



ARDAŠĪR

ARDAŠĪR, name of several figures in the *Šāh-nāma*.

1. The *mōbad-e mōbadān* (chief Zoroastrian priest-jurisconsult) in the reign of Pērōz (459-84), and also in the reign of Ƙosrow I Anōšīravān (r. 531-79). Ardašīr was one of the Iranian notables taken prisoner in the war between Pērōz and the Hephthalite king called Ƙvošnavāz, (see [Aƙšonvār](#)); he remained in captivity until the reign of Balāš when Sūfarā (Sōƙrā) procured his release (*Šāh-nāma* [Moscow] VIII, p. 25 vv. 319f.). A *mōbad-e mōbadān* named Ardašīr reappears in the reign of Ƙosrow I as one of the influential dignitaries and counselors at the royal court (*ibid.*, pp. 135 vv. 1366f., 161 v. 1822, 164 v. 1885, 169 v. 1982). It is unlikely, though not impossible, that the two were the same man. If Ardašīr's career had spanned the forty-seven years until Ƙosrow I's accession, he would have to have held the office of chief *mōbad* under Pērōz at an improbably early age. It is more plausible that the chroniclers at work in and after Ƙosrow I's reign mistakenly supposed that Ardašīr already held in his early career the high office to which he later rose.

2. Son of Bēžan, son of Gēv, who according to certain texts of the *Šāh-nāma* (ed. Mohl, part 14, vv. 814-15; ed. Borūƙīm, VI, p. 1489 vv. 805-07) took part together with his brother Šērōya in Lohrāsb's war with the Romans; neither he nor his brother is named in the oldest manuscripts, which speak only of the participation of Gōdarz's descendants in that war ([Moscow] VI, p. 58, v. 800). In the *Moǰmal* (p. 92) Ardašīr son of Bēžan is presented as the chief hero in the reign of Bahman. This account must be compared with a story in the *Bahman-nāma* of Ḥakīm Īrānšāh b. Abi'l-Ƙayr (B.M. ms. Or. 2780 dated 800/1397-98),



according to which Ardašīr, together with Bahman's wife Katāyūn and her lover Lo'lo', conspired against Bahman and drove him out of Iran. Bahman, with the help of the armies of Syria and Egypt, returned to Iran, and a battle between the two sides took place. While Ardašīr was in single combat with the king of Syria, a dust-storm suddenly blew up, and out of the black dust came a gigantic, mysterious warrior on horseback who took Ardašīr captive.

3. A hero in the reign of Bahman who was said to have captured Rostam's son Farāmarz; from the London manuscript dated 675/1276 it would appear that his real name was Yāz Ardašīr ([Moscow] VI, p. 349, v. 119). The *Bahman-nāma* of Ḥakīm Īrānšāh does not mention him, but ascribes the capture of Farāmarz to a squad of slave-soldiers sent in when Bahman's heroes refused to act.

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