



## ḲOSROW IV

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Ḳosrow IV is mentioned in some textual sources and also on coins as a challenger to the last Sasanian king of kings, Yazdegerd III (r. 632-51). After the coup of 628 and the fratricide by [Kawād II](#) (r. 628), this Ḳosrow, who is said to be a son of [Ḳosrow II](#) (r. 590-628), had been hiding at a place called Ḥiṣn al-Ḥijārah “the Stone Fortress,” near [Nisibis](#). He had been brought back to [Ctesiphon](#) by [Zāduya](#), a noble Persian, who held the office of the “chief of the servants” (Ṭabari, I, 1066; tr. Bosworth, pp. 408-9). [Arthur Christensen](#) stated that Ḳosrow IV ruled for a few years, between 630 and 632 and gives his full name as “Farroḳzād Ḳosrow” (p. 499). A. I. Kolesnikov saw him as a short-lived ruler as well (Kolesnikov, 1388/2010, 166). The *Šāh-nāma* of [Ferdowsi](#) covers a certain Farroḳzād who came to the throne from [Jahrom](#), in central Fārs province, which may suggest that he was originally from there (Zand, 2022, 306). The *Šāh-nāma* (ed. Khaleghi, VIII, pp. 403-5) states that he ruled for only a month and that his rule was followed by Yazdegerd III, but according to the other Islamic sources Farroḳzād Ḳosrow ruled a year (Zand, 2022, 307). He was one of the contenders raised by a faction of the court and possibly an army in the 7th century (Daryaee, 2011, 48-49).

We do possess coinage of a certain Ḳosrow which was early on identified as Ḳosrow V (Paruk, 1924, 394-96; Malek, 1993, 239; Göbl, 1973, 81), and all of his coinage listed by Mochiri shows him as a bearded man. There are ten mints associated with Ḳosrow IV: Mēšān (MY), Garm-Kermān (GLM), Narmšēr (NAL), Šērāz (ŠY), Bīšāpūr (BYŠ), Ardaxšīr-Xwarrah (ART), Dārābgerd (DA), Ctesiphon/Mobile court mint (BBA), Weh-Kawād or Weh-Andiok-Šāpur (WH) (for the



latter identification, Schindel, 2018, 499), and possibly Abaršahr (APL) (Mochiri, 2010, 196-99). The dates of the coins range from year 2 (632 CE) to year 10 (642 CE), which coincide with the first ten years of Yazdegerd III's rule (Mochiri, 2010, 180). If we place these coins in the context of the Arab-Muslim conquest and the coinage of the last Sasanian ruler, Yazdegerd III (Tyler-Smith, 2000, 146-48), we can see a much more complicated picture of the 630s for the Sasanian political map. It is important to note that coinage of Ḳosrow IV was also used in the post-Sasanian period, with the addition of the word *jayyid*, the Arabic translation of the word *'pd* (prosperous; excellent), on the margins (Mochiri, 2010, 185). Thus, this Ḳosrow IV appears to have been a contender to the throne for almost a decade against Yazdegerd III, whose base of power was [Kerman](#), [Khuzestan](#), and [Fārs](#).



Figure 1. Silver drachm of Ḳosrow IV, mint of DA; wt. 3.2 g; 28.5 × 30.5 mm (ZENO.RU, no. 179193; photo © planar73).



Figure 2. Drawing by Anahita Radpoor.

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