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## CHAPTER III

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## CHAPTER IV

### SASSANID PERSIA

#### I. THE SASSANIAN EMPIRE: POLITICAL HISTORY

TOWARDS the close of the Second Century of our era the king of Persis, a vassal of the Arsacid Great King, had his capital at Stakhr (Istakhr) not far from Persepolis. The ruling dynasty was that of the Basrangi, but the province of Persis contained local principalities most of which were more or less independent. Gochihr, the king at Stakhr, was attacked and put to death by Pabghagh, son of Sassan, a high dignitary at the Temple of Anahita in Stakhr, and of a Basrangian princess, whose name seems to have been Denagh<sup>1</sup>. The successor of Pabghagh as king of Persis was his eldest son Shapur, but Ardashir (Artakhshatr, Artaxerxes), brother of Shapur and lord of Darabgerd with the exalted military title of *hargobadh* (p. 114), rose in revolt against him and became king in A.D. 208<sup>2</sup>, Shapur having died suddenly, in consequence of an accident, if the tradition may be trusted<sup>3</sup>.

After having reduced to submission all the local princes of Persis, Ardashir seized the neighbouring province of Kerman, next Ispahan, Susiana and Mesene. At this point the Great King Artabanus V marched to attack in person this dangerous rebel, but was defeated and killed, in A.D. 224<sup>4</sup>, in a great battle which was fought according to Tabari in a plain called Hormizdeghan, the whereabouts of which cannot be fixed. After conquering the western provinces of the Arsacid Empire, Ardashir had himself crowned in due form (A.D. 226) and took the title of King of Kings (*Shāhānshāh*) of Iran<sup>5</sup>. Later expeditions won by arms the eastern

<sup>1</sup> *KbZ* II. 27-28. *KbZ* = the new inscription of the 'Ka'ba of Zoroaster,' on which see the Bibliography to this chapter I, I, E.

<sup>2</sup> The date is made certain by the inscription recently found at Shapur (Sh. Shap.). See the comments of A. Christensen in the article of R. Ghirshman, *Rev. des arts asiat.* x, 1936, p. 127 sq.

<sup>3</sup> The chronicle of Tabari is here the chief source. The genealogy of Ardashir which it gives is found also in the inscriptions. According to *KbZ* I. 28, the mother of Ardashir was named Rodhagh. A popular legend makes Ardashir, as formerly Cyrus, of humble origin; the *Kārnāmagh*, Agathias II, 27: see Christensen, *Les gestes des rois dans les traditions de l'Iran antique*, pp. 78 sqq.

<sup>4</sup> Or 227 if the second Sassanian epoch year is followed (see above, vol. XI, p. 111); the year 224 is implied by the inscription (Sh. Shap.) mentioned above (note 2).

<sup>5</sup> See Volume of Plates v, 234, a.

countries Seistan (Sacastene), Gurgan (Hyrcania), Abharshahr (the modern Khorassan), Merv (Margiana), Balkh (Bactria), Khvarezm (Chorasmia). Ardashir also seized Bahrein, and finally the King of Kushan, ruler of the Valley of Cabul and of the Panjab, and the Kings of Turan (Quzdar south of Quetta) and of Makuran (now Mekran) recognized him as suzerain<sup>1</sup>. The war of conquest which Ardashir waged against Rome is described later in this chapter.

According to a tradition of doubtful value, Ardashir had taken to wife an Arsacid princess, who was the mother of the prince Shapur. At all events, Shapur, whom his father named heir to the crown, was a grown man in 224, when he fought in the battle against Artabanus. Ardashir's consort was probably that Adhur-Anahid whose name is found<sup>2</sup> with the title of 'Queen of Queens' (*bānbishnān bānbishn*). Her name—the 'Fire of Anahita'—may have been given to her to commemorate Ardashir's coronation at the fire-temple of Anahita at Stakhr. For this city remained the holy city of the dynasty: four centuries later, according to Tabari, the last Sassanid King, Yazdgard III, was crowned in that same temple. But the capital of the Empire and the seat of the new dynasty, as of its predecessor, was Ctesiphon.

