



# FASĀ I. GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

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## FASĀ

### i. Geography and History

The sub-province (*šahrestān*) of Fasā, with an area of ca. 3,820 km<sup>2</sup>, is bounded to the north by the *šahrestāns* of Eṣṭahbān/Estahbān (q.v.) and Shiraz, to the east by Eṣṭahbān and Dārāb (q.v.), to the south by Dārāb and Jahrom (q.v.), and to the west by Jahrom and Shiraz. It comprises three *šahrs* (towns or cities): Fasā, Šešdeh and Zāhedšahr; five *baḵšes* (districts): Šešdeh, Qarabolāg, Šibkūh, Nowbandagān, and the *markazī* (central) *baḵš*; and eight *dehestāns* (subdistricts; Wezārat-e kešvar, p. 13; Markaz-e āmār, *Naqša-ye . . . Fārs*).

Only about two-fifths of the area consist of flatlands. The highlands include the mountains of Karmā'an (highest point: 3,185 m above sea level) in the north, Pāna'ī (2,790 m), Gač, and Dehū in the west, and Naširābād (2,066 m) in the southwest (*Edāra-ye joḡrāfiā'ī*, fasc. 112, s.v. "Fasā"). The greater part of the indigenous population is engaged in farming and animal husbandry. Farming and drinking water is supplied by *qanāts* (underground channels; formerly also called *kārīz*), deep wells, and a few natural springs. The main agricultural products are wheat (processed in several local flour-mills), barley, cotton, and sugar beet (mostly used in a local sugar factory). Local industry includes



carpet- and *gelīm*-weaving (Jehād-e sāzandagī, s.v. “Fasā”). Plants native to the region which have uses in medicine, industry, etc., include the *bādām-e kūhī* (mountain almond, *Amygdalus scoparia*; see BĀDĀM); *bana* (Persian turpentine tree, *Pistacia acuminata*); *anjīr-e kūhī* (mountain fig, *Ficus carica* spp.; see FIG); *golābī-e waḥšī* (wild pear, *Pyrus glabra* [?]); *dermana* (wormwood; semen contra); opopanax; and asafetida. Local wild fauna include *boz-e kūhī* (Persian ibex, *Capra aegagrus*; see BOZ), bears, wild boars, leopards, jackals, wolves, and hyenas (Sāzmān-e joḡrāfiā’ī). Gypsum and lime are mined at several places (Wezārat-e ma’āden, pp. 73, etc.).

Fasā, the *šahrestān*’s capital, is situated 1,382 m above sea level at lat. 28° 56' N and long. 53° 39' E, about 171 km southeast of Shiraz (administrative center of the *ostān*) and to the northwest of Mt. Kōmmār (1,494 m; Markaz-e āmār, 1993a, p. 41; Sāzmān-e hawā-šenāsī, p. 75; Wezārat-e rāh, pp. 153-54; Edāra-ye joḡrāfiā’ī).

The earlier name of the town and district, Pasā, before being supplanted by the arabicized form Fasā after the Muslim conquest, was still used in some geographical works in the Islamic period, e.g., in Ebn al-Balkī (p. 115) and in the *Ḥodūd al-‘ālam* (tr. Minorsky, 2nd ed., pp. 65, 128, 129; with the ms. variant Basā in Sotūda’s edition, pp. 134, etc.). The *nesba* to Fasā, now Fasā’ī, was Fasawī (see Sam’ānī, ed. Yamānī, s.v. “Fasawī”). Sam’ānī (ed. Yamānī, II, p. 218) has also mentioned the adjective *basāsīrī* which, according to him, “was the *nesba* of a Turk, Abu’l-Ḥāreṭ Arslān Basāsīrī, chief of the Turkish [mercenaries] in Baghdad under the caliph al-Qā’em be Amr-Allāh, who later rebelled against the caliph. . . The people of Fārs say and write *basāsīrī* as the *nesba* to the town of Fasā.” Yāqūt (*Boldān* III, pp. 891-92) reports that “the original meaning of *Fasā*. . . , which the ‘Ajām [Persians] themselves call Basā, . . . is ‘the north wind’”; then he quotes the following interesting point from the partly preserved *Mowāzana bayna’l-‘Arab wa’l-‘Ajām* by Ḥamza Eṣfahānī (q.v.): “The *nesba* to Fasā. . . is *basāsīrī*; [the natives] do not say ‘*fasā’ī*.’ In their parlance, *basāsīr* is like [such words as] *garm-sīr* [“warm region”] and *sard-sīr* [“cold region”]. Similarly, the *nesba* to Kasnā [?], a place near Nā’īn, is *kasnāsīrī*.”

