bushkanat (modern Bushkan, about 45 km west of Farrashband)⁹². Mandestan is also described as a district on the coast of the Persian Gulf, with Sana and Shanbe in its east, and the Persian Sea in its west and south⁹³. However, if the identification of Kujaran with or near Bandar-e Lengeh is accepted, the identification of the village of Mand, mentioned in the *Kārnmāg*, with the early Islamic Mandestan cannot be correct as the latter locale is located much further to the west and not between Kujaran and Ardashir *Khurrah* (Gur).

Margu

- *Attestations*: This place name is attested to in a sealing of the *maguh* of the district, which names Margu (*mlgw*) of Istakhr *Khurrah*. Gyselen has read this place name as Marap⁹⁴.

⁹⁰ Widengren, 1971: 734

⁹¹ Asha, 1999: 34-5

⁹² Ibn-e Balkhi: 232

⁹³ Fassai: 1341

⁹⁴ Frye, 1973b: 53 (Qasr-e Abu Nasr Sealing Darawing no. D204); Gyselen, 1989: 59

- *Identification*: Frye has correctly rejected the possibility of identifying this location with Marv Dasht, since Marv Dasht is not an old place name⁹⁵. It can, however, be identified with Marghab, although the only available pieces of evidence for this identification are the philological links, and the fact that Margu was located in Istakhr *Khurrah*.

Nev-Darab

- *Attestations*: Nev-Darab is only recorded in the sigillographic evidence. This place-name is recorded along with Ardashir and Bishapur *Khurrahs* as being under the jurisdiction of an *āmārgar*⁹⁶. Nev-Darab is not mentioned elsewhere in the literary sources - Sasanian and Islamic – or by numismatic evidence.

- *Identification*: It is not known if Nev-Darab (meaning New Darab) was a new name for Darabgerd, or for a different location altogether. Its only connection to Darabgerd seems to have been verbal as no other connections have thus far been identified. As it is recorded along with Ardashir *Khurrah*, it can be concluded that Nev-Darab was a province bordering Ardashir *Khurrah*. Naming several provinces as having come under the authority of one person, is also attested in the sealings of the *āmārgar* of Darabgerd and Istakhr, or the *āmārgar* of Istakhr, Bishapur and Veh-az-Amid-Qobad (Arrajan). In these examples, the provinces recorded have common borders: Istakhr with Darabgerd, Istakhr with Bishapur and the latter with Veh-az-Amid-Qobad. If this is taken as a rule, Nev-Darab may have bordered only Ardashir *Khurrah* (which in turn shared a border with Bishapur) not, as stated by Gyselen, necessarily both Bishapur and Ardashir *Khurrah*⁹⁷. This would locate Nev-Darab in the area between Ardashir *Khurrah* and Darabgerd, hypothetically in the vicinity of Fasa⁹⁸.

⁹⁵ Frye, 1973b: 53

⁹⁶ Gyselen, 1989: 35

⁹⁷ Gyselen, 1989: 56

⁹⁸ Gyselen, 1989: 56

It is suggested that Nev-Darab might have been a separate province before the administrative reforms of Qobad I and his successors, and the formation of the province of Veh-az-Amid-Qobad during the late Sasanian period. After the establishment of Veh-az-Amid-Qobad, Nev-Darab was incorporated into Darabgerd *Khurrah*. Its capital town, or *Shahrestan* of Fasa remained as one of the important towns in Darabgerd *Khurrah*. Islamic geographers recorded Fasa as the largest town in the province of Darabgerd, a possible reference to the earlier status of the town as a provincial capital⁹⁹. Gyselen has suggested that the attachment of Nev-Darab to Darabgerd may have happened in the early Islamic period, although there is no material support for this assumption¹⁰⁰.

Fasa was a mint town during the early years of Islamic domination in the region, issuing Arab-Sasanian coins along with the other Arab-Sasanian mint towns in Fars. These included Ardashir *Khurrah*, Darabgerd, Bishapur and Istakhr, all of which were Sasanian provincial capitals¹⁰¹. Fasa's status as an Arab-Sasanian mint town is indicative of the importance of the settlement in the period immediately after the Muslims' invasion of Fars and, in turn, its pre-Islamic importance. Fasa may have also been a Sasanian mint as the other Arab-Sasanian mint towns in Fars, mentioned above, were important Sasanian mints as well.

Although no numismatic evidence exists in support of the assumption that Fasa was a mint town during the Sasanian period, both archaeological and literary evidence attests to the pre-Islamic background of Fasa. Tabari named Fasa as the hometown of a hypocritical man called Zaradusht, who lived during the reign of Khosrow I (531-579 A.D.)¹⁰². Fasa was also named as an important town in Darabgerd *Khurrah* in accounts of the Arab invasions of Fars¹⁰³. Archaeological examinations have also confirmed the existence of a pre-Islamic settlement in Tal-e Zohak, site of the old town of Fasa. This

⁹⁹ Istakhri: 116, 127; Ibn-e Howqal: 272, 281

¹⁰⁰ Daryaee, 2003: 195; Gyselen, 1989: 71

¹⁰¹ 'Aqili, 1377Š: 274; Mitchiner, 1977: 32

¹⁰² Tabari, vol. V: 148

¹⁰³ Baladhuri: 388; Ibn-e Balkhi: 133

site is located about 4 km to the south of the modern town of Fasa. It was visited and briefly excavated by Stein, who states that, in relation to the dating of the remains:

"The total absence of prehistoric painted ware on the one hand and of definitely medieval glazed or relief-decorated pottery on the other seemed to indicate that the strata here disclosed dated from an historical period preceding Muhammadan [Islamic] conquest.... Below the layers of debris of the medieval Muhammadan [Islamic] town the remains of its predecessor in earlier historical times are probably concealed"¹⁰⁴.

A considerable pre-Islamic stronghold, locally known as Qal'eh Gabri (Zoroastrian Castle), is also located on a chain of hills to the south of Tal-e Zohak. Surface pottery collected at the site, as well as architectural remains, which include distinctive Sasanian stucco decorations, have confirmed that this structure was a Sasanian castle, overlooking the old town and valley of Fasa¹⁰⁵. The relationship between the castle and Tal-e Zohak forms a clear parallel with Qal'eh Dokhtar and the town of Gur on the Firuzabad plain.

Neyriz

- *Attestations*: In the inscription of Shapur I at Ka'ba Zardusht, there is a reference to the *šahrāb* of Neyriz (ŠKZ, line 50)¹⁰⁶. According to this inscription, Neyriz may have been a separate province (*šahr*) during the early Sasanian period, attached to Darabgerd as early as the late 4th century, when the DA mint signature was recorded on coins, while there exists no mint signature that can be identified with Neyriz. Alternatively, Darabgerd may have been referred to as Neyriz in this early Sasanian period inscription, with its name being changed to Darabgerd before the late 4th century.

- *Identification*: The modern town of Neyriz is located about 288 km east of Shiraz.

¹⁰⁴ Stein, 1936: 138, 141

¹⁰⁵ Stein, 1936: 142-7

¹⁰⁶ Huyse, 1999: 62

Nobandegan

- *Attestations*: Nobandegan of Shapur *Khurrah* was recorded in an account of the Arab invasion of Fars¹⁰⁷. Nobanjan is also recorded as being among the Arab-Sasanian mint towns of Fars¹⁰⁸. This may be indicative of the existence of a pre-Islamic settlement in this important early Islamic town.

- *Identification*: The ruins of Nobandegan are located behind the mayor's office in Nurabad-e Mamasani.

'Oqda

Attestations: According to *Tarikh-e Yazd*, 'Oqda was founded by one of Yazdgerd I's commanders (Jaf. p. 13).

Identification: The modern village of 'Oqda is located about 75 km northwest of Yazd. It was included in *Istakhr Khurrah* during the early Islamic period¹⁰⁹.