Ardashir adopted, in its main lines, the organization and administrative institutions of the Parthian State, as is attested by the survival under the Sassanids of political and bureaucratic terminology in the north-western dialect (Arsacid Pahlavi). What differentiated the new Empire from that of the Parthians was, first of all, a strong centralization, which substituted a unified State for a loose congeries of vassal kingdoms. Such of its governors as were of the royal stock bore the title of *shāh*, but were none the less no more than high officials in the Great King's service. The feudal system did not cease to exist. The *vāspuhrs*, the chiefs of the feudal nobility, marched to war at the head of the levy of their subjects, but these armies of peasants were ill organized and of slight military value. Mercenaries also became more important. The aristocratic mail-clad cavalry, which formed the élite of the army, was probably recruited from the lesser feudal nobles who were directly dependent on the crown. Furthermore, the fiefs of the great families were scattered throughout all the corners of the Empire. The administrative division into cantons was not organically connected with the several kinds of provincial govern-

<sup>1</sup> The account in Tabari is confirmed by the evidence of coins and by a bas-relief at Salmas. See E. Herzfeld, *Paikuli*, pp. 36 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> In *KbZ* l. 24.

ments, which were all rather military in character. This was aimed at preventing the governments from being feudal in tradition and from becoming hereditary principalities.

The second characteristic of the Sassanid State is the creation of an official Church resting on Mazdean doctrine, which had been for centuries the common faith of the Iranian people and which the Parthian kings had followed with a zeal that grew as iranism prevailed over hellenism. The organization of the Mazdean—or, one may say, Zoroastrian—religion into a State Church, like the centralization of the royal power which it completed, was doubtless an innovation, but one which consummated a slow evolution. This powerful Church was a very distinctive element in the civilization of the Sassanian period. The *Avesta*, the Holy Writ of Mazdeism, had probably been set down in Aramaic characters in the Arsacid period. According to the Zoroastrian tradition Ardashir I caused a high clerical official (*ēhrbadhan ēhrbadh*), Tansar, his chief helper in the task of organizing the Mazdean Church, to have the scattered texts of this Arsacid *Avesta* collected and to produce a new edition of it which was authorized and made canonical<sup>1</sup>.

Ardashir, who died in A.D. 241, was followed by his son, Shapur I, who was not formally crowned till 242<sup>2</sup>. It seems that the peoples of the Caspian provinces in the northern and eastern marches had taken advantage of the change of kings to rise in rebellion, for the Chronicle of Arbela states that Shapur, in the first year of his reign, fought against and reduced to obedience the Chorasmians, the Medes of the mountains (*i.e.* of Atropatene), the Gelae, the Dailamites and the Hyrcanians. Furthermore, the Pahlavi work 'The cities of the Iranian Empire' (*Shahrestānēhā ī Ērānshahr*)<sup>3</sup> relates that he defeated a king named Pahlezagh in Khorassan, the eastern area of the kingdom, where he proceeded to found the strong city of Nev-Shapur (Nishapur). He took the title of 'King of Kings of Iran and Non-Iran.'

The war against Rome ended with the peace of A.D. 244 (p. 131). The Arab fortress of Hatra, south of what had been Nineveh, which had held out against the attacks of Ardashir, was reduced by Shapur. In Armenia the king Tiridates of a collateral

<sup>1</sup> Prof. H. S. Nyberg, in a recent work, *Irans forntida religioner* (Stockholm, 1937), adopts a highly sceptical view of the details of the traditional narrative concerning the composition and collecting of the *Avesta*.

<sup>2</sup> Volume of Plates v, 234, b.

<sup>3</sup> J. Markwart—G. Messina, *A Catalogue of the Provincial Capitals of Eranshahr*, pp. 12, 52-3.

branch of the Arsacid dynasty fled in 252 or 253 on the appearance of a Persian army, which occupied the country. Then followed a new Perso-Roman war, in which the Emperor Valerian suffered a complete defeat and was taken prisoner (p. 135). This triumph was immortalized by a series of Persian reliefs<sup>1</sup>. But Odenathus the king of Palmyra, the great trading city in the Syrian Desert, joined forces with what remained of the Roman troops and harried the Persian army till it was driven beyond the Euphrates. Though Shapur repeatedly attacked Palmyra it was without success. Later, Tiridates returned to Armenia and once more ruled that country.

