



ARTEMITA IN APOLLONIATIS

ARTEMITA IN APOLLONIATIS, city of the Parthian period in eastern Iraq. Artemita (Greek or Macedonian name), the principle city of the Arsacid province of Apolloniatis and the birthplace of the historian Apollodorus of Artemita, was located on the major route to Khorasan, between Seleucia and the Zagros. According to Isidore of Charax (*Parthian Stations*, par. 2, ed. Jacobi, *Fragmente* III/c, 1958, p. 780), it was also called Chalaras. Herzfeld's interpretation of this name by means of Akkadian (u)gar-sallu (E. Herzfeld, *The Persian Empire*, ed. G. Walser, Wiesbaden, 1968, p. 53) is untenable; more probably it is a Parthian toponym composed of Chala—the name of the most important area of the neighboring province of Chalonitis—and *-sar*, “head, summit.” Strabo (*Geography* 11.11.7), citing Apollodorus of Artemita, locates the city in Babylonia, at equal distances from the Hyrcanian Sea (the Caspian) and the end of the Persian Gulf, i.e. 8,000 stades (1,260 km in stadia of Eratosthenes). According to Isidore, the city was crossed by the river Sillas (Dīāla) and was located 15 schoeni (about 82 km) from Seleucia. For the same distance, Strabo (*Geography* 16.1.17) gives 500 stades (78.75 km in stadia of Eratosthenes or 92.50 km in stadia of Artemidorus); the Peutinger Tables (12.1; ed. K. Miller, *Itineraria romana*, Stuttgart, 1916, cols. 743, 772) estimates the distance from Artemita to Ctesiphon to be 71 Roman miles (105 km, which must be corrected to 61 Roman miles (= 93.3 km/508 stadia; see W. B. Henning, *BSOAS* 10, 1942, p. 942 n. 1). Isidore describes Artemita as a “Greek” city, and Pliny the Elder (*Natural History* 6.117) mentions it among the Macedonian foundations. But for Tacitus (*Annals* 6.4.) and Stephanus of Byzantium (ed. Meineke, Berlin, 1841, p. 128), it is Parthian. From this information, it is



possible to conjecture that the indigenous Aramaic element, which must have formed the basic part of the population of Artemita at that time, had become sufficiently Iranian to be considered Parthian. In A.D. 31, Artemita along with other Mesopotamian cities welcomed the Arsacid pretender Tiridates II, sent by the Romans in opposition to Artabanus II (Tacitus, *Annals* 6.41). Nothing is known about Artemita under the Sasanians. E. Herzfeld (in F. Sarre and E. Herzfeld, *Archäologische Reise im Euphrat- und Tigris-Gebiet* II, Berlin, 1920, p. 76, and *The Persian Empire*, pp. 12, 53ff., cf. Christensen, *Iran Sass.*, p. 455) attempted to identify it with the famous royal residence of Kōsrow II, Dastagard (Daskarat al-Malek). But in Arabic itineraries one finds a possible corruption of Karkā Artemita (Henning, op. cit., p. 942 nn. 1-2) which implies that Artemita was distinct from Dastagard. Its location is usually sought on the borders of Dīāla river, either at Šahrābān in the ruins of Eski Baghdad (W. S. W. Vaux, *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography*, ed. W. Smith, I, London, 1896, col. 227. K. Miller, *Itineraria Romana*, col. 743) or in the region of Baqūba (M. Streck in Pauly-Wissowa, Supplementband I, 1903, col. 145; F. Lasserre, ed., Strabo, *Geography* 8, Paris, 1975, p. 149).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

See also Ptolemy, *Geography* 6.1.56 and Fraenkel, “Artemita,” in Pauly-Wissowa, II, col. 1444. M. L. Chaumont, *Iranica Antiqua* 17, 1982, pp. 170ff.

(M. L. Chaumont)