Although Oqda is clearly a non-Persian name, based on field observations and an architectural examination of the old *Jami'* mosque of 'Oqda, Shokoohy has suggested that this building was originally a pre-Islamic fire temple, converted to a mosque in the 9th/15th century¹¹⁰. A Zoroastrian shrine known as *Banu Pars* or *Bany-ye Pars* (Pars Lady) is also located to the south of the village of 'Oqda. The present Zoroastrian community is of the belief that, at this shrine, one of the fleeing Sasanian princesses was saved by God from the pursuing Arab army. Boyce, however, has argued that the *Banu Pars* shrine was originally dedicated to the goddess Anahita, whose cult was very important during the Sasanian period and this shrine was called *Banu Pars* as it was located "on the skirts of the land of Fars". According to her, the adoption of the princess legend is

¹⁰⁷ Ibn-e Balkhi: 132

¹⁰⁸ Mitchiner, 1977: 57-8

¹⁰⁹ Istakhri: 135; Ibn-e Howqal: 287

¹¹⁰ Shokoohy, 1985

likely to have taken place between the 4th/ 10th and the 11th/17th centuries in an attempt to save the temple from being destroyed by the Muslims¹¹¹.

Porg

- *Attestations*: The mint signature PW/PWRGY has been attached to a location in Fars based on die linkages between coins with this signature and other editions produced in Fars by Bahram IV and Yazdgerd I. Mochiri has identified this mint signature with Forg¹¹².

- *Identification*: Forg was a town and district in Darabgerd *Khurrah*. The modern town of Forg is located to the southeast of Darab. Remains of a fire temple known as Chak Chak are located to the east of Forg¹¹³, providing confirmation of the existence of a Sasanian settlement in this area.

Ramgerd

- *Attestations*: Ramgerd has been recorded as the site of the last battle between the Arabs and troops from Istakhr¹¹⁴.

- *Identification*: The modern village of Ramjerd is located approximately 73 km to the southeast of Ardakan to the north of Shiraz. No pre-Islamic remains are reported from this area, although the name Ramgerd (Ram + gerd) is indicative of a pre-Islamic background, as the component *gerd* can be found in the names of other Parthian and Sasanian towns such as Darabgerd, Dasrgerd, etc.

Rew-Ardashir / Reishahr

¹¹¹ Boyce, 1967: 38-9

¹¹² Mochiri, 1996: 74-5; Schindel, 2004: 167

¹¹³ Schippmann, 1971: 82-3

¹¹⁴ Baladhuri: 390

- *Attestations*: Islamic sources name Rew-Ardashir as one of the towns built by Ardashir I, or re-founded and re-named by him¹¹⁵. According to Hamza, in the 4th/10th century Rew-Ardashir was called Reishahr¹¹⁶. Reishahr is also mentioned by Baladhuri in the 3rd /9th century as a town near the sea, i.e, the Persian Gulf, and near Tawwaj¹¹⁷.

The name Rew-Ardashir is recorded on Sasanian sealings and on Sasanian coins in both its abbreviated and full forms.

During the reign of Shapur I (240-270 A.D.), Christian captives from his Syrian campaigns were settled in Rew-Ardashir and by the end of the 3rd century A.D. there were two Greek and Syriac churches in Rew-Ardashir¹¹⁸. After the separation of the bishopric of Fars from the Nestorian patriarch of Ctesiphon in the mid 6th century A.D., Rew-Ardashir became the official seat of the Nestorian metropolitan of Fars. The diocese of the bishopric of Fars covered a large area stretching as far as south India, northeast Africa (the island of Socotra near Aden) and the southern coast of the Persian Gulf¹¹⁹. The name of Rew-Ardashir is also recorded in some Manichean texts. According to these sources, in the 3rd century A.D. Mani traveled from India to Iran by ship via Rew-Ardashir, which was the most important harbor in Iran at that time, before continuing on overland¹²⁰.

The Sasanian sealing that bears the name Rew Ardashir belonged to an *āmārgar* whose jurisdiction included Rew-Ardashir, Eran-Khuarrah-Shapur and Vahman-Ardashir in Khuzestan. The mint signatures LYWARTHŠT/LYWARTHŠRT also refer to Rew-Ardashir.

- *Identification*: Gyselen has identified the Rew-Ardashir recorded on the sealing of the *āmārgar* as having been located in Khuzestan, or in the border area between Fars and

¹¹⁵ Tabari, vol. V: 16; Hamzah Isfahani: 44-5

¹¹⁶ Hamzah Isfahani: 45

¹¹⁷ Baladhuri: 387

¹¹⁸ Gropp, 1991: 86; McCulloch, 1982: 113-4, 128, 137, 141, 147

¹¹⁹ Gropp, 1991: 85

¹²⁰ Sundermann, 1981: 56-7

Khuzestan. It was therefore in the vicinity of the province of Arrajan in western Fars as Rew-Ardashir was named along with Eran-Khuarrāh-Shapur and Vahman-Ardashir, which were both located in Khuzestan¹²¹. On the other hand, coins bearing the LYWARTHŠT/LYWARTHŠRT signature have die links with other editions from Fars, suggesting that Rew-Ardashir was in Fars, not in Khuzestan. Furthermore, the relation of the Rew-Ardashir metropolitan with India is suggestive of a more eastern, as well as a probable coastal location for Rew-Ardashir.

The information provided by the early Islamic sources shows that there were two places with the name Rew-Ardashir or Reishahr¹²²; this information has confused scholars in their attempts to identify this locale¹²³. In the 3rd /9th century, while providing an account of the Arab conquest of Fars, Baladhuri described Reishahr as a town near the Persian Gulf in the province of Shapur, near Tawwaj of Ardashir *Khurrah*, where the Arab troops defeated Shahrak, *Marzban* of Fars¹²⁴. Tabari and Ibn-e Balkhi also name Reishahr as the location of a battle between Persian and Arab troops, with their description also implying its close proximity to Tawwaj¹²⁵. Yaqut, repeating Baladhuri's narration, also described Reishahr as a town close to Tawwaj and in Shapur *Khurrah*¹²⁶. On the other hand, 4th-6th / 10th-12th century Islamic geographical sources described Reishahr as a town/district in Arrajan *Khurrah* between Arrajan and Siniz on the banks of the Tab River (the modern Jarahi), which formed the border of Fars and Khuzestan¹²⁷. This location is clearly not close to Tawwaj, a site located far to the south of Arrajan and the Tab River in Ardashir *Khurrah*. The Reishahr of Arrajan *Khurrah*, mentioned by the 4th-

¹²¹ Gyselen, 1989: 57-8

¹²² In the 4th/10th century, Hamza clearly stated that Rew-Ardashir was called Reishahr at his time (Hamza Isfahani: 45). The shorter version of Armenian Geography also mentioned to this place as *Rēšir i Parsan*, from which came fine pearls (Hewsen, 1992, 74A). This evidence shows that from late Sasanian-early Islamic period the name Reishahr was applied to Rew-Ardashir.

¹²³ Fiey, 1969:179-82; Gaube, 1973/1359Š, 84-5, 127-30; Schwartz, 1969/1382Š: 158-60; Whitcomb, 1979b: 81

¹²⁴ Baladhuri: 386-7

¹²⁵ Tabari, vol. XIV: 681; Ibn-e Balkhi: 131

¹²⁶ Yaqut, vol. 3: 113

¹²⁷ Ibn-e Khordadbeh: 47; Istakhri: 112, 119; Ibn-e Howqal: 269; Ibn-e Balkhi: 204-5

6th / 10th-12th century Islamic geographers, has been identified as being near the district of Zeitun south of Arrajan, based upon information provided in itineraries present in the early Islamic geographical sources¹²⁸.

