



ARDAŠĪR BĀBAKĀN

ARDAŠĪR BĀBAKĀN, name of a Sasanian and early Islamic district (*ostān*) formed in the early 7th century south of Baghdad and west of the Tigris. Its capital was Weh-Ardašīr (Ar. Bahrasīr) a town founded by Ardašīr I Bābakān on the west of the Tigris opposite Ctesiphon. The district comprised five subdistricts (*ṭassūj/tasūg*): Weh-Ardašīr, Rūmaqān, Kūtā, Nahr Dorqīṭ, and Nahr Jawbar. The district seems to have dissolved as a result of the Arab conquest, with its subdistricts rejoining the district of Arz Bābel; this, however, was short-termed as the district was soon reconstituted under ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭāleb. In early ‘Abbasid times Ardašīr Bābakān had an economic output which was, according to a list from 819 A.D. preserved in the geographical work of Qodāma, more or less the same as the output of adjacent districts. This list, which reflects conditions in Sasanian times too, shows that the subdistricts of Rūmaqān and Kūtā were the most important ones. The precise location of the individual subdistricts, and as a consequence the extension of the whole *ostān*, can not be determined with precision. The *ṭassūj* of Bahrasīr, the hinterland of Weh-Ardašīr, is the region of modern Tell ‘Omar. Kūtā, which is identical with modern Emām Ebrāhīm, lay in the southwest of the *ostān*. Nahr Jawbar is to be localized east of Kūtā. It was irrigated by the Nahr Kūtā, which branched off the Euphrates northwest of Weh-Ardašīr and met the Tigris ca. 60 km south of this city. Rūmaqān most probably was adjacent to Weh-Ardašīr in the west and Nahr Dorqīṭ must have been located south of these two *ṭassūj*s and north of Kūtā and Nahr Jawbar.



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