



ARDAŠĪR-ḲORRA

ARDAŠĪR-ḲORRA, one of the five administrative divisions (*kūra*) of Fārs, in Sasanian and early Islamic times (the other four being enumerated under the Sasanians as Šāpūr-Ḳorra, Arrajān, Eštākr and Dārābīerd). The name means literally “glory of Ardašīr,” with reference to the founder of the Sasanian monarchy, *Ardašīr I*, son of Pāpak, just as Šāpūr-Ḳorra (lying to the west of Ardašīr-Ḳorra) refers to Ardašīr’s son Šāpūr I (r. A.D. 240-ca. 272). Ebn Ḳordāḏbeh (p. 47) says that Fārs was divided into five *kūras*, but in fact enumerates six: Eštākr, Sābūr [-Ḳorra], Ardašīr-Ḳorra, Dārābīerd, Arrajān and Fasā. This corresponds in practice with the enumeration of Maḡdesī (Moḡaddasī), over a century later, who mentions six *kūras*, as those above but with Fasā now called Shiraz, plus three districts (*nawāḥī*) of al-Rūdān, Nayrīz, and Ḳasū (p. 421).

Ardašīr-Ḳorra formed the southwestern *kūra* of Fārs. It comprised a mountainous hinterland of the southern Zagros chain—much of the territory inhabited later by the Qašqā’ī tribe—containing the administrative center of the *kūra*, Gūr/Fīrūzābād (see below); with its mountainous topography and extreme climate, this was accounted by the geographers as *sardsīr*. The Zagros foothills and the coastal plain, along the Persian Gulf, on the other hand, comprised an extensive *garmsīr* or hot region. This contained inland the town of Tavvaḡ, and along the coast the ports of Rīšahr, Naḡīram, Sīrāf (q.v.) and Hozū, Sīrāf in particular playing an extensive commercial role in the Gulf and Indian Ocean trade, together with the offshore islands of Naḡīlū, Šayḡ Šo’ayb, Hendarābī, and Qays (Kīš). This coastal region was in early Islamic times



divided into three *sīfs* or shores, named after Arab tribes from Bahrain or Aḥsā who had crossed the Gulf to colonize the Fārs shores: from west to east, Sīf Moẓaffar, Sīf Zohayr (whose hinterland was known as Īrāhestān), and Sīf ‘Omāra (which had a celebrated fortress Qaḷ‘at al-Dīkdān or Ḥeṣn Ebn ‘Omāra).

According to Ebn Ḳordādbeh (p. 44) the *kūra* of Ardašīr-Ḳorra comprised the *rostaqs* Jūr, Mīmand (Meymand), Ḳabr (Ḳafr), al-Ṣīmkān, al-Borjān, Korān, Karbanjān, Ḳavārūstān, Kīr, Kīzarīn, Abzar, Samīrān, Tavvaǰ, Kārzīn, Sīnīz, Sīrāf, Kovār, al-Rovayḥān, and Kām-Fīrūz (cf. Eṣṭaḳrī, pp. 104-107; Maqdesī, pp. 447-48—assigning them respectively to the *garmsīr* and *sardsīr*—and Yāqūt [Beirut] I, p. 146).

The capital of the *kūra*, Gūr (Arabized form, Jūr) is said to have been constructed by Ardašīr on the site of his victory over the Parthian king Artabanus V, probably in A.D. 224, as a circular town with gates at the cardinal points of the compass, and adjacent to Ardašīr’s palace where he had lived before his successful rebellion (cf. Christensen, *Iran Sass.*, pp. 93-94, with illustration of surviving ruins). Within the town he also built a lofty platform or tower, called Ṭerbāl, which Ebn Ḥawqal compares to a similar edifice at Balk (i.e. like a Buddhist stupa, or in the context of Fārs, a ziggurat?). The Sasanian emperor is also said to have constructed nearby a fire-temple which the historian Mas‘ūdī says he visited (Ebn Ḥawqal, pp. 278-79, tr. Kramers, p. 274; Mas‘ūdī, *Morūǰ* IV, p. 78). Gūr and Eṣṭaḳr strenuously resisted the Arabs when they invaded Fārs in the 630s and 640s and were not conquered by ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Āmer b. Korayz till 29/649-50 (Balāḍorī, *Fotūḥ*, pp. 315, 389-90). Fārs was, of course, always an important center for the Zoroastrian faith, and surviving jewels carry inscriptions relating to the *mōbed* of Ardašīr-Ḳorra (Christensen, op. cit., p. 118). The fire-temple mentioned by Mas‘ūdī as still in existence attests the continued florescence of Zoroastrianism in Ardašīr-Ḳorra for at least three centuries after the Muslim invasions, and we further know that in the Sasanian period at least, Nestorian Christianity flourished. According to the records of the Synod of 430, the metropolitan of Fārs had his seat at Rīv-Ardašīr, Islamic Rīšahr, on the coast, and there was a bishopric at Ardašīr-Ḳorra (i.e. Gūr) itself before 540, indicating that Christianity tended to spread from Lower Mesopotamia and the coastlands into the mountainous hinterland of Fārs (see Markwart, *Ērānšahr*, p. 27).

Gūr subsequently had its name changed from the inauspicious early form (Pers. *gūr* “grave”) to Fīrūzābād “Victory town” by the Buyid ‘Azod-al-dawla, who used frequently to visit it, according to Maqdesī (p. 432; see [Fīrūzābād](#)).



BIBLIOGRAPHY

See also *Nozhat al-qolūb*, pp. 113-14, 118, 125.

Le Strange, *Lands*, pp. 248-94, 256-57.

Ebn al-Balkī, pp. 132-41; tr. Le Strange, "Description of the Province of Fars in Persia at the Beginning of the Fourteenth Century A.D.," *JRAS*, 1912, pp. 35-50 (detailed survey of the subdivisions of the *kūra*).

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