



HORMOZD III

HORMOZD III, Sasanian great king (r. 457-59 C.E.). He was the eldest son and heir of Yazdegerd II (Łazar, tr., p. 159; Ełiřē, tr., Thomson, p. 242; Movsēs Dasxuranc'ı 1.10, tr. p. 9), and “was king of Sejestān” (Ṭabari, I, p. 871). When Yazdegerd “died in Pārs” (Łazar, loc. cit.) in 457 (Nöldeke, *Geschichte der Perser*, pp. 425-26), his second son Pērōz, who was evidently in the eastern part of the empire, rose in rebellion while their mother, Dēnak, ruled as regent (Ṭabari, I, p. 872). Oriental sources (listed in Justi, *Namenbuch*, p. 8, no. 16) represent Hormozd as unfair and Pērōz as worthier for the throne (Ṭabari, I, pp. 871-73; Nöldeke, *Geschichte der Perser*, pp. 114, n. 2, 117, n. 3). Only the anonymous work known as the Codex Sprenger 30 (on which see Nöldeke, pp. X, XII) states that Hormozd “was the braver and better” of the two, while Pērōz was “more learned in religion” (Nöldeke, *Geschichte der Perser*, p. 118, n. 4). According to the official Persian tradition reported by Ṭabari, Ya‘qubi (*Ta‘rikò* I, p. 84), Dinavari (ed. ‘Amer and řayyāl, pp. 59-60), and others, Pērōz went to the Hephthalites and persuaded their king that Hormozd had unfairly usurped his rightful place. Having received military assistance from the Hephthalites, Pērōz returned, defeated Hormozd, and killed him (Ṭabari, I, p. 872), or pardoned him and then reigned with justice (*řāh-nāma*, Moscow, VIII, pp. 7-8; Dinavari, ed. ‘Amer and řayyāl, p. 60). However, this is a legend, modeled after the flight of Pērōz to the Hephthalites which occurred after his dethronement (details in Nöldeke, *Geschichte der Perser*, pp. 115-18) and is contradicted by yet another report (*ibid.*, p. 117, n. 3; *Nehāyat al-arab*, p. 224) that Pērōz reigned after he had killed Hormozd and three members of his family. We have quite accurate accounts of what exactly happened in Łazar and Ełiřē. The



former says that upon Yazdegerd's death, his two sons made war on each other; and the younger, Pērōz, who was the foster son of Aštād of the house of Mehrān, won and slew Hormozd (tr., pp. 159, 166). Elišē (tr. Thompson, p. 242) is even more specific. According to him, the two sons of Yazdegerd contested the throne and "the tutor [*dayeak* < Mid. Pers. *dāyag*] of Yazkert's younger son [Pērōz], Roham [Rahām] by name from the family of Mihran [Mehrān] . . . with one half of [the Iranian army] ferociously attacked the King's elder son. He defeated and massacred his army, and capturing the King's son ordered him to be put to death on the spot. Then he crowned his protégé, who was named Peroz."

No coin or any other relics attributable to Hormozd III is known.

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