According to popular traditions, the town of Fasā owed its name to Pasā, a son of Fārs b. Ṭahmūrāt (or Tahmūrāt) to whom his father had granted this town (Ebn al-Faqīh, pp. 195-96). Its foundation was attributed to Bahman (q.v.), son and successor of Eṣfandīār (q.v.) and father of Dārāb (q.v.; Ebn al-Balkī, pp. 54, 130). But Ḥamd-Allāh Mostawfī (*Nozhat al-qolūb*, ed. Le Strange, p. 125) has the following legend about Fasā’s development: “Originally built by Fasā b.



Ṭahmūrāṭ Dīvbānd, it [gradually] fell into ruin. The Kayanid Goštāsb b. Lohrāsb undertook its reconstruction, which was completed by his grandson Bahrām b. Esfandiār, who renamed it ‘Sāsān’ [sic]. At first, it was triangular in shape, but in the time of [the Omayyad governor] Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf Ṭāqafī, his agent (‘āmel), Āzād-mard, following his orders, changed its shape and reconstructed it.”

Apart from these myths, archeological as well as historical linguistic evidence indicates that the antiquity of Fasā goes back at least to the Achaemenid period, when Fasā was an important settlement site with fortifications (Hansman, pp. 299, 302-3, 307) or, in Harold Bailey’s interpretation (p. 311), the southern stronghold of Persia in that period. According to George Cameron (quoted by Bailey, p. 310), the origins of Fasā probably antedate the Achaemenid period. Moreover, Aurel Stein, during his archeological explorations in Fārs (November 1933 to May 1934), found prehistoric mounds (mostly belonging to the Eneolithic period) at numerous places in the area of Fasā including, for instance, the Tall-e Sīāh (Stein, p. 153; Vanden Berghe, p. 46; tr., p. 47). The nearby mound of Tall-e Žaḥḥāk (see below) is surrounded by abundant archeological remains and contains archeological strata indicating human settlement in that area in different periods (Hansman, pp. 295, 297).

*The Islamic period.* Towards the end of ‘Omar’s caliphate, in 23/644, the Arab general ‘Oṭmān b. Abī’l-‘Āṣ took Dārābgerd (q.v.) and Fasā peacefully because the *hērbadō* (Zoroastrian religious leader; see HĒRBAD) of these two towns reached a compromise with him by offering him some *māl* (money, goods; Balāḍorī, *Fotūhā*, p. 388). Ebn al-Balkī has specified the terms of that compromise: “[The *hērbad* of the *kūra* of Dārābgerd] was a wise and astute man. [When ‘Oṭmān’s troops were advancing,] he went out to meet and welcome him, and prevented strife and fights by pledging that the community of the *kūra* would offer two million dirhams to the Muslims’ *bayt al-māl* [fisc] in exchange for ‘Oṭmān’s *amān* [immunity from being punished or killed] to them, and that the community would further pay an annual *jezya* [poll tax or tribute on free non-Muslims under Muslim rule]. After this agreement, ‘Oṭmān took the money, and the Arabs went back” (p. 115). But again, under the caliph ‘Oṭmān, in 29/650 another Arab general, ‘Abd-Allāh b. ‘Āmer, after he was appointed governor of Baṣra, again dispatched troops to Fārs to conquer Sābūr, Dārābgerd, Fasā, and Eṣṭaḳr (Ya‘qūbī, *Ta’rīkò* II, p. 192).