The statesmanship and military qualities of Shapur I marked him out as the worthy son of his father, and like his father he made the succession secure by nominating the prince who was to follow him. The Chronicle of Arbela describes him as harsh and stern. But hard as he was to enemies within and without, he displayed a notable tolerance in matters of religion. It is a well-attested fact that he showed goodwill towards the great heretic Mani, whose teaching was anathema to the Mazdean clergy, and Mani dedicated to the king one of his chief works, the *Shāhpuhraghān*<sup>2</sup>. According to the Armenian Chronicle of Elisaeus Vardapet, a chief of the Magi, in a speech to the Armenians two centuries later, related how Shapur, after vainly attempting to stamp out Christianity, changed his policy and forbade the Magi and chiefs of the Magi to continue their persecution, and proclaimed that 'Magi, Manichaeans (*Zandigh*), Jew, Christian and all men of whatever religion, should be left undisturbed and at peace in their belief in the several provinces of Persia<sup>3</sup>.' In this connection may also be remembered the part played by Shapur in the story of the composition of the Sassanian *Avesta*.

According to the Parsee tradition, the king caused to be included among the holy books secular works on medicine, astronomy and metaphysics found in India, Greece and other countries. It is probable that these were really works compiled by Iranians

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 123. It is also, perhaps, the subject of a battle-scene on a fresco at Doura (M. Rostovtzeff, *Caravan Cities*, pp. 210 *sqq.*) and it is mentioned in the inscription *KbZ* l. 13 in connection with the city of Urhai (Edessa).

<sup>2</sup> For Manichaeism, see below, pp. 504 *sqq.*

<sup>3</sup> See V. Langlois, *Coll. des historiens de l'Arménie*, II, p. 203 *sq.* E. Herzfeld has called attention to a passage, unfortunately mutilated, in the inscription of Kartēr Hormizd, in which there may be a reference to this edict of toleration. It refers to 'Zandighs, Jews, Shamans, Brahmans, Nazaraeans, Christians and what other religions there are.' See *Arch. Hist. of Iran*, p. 101.

with the use of foreign sources. But, in any event, the inclusion of treatises of this kind among the sacred writings at Shapur's orders is evidence of his broadmindedness<sup>1</sup>.

After Shapur's death in 272, the crown passed to his son Hormizd I, who had been governor of Khorassan with the title of Great King of the Kings of the Kushans. He died after reigning a year. His brother Vahram I (273-276)<sup>2</sup>, who abandoned Mani to the mercy of the Mazdean clergy (p. 513), and the next King Vahram II (276-293)<sup>3</sup>, son of Vahram I, had also been governors of Khorassan before ascending the throne of Iran. Vahram II was at once valiant and energetic. There was again a war with Rome, and the Emperor Carus advanced as far as Ctesiphon, but his sudden death ended the triumphal progress of the Roman army. None the less, a rising in the eastern parts of the Empire drove Vahram in 283 to make peace with Rome, which gained possession of Armenia and Mesopotamia. Hormizd, the Great King's brother, who was then Governor of Khorassan, sought to create for himself an independent kingdom in the east, and had gained the help of the Sacae, the Kushans and the Gelae. Vahram took the field against his brother; crushed the revolt and, after reducing Sacastene to submission, he set up as its governor his son the future Vahram III with the title of King of the Sacae (*Saghān-shāh*). For the prince designed to succeed was always named governor of whatever province was at the moment the most important and the most exposed to attack. The Sassanid Empire now included Hyrcania, all Khorassan, perhaps Chorasmia and Sogdiana, and Sacastene with Makuran and Turan, the countries of the Middle Indus and its delta<sup>4</sup>.

Vahram III, after a reign of only four months, lost his crown in 293 in an insurrection staged by his great-uncle Narsah (Narses)<sup>5</sup>, son of Shapur I. In the great inscription of Paikuli Narses recounts in detail his triumph and the homage paid to him by the grandees of the Empire and the vassal kings. He began a war with Rome and drove Tiridates from Armenia (p. 132). But the war

<sup>1</sup> These parts, as many others, of the Sassanian *Avesta*, which after its completion by Shapur I and revision and final authorization under Shapur II, comprised 21 books or *nasks*, perished during the centuries that followed the fall of the Sassanid Empire. In the eighth and ninth books of the *Dinkart* we possess an epitome of the 21 *nasks*.

<sup>2</sup> Volume of Plates v, 234, c.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* v, 234, d.

<sup>4</sup> So Herzfeld, *Paikuli*, pp. 35-51, who, by means of such inscriptions as were known when that book was published (1924) and of coins, has contributed to elucidate the rather obscure early history of the Sassanid Empire.