The Reishar of Arrajan *Khurrah* is likely to have been the Rew-Ardashir that was connected to Eran-Khuarrāh-Shapur and Vahman-Ardashir. The Rew-Ardashir of Fars, the mint, the Nestorian metropolitan, and the site of the battle between the Persians and the Arabs, however, was connected to the locality recorded in the *Fotuh* literature as the Reishahr of Tawwaj, located further to the south in Ardashir *Khurrah*.

The Sasanian Rew-Ardashir of Fars has been identified with a site on the Bushehr peninsula, about 12 km south of the modern town of Bushehr, where vast pre-Islamic, i.e. Partho-Sasanian remains, as well as a village bearing the name of Reishahr, still exist there¹²⁹. The name Rishahr was applied to a harbor town in the area that was populated before the foundation of the town of Bushehr by Nader Shah Afshar in the 12th/ 18th century. Wilson suggested that, based on its dissimilarity with other Portuguese fortresses in the Persian Gulf region, the so-called Portuguese castle of Reishahr may date to a period before the 17th century, when the Portuguese arrived on the peninsula, and that the castle may have simply been "adapted by them for their needs"¹³⁰. A similar idea has been put forward by Williamson who analyzed surface pottery found at the fort and concluded that based on the pottery collection, location of the fort, as well as the stratification of a section of a nearby beach, it was, in fact, a pre-Islamic structure. The surface pottery collection from the Bushehr peninsula has also been generally dated to the first centuries A.D.¹³¹. A lack of early Islamic (Umayyad and Abbasid) archaeological evidence at the site indicates that the settlement was almost certainly abandoned after the 7th century A.D. This may have occurred as a result of either the

¹²⁸Gaube, 1973/1359Š: 84-85; Le Strange, 1912: 866; Schwartz, 1969/1382Š: 158-60

¹²⁹ Whitehouse and Williamson, 1973: 35-41

¹³⁰ Wilson, 1928: 74

¹³¹ Whitehouse and Williamson, 1973: 39-40

Muslim invasion and its aftermath, or of the later development of neighboring towns such as Tawwaj or Siraf¹³². On maps of the Bushehr area produced by the Portuguese in the 16th and 17th centuries A.D., Rishahr is recorded as Reixer, a possible corruption of Reishahr¹³³. Later records about the Rishahr of the Bushehr peninsula are from the late 13th/19th century¹³⁴.

In 1979 Whitcomb, after examining the conflicting reports given by the early Islamic sources, stated that, "though there is no textual or archeological evidence, the suggestion of a mass transfer of the population of Reishahr in the early Islamic period from the Bushir peninsula to inland, south of Arrajan ... might be postulated. Mass movements, forced or otherwise seem to be extremely rare as a result of the Arab conquests and during the subsequent period and other explanations for this dual location of the town of Reishahr must be sought"¹³⁵.

The proposed movement of settlement from the Bushehr peninsula towards Arrajan can, however, be completely rejected. The identification of the Reishahr of Arrajan *Khurrah* as a different locality with the Rew-Ardashir of Khuzestan recorded on the sealing of an *āmārgar* and its location near Zeitun, invalidates this theory. A more likely scenario is that the battle between the Arabs and the Persians had indeed happened at Rew-Ardashir on the Bushehr peninsula and the site abandoned after the event, as is suggested by the archaeological evidence. As mentioned earlier, no early Islamic remains were found at the site of Rew-Ardashir on the Bushehr peninsula. In 1987, as a result of a survey of the area around Bushahr and Borazjan, Whitcomb has proposed that the disappearance of the Reishahr on the Bushehr peninsula after the Arab invasion

¹³² Carter et al. , 2006: 97-9; Whitcomb, 1979b: 81; Whitehouse and Williamson, 1973: 40

¹³³ Wilson, 1928: 73

¹³⁴ According to *Fārs Nāmeḥ Nāserī*, Reishahr was a village in Dashtestan *boluk* or district near Bushehr. It was located 1/5 (about 9 km) farsakh south of Bushehr. According to him, this town was occupied by Muslims in the 18th year A.H. It was by the sea and was decayed in the late 19th century (Fassai: 1335).

¹³⁵ Whitcomb, 1979b: p. 81

may have occurred as a result of political and economic factors, likely to have been connected with the growth of the town of Tawwaj¹³⁶.

This Rew-Ardashir was connected to Tawwaj in the early Islamic sources, a result of a growth in the significance of Tawwaj during the early Islamic period, and the relatively close proximity of these two locations. In reality, however, this Rew-Ardashir or Reishahr no longer existed. Nevertheless, its presence in the early Islamic sources along with Reishahr of Arrajan has fuelled extensive debates.

Table 1 summarizes Rew-Ardashir's identification discussion.

Toponym	Attestation	Province	Early Islamic Name	Location
Rew-Ardashir	Seal of <i>āmārgar</i>	Khuzestan	Reishahr of Arrajan	Near Zeitun
Rew-Ardashir	- Late 4 th to mid 7 th Century Sasanian Coins - Metropolitan of Fars and India	Fars	Reishahr of Tawwaj	Near old Reishahr village in Bushehr Peninsula.

¹³⁶ Whitcomb, 1987: 332-4

Table 1: Two Reishahrs and their Locations

Rudan

- *Attestations*: the *LWD* mint signature has been identified with Rudan. The linkages between the issues of *LWD* and those of Istakhr, as well as the large number of mints in Fars under Bahram IV, under whom *LWD* mint was operating, suggest that this signature is related to a mint in Fars; hence Rudan¹³⁷. Furthermore, the place name *lwd'n* on the sealing of a *magūh*, has been identified with Rudan of Istakhr Khurrah¹³⁸.
- *Identification*: The exact location of Rudan has not been determined. According to early Islamic geographers, Rudan was a district and a town in Istakhr *Khurrah*, the most eastern district of Fars on the border with the province of Kerman¹³⁹.

Sartak

- *Attestations*: This toponym is recorded on a sealing of a *maguh*, whose jurisdiction existed at a district level. Sartak was a district in Bishapur *Khurrah*¹⁴⁰.
- *Identification*: The location of this district cannot be identified.

Shiraz

- *Attestations*: Elamite clay tablets mention a town (?) called Tirazziš and Širazziš as well as the castle of Tirazziš¹⁴¹, which are most probably references to the site of old Shiraz. Frye has suggested that the application of the same name to a castle and a town "may be explained by the assumption that it was the name of the district in which were several villages and castles"¹⁴². The same picture can be found in Ibn-e Balhki's description of

¹³⁷ Schindel, 2004: 164

¹³⁸ Gyselen, 1989: 39, 58

¹³⁹ Istakhri: 125; Ibn-e Howqal: 280; Muqaddasi: 438

¹⁴⁰ Gyselen, 1989: 45

¹⁴¹ Hallock, 1969: index

¹⁴² Frye, 1973b: 1

the Shiraz region in the pre-Islamic period as a district with strong forts and no towns¹⁴³. Alternatively, we may assume that it was simply the name of a town and a nearby castle.

The next reference to the name Shiraz can be found in some of the coins and sealings discovered at the site of Qasr-e Abu Nasr. The sealings, which also bear the name Ardashir *Khurrah*, the province in which Shiraz was located, belonged to the *maguh* of Shiraz¹⁴⁴. Frye noted that seal impressions made by the *maguh* of Shiraz were the most common at Qasr-e Abu Nasr, followed by the sealings from the *handarzbād* of Ardashir *Khurrah*¹⁴⁵. Furthermore, coins with the ŠY/ŠYLAC mint signature form the largest group of coins discovered at Qasr-e Abu Nasr¹⁴⁶.

