



## BEH-ARDAŠĪR

**BEH-ARDAŠĪR** (Mid. Pers. *Vēh-Ardaxšēr*, Ar. *Bahorasīr*), name of two cities founded by the first Sasanian king of kings, Ardašīr I (r. 226-41), one west of the Tigris river opposite Ctesiphon and another (called *Bardasīr* and *Bardašīr* by the Arabs) in Kermān. The former, founded in about 230 a.d., was one of the seven towns that made up the complex of the Sasanian capital (*Madā'en*) and has been identified by Gullini as the round, walled city.

The name of Beh-Ardašīr on the Tigris is attested in Sasanian times on seals and bullae, in inscriptions, and in Manichean texts. For the seals and bullae see the references in Sundermann, 1986, p. 298 (the name is written *Vḥy/Vyḥ/Vḥ-rthštl*). In the inscription of Šāpūr I on the *Ka'ba-ye Zardošt* at Naqš-e Rostam the satrap Rastak of *Vḥy-rthštr* (Mid. Pers. l. 34, Parth, l. 28, Gk. l. 66 *Gue-Artaxarōn*; Maricq, p. 331) is mentioned. In Manichean texts it is related that Mani stayed in this town (written *Why-rdhšyr* and *\*Wyhrdhšyr*; see Sundermann, 1981, pp. 26 with n. 1, 116 with n. 2, and 1986, pp. 278, 298). Jews called the town *Bē-Ardašīr*, *Ardašīr*, *Hadrašīr*, or *Māḥōzē*; Christians called it *Bēt Harṭašīr*, *Bēt Hardašīr*, or *Sāleq* (*Seleucia*, having transferred this name from the Hellenistic city nearby). It was mainly commercial and industrial, inhabited by wealthy Jews, and it housed the residence of the exilarch. The district called *Kōkē*, in the southwestern quadrant (*Tell Baruda*) was the location of the cathedral church of the Nestorian catholicos. The mintmarks *WH* and *WYH* are now believed to stand for *Vēh-Artaxšēr*, and coins with the *WYH* mintmark have been found there dated as late as year 38 (i.e., a.d. 628) of *Ḳosrow II Parvēz*, who had a palace there near an orchard called



Bāg al-Hendovān (Ṭabarī, I, p. 1043). By the sixth century parts of this city had been abandoned. The subdistrict (*ṭasūj*) of this city and the district (*kūra*) of which it was the capital were also called Vēh-Artaxšēr (Estān Ardašīr Bābakān in Ebn Kordāḏbeh, p. 7). A *marzbān* resided in a fort north of this city in about 420, and there is a seal impression of the *mōbad* of Vēh-Artaxšēr the *šahrestān* of Vēh-Artaxšēr.

Arabs called this city and its subdistrict Bahorasīr or Behrasīr, but abolished its administrative district following the conquest and combined its subdistricts (Beh-Ardašīr, Rūmaqān, Kūtā, Nahr Dorqīt, Nahr Jawbar) with Beh-Qobād. After ‘Alī settled at Kūfa in 36/657, he appointed ‘Adī b. Ḥāreṭ b. Rowaym Šaybānī governor (*‘āmel*) of Bahorasīr, and this city was a mint for post-reform dirhams. The exilarch and catholicos remained there until they moved to Baghdad after 145/762. There was a large fire temple there in the 4th/10th century and a village of Shi‘ite farmers in the 7th/13th century, settlement being confirmed by coins found at Tell Baruda. Bahorasīr remained a small Shi‘ite town in the 9th/14th and 9th/15th centuries.

See also [ctesiphon](#); madā’en.

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