



## DĀRĀB (2) III. ROCK RELIEFS

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Three rock reliefs are now known on the southern precipices of the mountain ridge between modern Dārāb and the plain; they are sited above a recently drained pool.

The best known is the Sasanian relief first recorded by Sir William Ouseley (pp. 145-48) and published by Leo Trümpelmann. It shows in the center the mounted figure of the emperor, wearing the crown of Ardašīr I (q.v.; 224-40). Behind him are rows of Sasanian courtiers; in front are two pleading figures. Under the emperor's horse lies a defeated enemy. Balancing the rows of Sasanians are rows of "Romans" arranged in tiers. There is no universally accepted interpretation of this scene, though the dating suggested by the different hypotheses varies only about thirty years, from the late 230s to the 260s. In these hypotheses what is depicted on the relief is identified either as a little-known victory of Ardašīr in the 230s (e.g., MacDermot, p. 74; Herrmann, 1969, pp. 63-88; idem, 1989, pp. 21-22); as an early relief of Šāpūr I (240-70) before his coronation (e.g., Ghirshman, 1971, pp. 103-06; Calmeyer, pp. 93-94); as the earliest of the victory reliefs of the emperor Šāpūr I (von Gall, pp. 99-104); or as a late relief of Šāpūr I, illustrating his defeat of Valerian (e.g., among others, Hinz, 1969, pp. 148-49, 173-82).

Below this relief is a small bust first noticed by Louis Vanden Berghe, who initially identified it as that of Anāhitā (1978, p. 72; see [ANĀHĪD](#)). A. Shapur Shahbazi has suggested that it represents Narseh's queen, Šāpūrduxtak II



(1983, p. 265 n. 61).

Finally, the draining of the pool in 1369 Š./1990 revealed a third relief, showing a king stabbing a rampant lion, reported by Dietrich Huff but not yet published (see ii, above).

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