According to the early Islamic geographers Shiraz, the Islamic capital of Fars, was founded by Arabs in the 1st/7th century¹⁴⁷. Shiraz acted as a campsite for the Muslim army during their attack on Istakhr. After taking control of Istakhr, to celebrate their victory, they founded a new town at the site of their camp¹⁴⁸. In contrast, Shiraz is recorded, together with other towns or districts in Fars, as having been conquered by the Muslims, whose inhabitants could either choose to stay and pay tribute or to leave¹⁴⁹. Istakhri, who clearly stated that Shiraz did not exist in "old times", later mentioned two or three fire temples as having existed in Shiraz. Two of them, known as Hormoz and Karniyan, were located in Shiraz. Another, known as the Masuban / Mansariyan fire temple, was located in the village of Barkan or Sukan near one of the gates of Shiraz, in clear view of the town¹⁵⁰. There was also an old strong castle known

¹⁴³ Ibn-e Balkhi: 132

¹⁴⁴ Frye, 1973b: 49-50 (Qasr-e Abu Nasr Sealing Drawing no. D177); Upton, 1973: 24

¹⁴⁵ Frye, 1973b: 49-50

¹⁴⁶ Gyselen, 2004: 137; Schindel, 2004: 168-9

¹⁴⁷ Le Strange, 1905: 249.

¹⁴⁸ Ibn-e Howqal : 279; Istakhri: 124-5

¹⁴⁹ Baladhuri: 388

¹⁵⁰ Istakhri: 124, 119; Ibn-e Howqal : 274; *Hodud al-'Alam* : 130-1

as *Qal'eh Shahmubed* - clearly a pre- Islamic term - in (or near?) Shiraz¹⁵¹. *Shahmubad* was also name of one of the sub-districts or *tassujs* of Shiraz during the early Islamic period¹⁵². Muqaddasi attributed the foundation of Shiraz to Shiraz, son of Fars, a legendary character. It can be inferred from this foundation story that Shiraz had been a settlement during the pre-Islamic period, with similar myths existing in relation to other ancient towns in the region. Furthermore, Muqaddasi referred to the Muslims as those who had "changed" Shiraz from an ordinary town (*madina*), to a *mīsr* after they had conquered Fars¹⁵³. In the 6th/12th century, in an account of the Muslim invasions, Ibn-e Balkhi said:" at that time [year 18th A.H.] Shiraz was a district, with strong forts and there was no town; they [Muslims] captured them all peacefully"¹⁵⁴. Elsewhere he said: "In the days of the Persian kings Shiraz was a district with several forts lying in the open land and it remained this way until ... Muhammad ibn-e Yusof founded Shiraz [town]"¹⁵⁵. This was in 74 A. H./ 693 A.D. According to Mostowfi, Shiraz was founded by Shiraz son of Tahmureth or by Fars son of Noah (again legendary characters). According to him, the town was known as Fars in earlier periods and was ruined before Islam, but Muhammad ibn-e Yusof "built and restored it...in 74 A. H."¹⁵⁶. Furthermore, the Shiraz in Ardashir *Khurrah* is mentioned as the homeland of a Persian, "a man of Fars from the people of Shiraz", who was a commander under Piruz (458-484 A.D.)¹⁵⁷.

- *Identification*: No evidence of a pre-Islamic settlement has thus far been discovered in the present town of Shiraz itself. Nevertheless, based on archaeological investigations and finds, it is believed that the site of Qasr-e Abu Nasr is the location of old Shiraz or "the seat of administration of the local governor and the citadel towers over the [Shiraz]

¹⁵¹ Istakhri: 116; *Hodud al-'Alam*: 130-1

¹⁵² Istakhri: 104

¹⁵³ Muqaddasi: 423

¹⁵⁴ Ibn-e Balkhi: 132-33

¹⁵⁵ Ibn-e Balkhi: 171

¹⁵⁶ Mostowfi: 170-1

¹⁵⁷ Tabari. vol. V: 110-1

plain" during the Sasanian period¹⁵⁸. After the Muslim conquest Shiraz, a *misr*, was founded in the vicinity of the pre-Islamic center of the district, Qasr-e Abu Nasr, as was common practice; all the *amsar* in Iraq, for instance, were located near an older town or village¹⁵⁹.

Qasr-e Abu Nasr, located 6 km east of Shiraz, is one of the few Sasanian sites excavated in Iran. The Persian Expedition of the Metropolitan Museum of Art conducted three seasons of excavation at this site between 1932 and 1935. The preliminary reports of the excavation were published mainly in the *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*¹⁶⁰. 50 years later, in 1985, Whitcomb published the full excavation results¹⁶¹. Seals, sealings and coins from this site were separately studied and published in a single volume, edited by Frye, in 1973¹⁶².

Apart from some Achaemenid and what are likely to be Parthian artifacts, a large number of administrative Sasanian seals and sealings, coins and other objects were found at Qasr-e Abu Nasr¹⁶³. Based on architectural phases (Phase Ia: post-Achaemenid and Late Parthian; Ib and Ic: Early Sasanian and Phase 2a and b: Late Sasanian and Early Islamic), ceramics and coins, the earliest settlement at Qasr-e Abu Nasr has been dated to the post-Achaemenid and late Parthian periods, with the last phases of occupation at the site dating to the mid 8th century A.D.¹⁶⁴. At this time the settlement at Qasr-e Abu Nasr was overshadowed by the growing Islamic city of Shiraz. Excavations showed that the site of Qasr-e Abu Nasr flourished during the Sasanian era, up until the early Islamic period (6th-8th centuries A.D.). After the foundation of the Islamic town of Shiraz, the name and site of old Shiraz was transferred to the new settlement located nearby.

¹⁵⁸ Frye, 1973b: 3

¹⁵⁹ Whitcomb, 1985: 226

¹⁶⁰ Hauser, 1933; Wilkinson, 1936 and 1965; Winlock et. al., 1934

¹⁶¹ Whitcomb, 1985

¹⁶² Frye, 1973a

¹⁶³ Upton, 1973: 18-9

¹⁶⁴ Whitcomb, 1985: 21, 104, 150-1

As mentioned above, the name Shiraz is recorded on a number of sealings. It is very probable that Qasr-e Abu Nasr, a regional town whose influence was limited to the Shiraz plain, represents the pre-Islamic Shiraz¹⁶⁵. It was located along routes connecting the southern cities of Fars with its western and northern regions around Istakhr and Bishapur, and possibly with Darabgerd in the east. A limited number of sealings discovered in this site come from other districts and provinces in Fars, including Istakhr, Bishapur and Veh-Az-Amid-Qobad, providing evidence of interregional communication¹⁶⁶. Thus, it "might have been situated on an earlier version of the road running the length of the [Shiraz] plain"¹⁶⁷.

As for other pre-Islamic evidence from the Shiraz region, and from the vicinity of Qasr-e Abu Nasr, there exist two Sasanian rock reliefs, located about 3 km east of Qasr-e Abu Nasr, at Guyum and Barm-e Delak, which depict Bahram II (276-293 A.D.). Sasanian rock reliefs from Fars were often carved close to important settlements, such as in Firuzabad, Bishapur, Istakhr and Darabgird. The discovery of the Barm-e Delak and Guyum rock reliefs, as well as the remains of a fire altar (originally part of a fire temple) in this area may indicate the presence of an important settlement nearby. This settlement was almost certainly Qasr-e Abu Nasr as no other major Sasanian sites are known to have existed in the area. Furthermore, Whitcomb has confirmed the identification of the *Shahmubad* castle in Shiraz, recorded by Islamic geographers, with Pahandezh Castle, located to the northeast of Shiraz in the early Islamic Shahmubad sub-district or *tassuj*¹⁶⁸. This identification was also proposed by Barthold¹⁶⁹. Late-Sasanian and early Islamic pottery were recorded from this site. As noted above, a few fire temples were also located on the Shiraz plain according to early Islamic