According to Eṣṭaḳrī (d. 340/951), Fasā was the largest town of the *kūra* of Dārābgerd, almost as large as Shiraz (then the capital of Fārs), with buildings



more spacious than those of the latter, and wide thoroughfares. The buildings were made of mud; the wood mostly used in these was cypress wood. It had a citadel, a moat, and a *rabaż* (business or market quarter outside the town walls). Its weather was more salubrious than that of Shiraz. Both cold and warm region fruits were produced in the district. The people of Fasā, like those of Kāzerūn, were engaged in overland trade, had thus acquired great wealth, and enjoyed comfort and a life of affluence. The predominant religion in Fasā (as in Shiraz and Eṣṭaḳr) was Sunnism “according to the *maḏāheb* of the people of Baghdad” (pp. 97, 127, 139). Already in 372/982 the author of the *Ḥodūd al-‘ālam* (ed. Sotūda, p. 134; tr. Minorsky, p. 128) had referred to the economic prosperity of Fasā: “Pasā, a large and flourishing town is a resort of merchants and has abundant merchandise.” Fortunately, Eṣṭaḳrī (p. 442) has itemized the local trade goods that had secured its commercial prosperity: “silk cloths, good delicate costumes, *besāṭs* [tablecloths; *qālīs*], *fūṭas* [napkins; towels], *waşy* [multicolored silk cloths, sometimes brocaded], precious *setrs* [curtains; bed sheets], excellent carpets, tablecloths, *ḳargāhs* [tents worthy of kings], *mandīls* [handkerchiefs; turban-like headgear], safflower, etc.” In 375/985, Moḳaddasī (p. 431) noted that Fasā’s natives were “the most righteous, pleasant, and liberal people of Fārs;” that Fasā had a *sūq* (bazaar street; market) all of wood and a (Friday) mosque larger than that of Shiraz, made of bricks, with two courtyards connected by a roofed passage, designed like those of Baghdad’s Friday Mosque.

Fasā sustained a heavy blow in 379/989-90; following the death of Šaraf-al-Dawla Šīrzīl, the Deylamite overlord of Iraq, during the bloody conflicts in Fārs between his Turkish mercenaries, who constituted the strongest military force in Iraq, and the Deylamite soldiers and mercenaries supporting and guarding his brother and rival Şamşām-al-Dawla Abū Kālījār (see BUYIDS), Abū ‘Alī, the former’s son, with a multitude of Turks took and pillaged Fasā, then one of Abū Kālījār’s headquarters, and killed all the Deylamites there; then they returned to Shiraz and Arrajān to confront Şamşām-al-Dawla (Ebn al-Aṭīr [Beirut], IX, pp. 62-63). In 442/1050 Alp Arslān (q.v.), on his own initiative “and without anybody’s knowledge,” decided to raid and pilfer the wealthy town of Fasā, still part of the Buyid dominion. He and his military party secretly reached Fasā through the desert, “entered the town, killed a thousand Deylamites and a large number of the common people, plundered a million dinars’ worth [of valuables], took three thousand people captive... and then returned to [Marv in] Khorasan” (Ebn al-Aṭīr [Beirut], IX, pp. 564-65). By the first decade of the 6th/12th century, Ebn al-Balkī wrote that “although Pasā



is as large as Isfahan, it is in complete disarray, and the largest part thereof in ruin; Šabānkāra [tribesmen] had destroyed it; the *atābeg* Čāvli had it rebuilt” (p. 130; see also *Nozhat al-qolūb*, ed. Le Strange, p. 125).