¹⁶⁵ Whitcomb, 1985: 16

¹⁶⁶ Upton, 1973: 9-10; Whitcomb, 1985: 15

¹⁶⁷ Whitcomb, 1985: 15

¹⁶⁸ Whitcomb, 1985: 227

¹⁶⁹ Barthold, 1984: 154

geographers¹⁷⁰. After the Muslim Arab invasions, the Persian Zoroastrian communities were not allowed to build new fire temples¹⁷¹. This provides confirmation that the fire temples in Shiraz were definitely of a pre-Islamic background and that a settlement existed in the district of Shiraz during the Sasanian period¹⁷². One of the fire temples, Karniyan, was probably located within the sub-districts of Karistan (Karniyan?). A pre-Islamic settlement was probably located within the sub-district of Shahrestan as well¹⁷³. The evidence strongly suggests that the pre-Islamic settlement of Shiraz corresponds with the site of Qasr-e Abu Nasr. Qasr-e Abu Nasr was the administrative center of the district of Shiraz, in which the noted pre-Islamic sites were located. With the Islamic conquest the new town of Shiraz was founded as a *misr*, or metropolis, in the same area. Even if the pre-Islamic Shiraz and Qasr-e Abu Nasr are not the same, which is unlikely, the aforementioned evidence confidently shows the close proximity of this site and pre-Islamic Shiraz (in this case, perhaps, in the sub-district of Shahrestan?)¹⁷⁴.

Shiyak (Syag)

- *Attestations*: This toponym is recorded on a Sasanian sealing as the seat of a *maguh*, whose jurisdiction existed at a district level, thus making Shiyak a district. It was located within Bishapur *Khurrah*¹⁷⁵.

- *Identification*: Frye has suggested that Shiyak can be identified with the district of Siakh, recorded in the early Islamic geographical sources as having been located in Ardashir *Khurrah*¹⁷⁶. Siakh is still the name of a district to the southwest of Shiraz and to the west of Kovar district, and therefore in the western end of the Ardashir *Khurrah* and close to its border with Shapur *Khurrah*.

¹⁷⁰ Istakhri: 124, 119; Ibn-e Howqal: 274; *Hodud al-'Alam*: 130-1

¹⁷¹ Zarrinkub, 1975: 31

¹⁷² Arberry, 1960: 30-1

¹⁷³ Whitcomb, 1985: 227-9

¹⁷⁴ Whitcomb, 1979b: 68; 1985: 15, 226-31

¹⁷⁵ Gyselen, 1989: 45

¹⁷⁶ Frye, 1973b: 53, (Qasr-e Abu Nasr Sealing Drawing no. D12)

Siniz

- *Attestations*: Siniz, an important early Islamic town in the coastal area of Ardashir *Khurrah*, is recorded in accounts of the Muslim conquest of Fars¹⁷⁷.
- *Identification*: The ruins of Siniz were identified near the village of Imam Hassan, 20 km south of Bandar-e Deylam toward Ganaveh. These ruins are located east, west and north of the village, stretching 2-3 km in each direction around it¹⁷⁸. As is clearly stated in the early Islamic sources, Siniz was located between Mahruban and Jannabah¹⁷⁹. Thus Schwartz's identification of Siniz with the modern town of Deylam appears inaccurate¹⁸⁰.

Siraf

- *Attestations*: Siraf, according to Baladhuri, was known as Dezh-e Surianak (Surianak Castle)¹⁸¹. A very poorly preserved copper coin from Siraf bears a mint signature that can be read as SYLAP (Siraf?). Nevertheless, due to the poor state of the coin, this signature has been interpreted as another form of the Shiraz mint abbreviation¹⁸².
- *Identification*: The ruins of Siraf are located near the modern village of Taheri, 240 km south of Shiraz on the coast of the Persian Gulf. Siraf was excavated by D. Whitehouse between 1966 and 1973-4, with primary reports of the excavation being published¹⁸³. The Sasanian remains in Siraf, including both architectural remains and coins, were discovered beneath the Islamic layers. The architectural complex included a "fort-like structure" (Surianak Castle?) and other buildings, protected by an outer enclosure, as well as what is likely to have been a Zoroastrian cemetery or *astodān*, with its rock-cut

¹⁷⁷ Baladhuri: 388; Ibn-e Balkhi: 132

¹⁷⁸ Afshar Sistani, 1376Š: 82; Eqtedari, 1348Š: 17

¹⁷⁹ Istakhri: 34; Ibn-e Howqal: 260

¹⁸⁰ Schwartz, 1969/1382Š: 167

¹⁸¹ Baladhuri: 391

¹⁸² Lowick, 1985:2; Schindel, 2004: 168-9;

¹⁸³ Whitehouse, 1968, 1969, 1970a, 1970b, 1971a and b, 1972a and b, 1974, 1975

chamber tombs, above the town. Based on both literary and architectural evidence, Whitehouse has suggested that the fort may be tentatively dated to the reign of Shapur II. During this period it may have served as an outpost to reduce the impact of Arab raids along the coast of *Ardashir Khurrah*, as reported by Tabari. During the late Sasanian period, however, Siraf seems to have operated more as an important trading post, a role that significantly developed during the early Islamic period¹⁸⁴. In the early Islamic period (9th century) the Friday mosque was built on the top of the fort, with the Islamic settlement expanding on top of the earlier remains¹⁸⁵. The site remained inhabited from the Sasanian era up until the middle Islamic period (about early 7th/13th century).

Sobat Island

-*Attestations*: Sobat Island is named in Armenian Geography as an island belonging to Pars¹⁸⁶.

- *Identification*: Unidentified.

Sotuj or Sotuh

- *Attestations*: Sotuj is recorded in accounts of the Muslim conquest of Fars as a locality on the coast of *Ardashir Khurrah*¹⁸⁷.

- *Identification*: Unidentified.

Tabiana Island

- *Attestations*: Ammianus Marcellinus names Tabiana Island as an island belonging to Pars (Book XXIII. 6. 42). It was also recorded by Ptolemy in the 2nd century (Book 6.4.8).

¹⁸⁴ Whitehouse and Williamson, 1973: 33-5

¹⁸⁵ Whitehouse, 1970b: 146-153

¹⁸⁶ Hewsen, 1992: 74

¹⁸⁷ Baladhuri: 388; Bal. : 132

According to Ptolemy's coordinates, Tabiana was the most western island among the three named by him, as well as by Ammianus, as existing off the coast of Fars.

- *Identification*: Unidentified. Khark Island?

Tawwaz

- *Attestations*: According to the *Šahrestānīhā ī Ērān*, Tuzag (*tūzag*) (Early Islamic Tawwaz) was founded by Humāy, the daughter of Chihr Āzādān or Bahman ī Spandīyād, a Kyanid king that is identified as the fifth Achaemenid monarch, Ardashir¹⁸⁸. Tawwaz is believed to be the same as the Taoke mentioned by Arrian, a site located along the Granis River close to a Persian Royal residence (Arrian, XXXIX)¹⁸⁹. It has also been equated with the Achaemenid place-name Tamukkan¹⁹⁰. The discovery of the remains of an Achaemenid bastion near Borazjan has strengthened this assumption¹⁹¹.

Tabari named Tawwaj as a town in which Shapur II had settled some revolting Arab tribes¹⁹². In an account pertaining to Khosrow II (591-628 A. D.) and his servant, fabrics from Tawwaz are described as the best for use in summer¹⁹³. Tawwaz's textile industry provided the town with its major source of income and fame up until the 6th/12th century, when it was replaced by Kazerun. It is possible that Tawwaz was a center famous for its production of fabrics from the Late Sasanian period. Even after its replacement by Kazerun, the legacy of "Tawwazi" fabrics lived on, with the "Tawwazi" name being applied thereafter to a specific group of fabrics, previously exclusively woven in Tawwaj¹⁹⁴.

¹⁸⁸ Daryae, 2002:22, 34; Yahaqqi, 1375Š/1996: 137. Gyselen read this toponym as Tavpak and therefore an unidentified locality (Gyselen 1988:202-3)

¹⁸⁹ Whitcomb, 1987: 331; Whitehouse and Williamson, 1973: 35

¹⁹⁰ Hallock, 1969: 760

¹⁹¹ Sarfaraz, 1973

¹⁹² Tabari, vol. V: 65

¹⁹³ Tha'alibi: 710; Christensen 1936/1384Š: 455; However, this part is not recorded in the Pahlavi version of the story (Khosrow and Ridak)

¹⁹⁴ Ibn-e Balkhi: 198

During the Arab invasion of Fars in the years 16-7/637-8, Tawwaj was captured, becoming the central encampment of the Muslim army. From this site the invaders planned and pursued their conquest of Fars¹⁹⁵. Baladhuri records Tawwaj as a town in Arrajan *Khurrah*, although other early Islamic geographers record it as being in Ardashir *Khurrah*¹⁹⁶.

- *Identification*: The location of the early Islamic town of Tawwaj has been identified with archaeological remains near the villages of Zirah and Sa'ad Abad, close to the banks of the Shirin River to the north of the town of Borazjan. Whitcomb and Eqtedari both reported that Parthian-Sasanian pottery was scattered on three spots around the site, marked as B6 (Tawwaj itself), B7, and B11 in Whitcomb's report¹⁹⁷. Recent archaeological surveys in the inland of the province of Bushehr in 2004 have confirmed the identification of these remains with early Islamic Tawwaj. In the first published report of this survey, the site of Tawwaj (BH12 of the 2004 survey) is described as an "extensive collection of predominantly Umayyad mounds and structures, with earlier [Elamite and Achaemenid-Parthian] material but not Sasanian"¹⁹⁸. The same survey resulted in the discovery of a cluster of sites from the Achaemenid through Sasanian periods (BH29-44) outside the village of Qal'eh Deh, less than 10 km southeast of the site of Tawwaj and on the banks of the Dalaki River. The site is described as a dispersed town, and as the most significant Sasanian site in the surveyed area¹⁹⁹.

If the results of this survey are to be accepted (in spite of Whitcomb and Eqtedari's reports concerning the Sasanian pottery²⁰⁰), one may conclude that the Sasanian and early Islamic Tawwaj were, therefore, the same location. Baladhuri reported that, after Tawwaj was captured by the Arabs, their commander, 'Uthman ibn-e Abi al-'As settled

¹⁹⁵ Tabari, vol. XIV: 65-6; Baladhuri: 386-7; Ibn-e Balkhi: 131

¹⁹⁶ Baladhuri: 386; Istakhri: 106; Ibn-e Howqal: 267; Ibn-e Balkhi: 177

¹⁹⁷ Eqtedari, 1348Š: 93, 97-8; Whitcomb, 1987: 330, Figs. F and I

¹⁹⁸ Carter et al.: 2006: 71-2, Table 2

¹⁹⁹ Carter et al.: 2006: 71-2, 94-96

²⁰⁰ Eqtedari, 1348Š: 93, 97-8; Whitcomb, 1987: Figs. F and I

some Arab tribes, building a mosque in Tawwaj and the town became a *mīsr*²⁰¹ or a "planned Islamic town"²⁰². Tawwaj then became the central encampment of the Muslim army, from which they organized their conquest of Fars²⁰³. No Umayyad pottery was discovered on BH 29-44, while BH12 was reoccupied from the 8th century. Hence it appears that the abandonment of BH 29-44 from the 7th century and the reoccupation of BH12 from the 8th century happened almost simultaneously²⁰⁴. These pieces of evidence suggest that the Achaemenid-Sasanian site at BH 29-44 is identical to the pre-Islamic town of Tawwaj, while BH12 is representative of the new early Islamic town of Tawwaj, previously occupied before the Sasanian period.

Tirudeh

- *Attestations*: Tabari named Tirudeh as the birthplace of Ardashir I. It was a village in the district (*rostāq*) of Khir in Istakhr *Khurrah*²⁰⁵.

- *Identification*: The village of Tirudeh is probably identical with the early Islamic village of Tir, located along the Shiraz-Yazd road. See also entry under Khir.

Veh-az-Amid-Kavad or Arrajan

- *Attestations*: The foundation of the town of Veh-az-Amid-Qobad, also recorded as Wam Qobad, Bar Qobad or Arrajan, is attributed to Qobad I. After foundation of the town, Qobad attached parts of the provinces (*Khurrahs*) of Surraq and Ram Hormoz to it, forming a fifth province, Arrajan or Qobad *Khurrah*, in Fars²⁰⁶.

Although almost all of the Islamic geographical and historical sources attribute the foundation of the town to Qobad I, Tabari names Arrajan as a town which Ardashir I

²⁰¹ Baladhuri: 386-7

²⁰² Whitcomb, 1987: 333

²⁰³ Baladhuri: 386-7

²⁰⁴ Carter et al.: 2006: 97

²⁰⁵ Tabari, vol. V: 3

²⁰⁶ Hamzah Isfahani: 55; Tabari, vol. V: 137-8

had passed through on his way toward Ahwaz during his early reign²⁰⁷. It is likely that there was an older town that Qobad had re-founded or restored before expanding its administrative district²⁰⁸.

The name Veh-az-Amid-Qobad is also written on the sealing of an *āmārgar*, a figure in charge of the financial affairs of the province, together with those of Istakhr and Bishapur *Khurrahs*²⁰⁹. Sigillographic evidence also bears the name Arrajan (?) as the seat of a *maguh*²¹⁰. Arrajan was the name of a district in the province of Veh-az-Amid-Qobad, in which the provincial capital Veh-az-Amid-Kavad was located. In the early Islamic period, the name Arrajan was applied to the city and to the province as a whole.

The mint signature WYHC has also been identified with Veh-az-Amid-Qobad. This mint issued Sasanian coins from the early 6th century A.D., under Qobad I, until the end of this period²¹¹.

- *Identification*: The ruins of the Sasanian and early Islamic town of Veh-az-Amid-Qobad/Arrajan, covering an area of 1200x800 m, are located about 1.5 km to the northwest of the modern town of Behbahan, approximately 220 km northwest of Shiraz, on both sides of the Kurdistan or Tab River.

Yazd

- *Attestations*: According to Tarikh-e Yazd, the town of Katheh (early Islamic period center of Yazd district) was re-founded and renamed Yazdan by Yazdgerd I (399-420 A.D), a name which remained in the form of "Yazd" in later periods. He built a fire temple as well as bazaars, a surrounding wall and palaces, digging three canals and

²⁰⁷ Tabari, vol. V: 12

²⁰⁸ Bosworth, 1999: 12, footnote no. 45

²⁰⁹ Gyselen, 1989: 35, 62

²¹⁰ Frye, 1973b: 53, (Qasr-e Abu Nasr Sealing Drawing no. D201)

²¹¹ Daryaee, 2003: 196; Schindel, 2004: 170-1. The identification of WYHC has been controversial and this signature was attributed to several cities before its true identification with Veh-az-Amid-Qobad by Gyselen (Gyselen, 1979: 210). For other proposed identifications of this mint signature see Mitchner, 1978: 473; Mochiri, 1982: 454; Sellwood, 1985: 49; Tyler-Smith, 1983: 244-5

ordering his commanders to build the towns of Bideh, Meybod (northwest of modern Yazd), and 'Oqda (or the modern village of Deh-e Gabran)²¹². The local Zoroastrians, as well as other legends pertaining to the region, suggest that, after the Arab Muslim invasions, Yazdgerd III's family, pursued by the Arabs, sought refuge in Yazd area. They are thought to have been miraculously saved from their pursuers by disappearing into the neighboring rocks and desert²¹³. The mint signature YZ has also been identified with Yazd²¹⁴.