Probably on account of its gradual decline, Fasā is seldom mentioned in later chronicles. An event that might have had serious socio-economic and cultural consequences for Fasā is reported many centuries later by Nāmī Ešfahānī (d. 1204/1789-90; pp. 120-21), chronicler of Karīm Khan (q.v.), founder of the Zand dynasty. Because of the Baḳtīārī tribe’s wrongdoings and unruliness, in 1176/1762-63 Karīm Khan, having decided to punish them, sent separate detachments from Isfahan to raid Baḳtīārī territory to dislodge the Baḳtīārīs from their mountain fastnesses and hideaways, and to confiscate their properties. The members of the two branches of the Baḳtīārī tribe, the Haft Lang and the Čahār Lang (see BAḲTĪĀRĪ TRIBE i), when subdued, were forced to migrate to and settle down in the districts of Qom and Fasā respectively. As a gesture of goodwill, Karīm Khan ordered agricultural lands to be provided to the immigrants for farming, and he enrolled in his army the younger or skillful tribesmen. In his *Bostān al-sīāḩa* (q.v.), Zayn-al-‘Ābedīn Šīrvānī (1194-1253/1780-1837) has the following remarks about Fasā (p. 387): “It is a pleasant townlet ... Most of its inhabitants are *tājik*...; all of them are Shi’ite and not devoid of *mardomī* (civility) ...Now it includes nearly two thousand houses, and its countryside nearly thirty hamlets and cultivated fields.”

A number of notable men were natives of Fasā. In the Sasanian period, according to Ṭabarī (II, p. 893), “a dissembler native of Fasā, named Zarādošt-e Ḳorrakān, had originated a heresy in the Zoroastrian religion, and a group of people had embraced his doctrine; this heresy was suppressed by Ḳosrow Anōšīravān [r. 531-74 C.E.] after his dominion was firmly established.” From the Islamic period, Yāqūt has mentioned three notables from Fasā: the famous Mu’tazilite grammarian and litterateur, Abū ‘Alī Fāresī Fasawī (q.v.; 900-987/288-377; the only well-known learned man from Fasā mentioned by Ebn Ḥawqal, p. 267); Abū Yūsof Ya’qūb b. Sofyān Fasawī (d. 277/890-91), a traditionist “who traveled eastwards and westwards to collect *aḩādīṭ*, and from whom the grammarian Ebn Dorostawayh [q.v.] has transmitted some traditions;” and Abū Sofyān b. Abī Mo’āwīa Fāresī Fasawī, who traveled to Damascus several times to gather Hadīths, and from whom numerous ‘*olamā*’ have related traditions (Wūstenfeld, ed., III, pp. 891-92). Some other eminent scholars of Fasā are the aforementioned Ebn Dorostawayh (258-347/871-958),



the Šayḡ-e Šaṭṭāḡ Rūzbehān Baqlī (522-606/1157-1209), and, in more recent times, Mirzā Ḥasan Šīrāzī known as Fasā'ī (1237-1316 /1821-98), author of the *Fārs-nāma-ye nāṣerī* (q.v.).

No monuments of architectural or historical significance survive that attest to Fasā's size and importance in early Islamic times. Two extant shrines are documented by Sayyed Moḡammad-Taḡī Moṣṭafawī (pp. 430-31), that of Emāmz'ada Moḡammad and that of Emāmz'ada Ḥasan (see EMĀMZĀDA). While their foundations may be old, both buildings appear to be constructions of the nineteenth, if not the early twentieth, century. The former (Moṣṭafawī, fig. 267) is distinguished by an imposing conical dome, set on a high drum; the latter (Moṣṭafawī, fig. 268) by an entrance portico supported by two columns with *moqarnas*-decorated capitals.

Several kilometers southeast of Fasā is the mausoleum of Sayyed-al-Dīn, with a turquoise-tiled dome; it dates to at least the Safavid period but has undergone subsequent restorations and repairs (Moṣṭafawī, p. 497).

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