- *Identification*: Yazd was part of Istakhr *Khurrah* until it was attached to the province of Jibal after the Mongol invasions in the 7th/13th century²¹⁵. The modern town of Yazd, now the administrative center of the province of Yazd, is located in central Iran, 440 km northeast of Shiraz on the Shiraz-Khorasan road.

Description of Fars Rivers in Pre-Islamic Sources

In *Bundahišn* there are references to the Kor and Sakkan Rivers in Chapters XI and XIa. Chapter XI. 8 names the Tōrd River - or the Kōr - and the Wanadiš - or Sagān Rivers- among the most famous 18 principal rivers of the Sasanian Empire. In Chapter XIa these rivers are described as follows: "20. ... Kōr comes from the sea of Sīrāz and pours into the sea of Gurgān. 21. The spring of that river comes from Ādurbādagān and pours into the sea in Pārs.... 25. The river Wanadiš is the one of Pārs, which they also call Sagān"²¹⁶. The description of the Kor River is ambiguous, seemingly conflating two different rivers, one in Fars, the other in Azerbaijan²¹⁷. The reason for this confusion may lie in the assumption that all rivers stemmed from the same source (XIa. 31). A reference to the Borazeh, or the early Islamic Honaifaghan River, is found in *Kārnāmag ī Ardašīr ī*

²¹² Ja'fari: 13

²¹³ Boyce, 1967: 31-2

²¹⁴ Gyselen 2004: 137; Malek, 1995: 124; Schindel, 2004: 174

²¹⁵ Le Strange, 1905: 249

²¹⁶ Cereti, 2004: 33-4

²¹⁷ Cereti, 2004: 19, table B

Pābgān, where it reports the foundation of Ardashir Khurrah by Ardashir I, as well as other construction activities carried by him in this area, namely the digging of canals through mountains and the foundation of fire temples and villages (KAP V. 13)²¹⁸.

Ammianus Marcellinus named the four greatest rivers of Fars in the mid 4th century as Batradites, Rogomanus, Brisona and Bagrada (Book XXIII. 6. 41). The text does not, however, provide sufficient information to attach the names of these rivers to those present in modern Fars, with the sole clue being that they all emptied into the Persian Gulf. This point excludes the possibility of their being identified as either the Kor and Forvab rivers. Furthermore, no philological link has been drawn between these names and later names attached to the rivers by early Islamic geographers, making their approximate identification difficult.

Other Sasanian Settlements

As mentioned earlier in this paper, apart from the Sasanian toponyms recorded in the contemporary or later sources, several other localities with a Sasanian background were identified within the study area. The dating of some of these settlements has been conducted mostly through architectural and philological examinations, although in some other cases proper archaeological evidence is available. These sites are briefly described below.

Abarquh

The Birun Mosque of Abarquh is believed to have originally been a Sasanian fire temple. The Biroon Mosque (meaning the outside mosque, since it was located outside of the town wall) is located southeast of Abarquh. Shokoohy visited and studied this mosque in

²¹⁸ The Pahlavi text directly names the river and says that Ardashir changed the course of the river (*rōd ī varāzag rāyēnīd*). None of the English translations of the text available to me (Horne, 1917: 235; Asha, 1999: 28-9) mentioned the name of the Borazeh River, which is clearly named in the Pahlavi text.

1977, suggesting that the mosque was originally a Sasanian fire temple before being converted into a mosque. His argument has been summarized below²¹⁹.

The only inscription found in the mosque, based upon the style of calligraphy and language that it exhibits, has been dated to the early 9th/15th century. However, architectural evidence indicates that the building may have been much older than this, with some architectural features supporting an early Islamic date. These pieces of evidence, according to Shokoohy, include the presence of arches that are characteristics of the late Sasanian – Early Islamic period, as well as the style of brickwork used in a wall in the northwestern corner of the mosque's courtyard, which exhibits a technique common during the Sasanian period, often used in the construction of fire temples. Another technique uncovered at the site that was in use during the early Islamic period is the orientation of the building towards the west. This was a characteristic present in many of the early Islamic mosques (those with an inaccurate altar or *mehrab* direction), an indication of the fact that the building performed other functions before being turned into a mosque.

The current plan of the mosque provides an example of an early Islamic mosque with two *eivan* and one domed chamber. However, based on the different brick working of its arches, and the difference in the direction of its axis in relation to the whole building, it can be concluded that the eastern *eivan* was a later addition to the original building. Without this part, the western part of the plan was comprised of a single *eivan* in front of a domed chamber, a characteristic plan used in Sasanian fire temples. Qal'eh Dokhtar in Firuzabad has a similar plan although the small scale of the Biroon Mosque's original Sasanian structure suggests that it functioned as a fire temple, rather than as a fortress.

Hajiabad of Darab

²¹⁹ Shokoohy, 1985: 545-62

Apart from the major Sasanian towns of Bishapur, Istakhr and Ardashir *Khurrah* (or Gur), including the nearby Sasanian remains at Qal'eh Dokhtar, and the Firuzabad Palace, there are only a very small number of excavated Sasanian sites in Fars. Apart from brief excavations conducted by Stein at Fasa (already mentioned above), Siraf and Qasr-e Abu Nasr, the only other excavated Sasanian site is the so-called Manor House in Hajiabad, about 50-60 km south of Darab, a project conducted by M. Azarnoush²²⁰. The archaeological surveys in the Hajiabad area resulted in the discovery of a small town [sites 17, 8, 21], fortifications [sites 12, 15, 19, 24], watch towers, hamlets, religious structures [sites 17, 18] and the remains of an irrigation system²²¹. The uniformity of the irrigation system in the surveyed area shows that, in all likelihood, a central decision maker, possibly a feudal lord, initiated the system. Two sections can be distinguished in the surveyed area: the southern section, belonging to the lord, with a Manor House and several hamlets, and the northern part, which included the town, fortifications and *Chāhār Tāqs*, with the fortifications helping to defend against attacks from the south and southwest. A wall separated these two areas. All the settlements in the Hajiabad area, excavated and surveyed, belong to the same period, with no pre-Sasanian settlements being recognized among the surveyed sites²²². The potteries from the excavated site of Hajiabad- Manor House- belong to a period between the 4th century A.D. and the late Sasanian period. Ceramics from the surveyed sites belong to the 4th to 6th centuries A.D.²²³.

Izadkhast/ Yazdkhast

In the 1970s, Varjavand and Kleiss studied the castle of Yazdkhast, located next to the modern village of Yazdkhast along the Isfahan-Shiraz road. These studies showed that

²²⁰ Azarnoush, 1983, 1984, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1994

²²¹ Azarnoush, 1994: 17-35

²²² Azarnoush, 1994: 240

²²³ Azarnoush, 1994: 214-5

Yazdkhast is of a pre-Islamic origin²²⁴. According to Varjavand, Yazdkhast castle and its *Jami'* mosque were both originally Sasanian structures. The castle was constructed on top of a rocky bed along the base of the valley of Yazdkhast. The outer and inner walls of the castle were built, in some places, using 40x40x13 cm bricks typical of the Sasanian period. The lower section of the castle walls, where the base rock was not strong enough, was built using uncut stones. To further strengthen the wall, several semi-circular towers were constructed along the outer face of the western wall at specific intervals²²⁵.

The pre-Islamic *Chāhār Tāq* shape fire temple inside the castle was located on the rocky bed on its eastern side, looking out over the valley. To convert the fire temple to a mosque, its eastern, western and southern *eivans* were blocked, with a small niche being formed in the southern wall as a *mihrab*. The northern *eivan* was left open, forming the entrance to the mosque. A low dome ceiling was built under the high dome of the fire temple in order to balance this new, smaller enclosed space and the ceiling. Large Sasanian bricks, the profile of the original dome and the ambulatory of the fire temple all became visible after fall of the eastern side of the building in this part of the castle²²⁶.

A dam-bridge made of stone, known as Sar Band, was also discovered about 10km south of the castle across the river that passes through the Yazdkhast valley. This convex dam-bridge measures approximately 65m in length and 6m in width. The middle section of the structure has been destroyed. This dam has also been attributed to the Sasanian period as a result of its architectural features, including the materials used, and the general structure of the building²²⁷.

Khark Island

²²⁴ Kliess, 1974: 199; Varjavand, 1351Š

²²⁵ Varjavand, 1351Š: 60-1

²²⁶ Kleiss, 1974: 199-202; Varjavand, 1351Š: 62

²²⁷ Varjavand, 1351Š: 63-5

The history of settlement on Khark Island dates back to at least the first centuries B.C. A group of rock-cut tombs is located on the northeast side of the island. These tombs are likely to have belonged to a Palmyrene merchant colony, conducting trade between China and India and the West that lived on Khark during the Parthian and early Sasanian periods²²⁸. Based on the excavations conducted by Roman Ghirshman in 1959 and 1960, the remains of a Roman Temple of Poseidon were also discovered. This temple was probably ruined in the 4th century A.D., following which a Zoroastrian fire temple was built in its place. A Hormoz II (302-9 A.D.) coin found in this structure provides a probable date for the foundation of the fire temple. This fire temple was itself converted to a mosque after the Arab invasion through the addition of an altar or *mehrab* in the wall facing Mecca. Ghirshman also excavated a Christian church, a monastery and a residential complex for the priests in the western side of the island, dated to the 5th-6th century A.D. The Christians are likely to have lived on the island from the 3rd century when two Greek and Syriac churches were established at the nearby settlement of Rew-Ardashir (See entry under Rew-Ardashir). A Roman coin was also discovered in one of the stone graves at Khark, along with the remains of about fifteen skeletons, which may indicate that the corpses were moved to these graves sometime during the 4th-5th centuries A.D. Approximately ten graves were also excavated in the graveyard site that was located on the eastern side of the island. These graves probably belonged to the late Sasanian period.

Persian Gulf Coastal Region

An archaeological survey of the coast of the Persian Gulf by Williamson identified three "concentrations of Sasanian settlements" at the Minab oasis, in the Siraf and Gavbandi

²²⁸ Ghirshman, 1960

regions, and on the Bushehr peninsula respectively from east to west. These areas were each connected to an inland center: Reishahr to Bishapur, Siraf to Gur and Hormoz to Kerman. The Bushehr peninsula and Siraf-Gavbandi zones correspond roughly to the coastal territories of Seif-e Al-e Abi Zuhair (Zohair Tribe Seashore) and Sief-e Muzaffar (Muzaffar Tribe Seashore) recorded in early Islamic sources from the 4th/10th century²²⁹. The first zone stretched from Jannabah to Najiram and included the Bushehr peninsula. The latter was located between Najiram and Seif-e 'Omareh to the east of Siraf²³⁰. A subdivision of the Siraf-Gavbandi zone is located 80 km to the east of Siraf and 25 km to the west of Lengeh. Although not mentioned by Williamson, this area also corresponds approximately to the Seif-e 'Omareh. Williamson believed that these pieces of evidence may imply the existence of a similar tribal-political division along the coast of Fars during the Sasanian period²³¹.

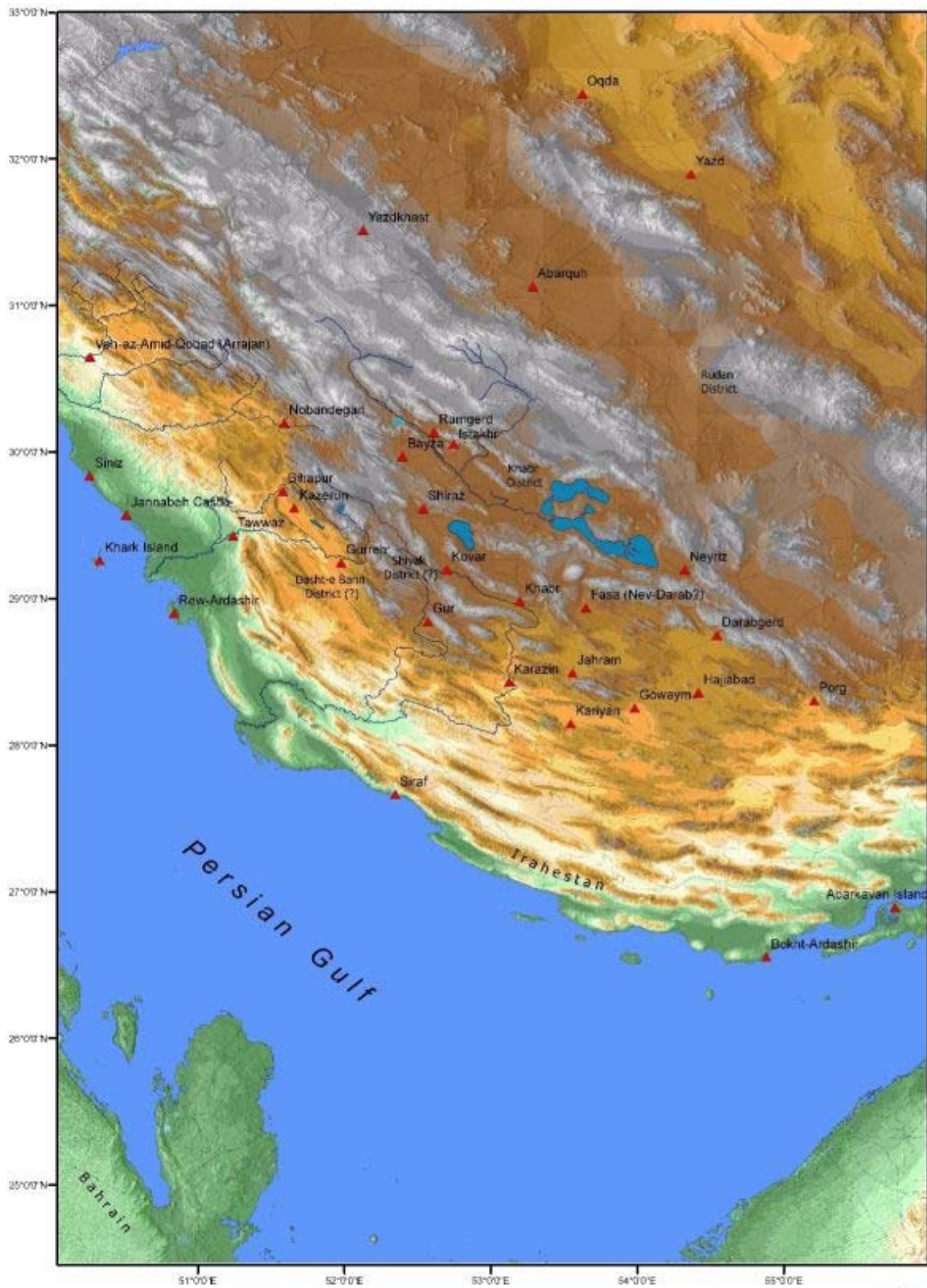
In addition to the aforementioned localities, several Sasanian coins were discovered during construction activities at Soru in the early 20th century. Only some photos of these coins have been included in Iqtidari's book, with no further details being present in the text. The photographs show coins dating to the reign of Khosrow II, although it is not known if the coins presented are the only examples or if there were more Sasanian coins²³².

²²⁹ Istakhri: 104-6, 140-2

²³⁰ Williamson, 1973: 104-6

²³¹ Williamson, 1973: 104

²³² Frye, 1983: 135, fig.1; Göbl, 1983: 350, plate 29, coin no. 5; Eqtidari, 1348Š: 537, 567, figures on pages 551-9



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