<sup>5</sup> Volume of Plates, v, 234, e.



was not attended with success and the peace that was made in 298 restored Tiridates to his throne and cost Persia five cantons of Lesser Armenia.

Narses died in 302. The reign of his son, Hormizd II<sup>1</sup> (302–309) passed without great events and was followed by internal wars which ended in the accession of Shapur II, Hormizd's infant son. During his minority his mother ruled jointly with the great nobles, whose power notably increased at the expense of the royal prerogative. But when the young king came of age, he displayed remarkable strength and vigour and contrived to check the ambitions of the feudal notables. Already well advanced in middle life, after subduing with merciless harshness the rebellious Arab tribes, he began in 356 the war of revenge upon Rome.

## II. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE SASSANIAN STATE

Sassanian society was marked by the feudal structure which it inherited from the preceding period<sup>2</sup>. Four classes were distinguished: the clergy (*āsravān*), the warriors (*artēshtrārān*), the bureaucrats (*dibhērān*, the secretaries) and the commons (*vāstryōshān*, the peasants, and *hutukhshān*, the artisans or workmen). The three first classes formed the aristocracy, which was very firmly marked off from the plebeians. But this division was in theory rather than in fact. The inscription of Shapur I at Hajiabad gives the names of the four classes of the Sassanian high society. The most exalted of these was that of the *shahrdārs*, which, in all probability, comprised the vassal kings of foreign origin and the governors who belonged to the royal family and bore the title of *shāh*. The chiefs of the great feudal houses formed the second class, that of the *vāspuhrs*. Seven families enjoyed peculiar privileges. The first of these was that of the Sassanids<sup>3</sup>. Certain high offices, military and civil, were hereditary in these houses, but little is known of the true character of these offices. The dignity of *hargōbadh*<sup>4</sup> belonged by right of birth to the family of the Sassanids.

<sup>1</sup> Volume of Plates v, 234, f.

<sup>2</sup> See Vol. XI, pp. 120 sqq.

<sup>3</sup> Among the others are known the *Kārān Pahlav*, the *Sūrēn Pahlav*, the *Aspāhbād Pahlav*, the *Spendiyād* and the *Mihrān*. *Kārān* (written k.a.r.n. or k.a.r.n.i.), not *Kārēn*, is the form attested by the inscriptions; *Pahlav* signifies 'Parthian.' A considerable number of eminent families and of names of individual *vāspuhrs* are found in the inscription of the 'Ka'ba of Zoroaster.'

<sup>4</sup> Pronounced *argobād*. This title, like so many others, is inherited from the Parthian State. A relief of a certain 'Vorōd, the argabad' has been found at Palmyra. See H. Ingholt, 'Inscriptions and Sculptures from Palmyra I', *Berytus*, III, 1936, p. 93.

The third class, the *vuzurgān*, 'the Great Ones,' comprised the Ministers and other heads of the Administration, and the fourth, the *āzādihān*, 'the Free Men,' the lesser nobility, which, scattered through all the Empire, acted largely as inferior functionaries in provincial government. The military aristocracy being also a civilian aristocracy, the *vāspuhrs* were often also members of the class of the *vuzurgān*.

Little is known with precision about this complicated hierarchy. The gradation of society showed itself at every turn, in clothing, the form of the headdress, personal ornaments (rings, girdles, diadems) and in the horses they rode. There were titles of honour, as for example those which gave the name of the king in whose service the bearer of the title had distinguished himself<sup>1</sup>. The wife of a *shāh* was *bānbishn*, the title *Mēshān-bānbishn* (Queen of Mesene) corresponding to *Mēshān-shāh*. The consort of the King of Kings was named Queen of Queens (p. 110).

The inscriptions, especially those previously mentioned, give a large number of titles of high State functionaries. The Chief Minister still had the old title of *hazārobadh*<sup>2</sup>. The 'Chief of the Husbandmen' (*vāstryōshān* [or *vāsrōshān*] -*sardar*) was Minister of Finance, the *spāhbadh* was General of the Army, the *dibhērobadh* Chief of the Secretaries<sup>3</sup>, the *handarzbadh* was something like a Minister of Public Instruction. The *kartiēr*<sup>4</sup> was beyond doubt one of the most exalted dignitaries but his functions cannot be defined. The title of *ganzobar* 'treasurer' has recently been discovered in an inscription<sup>5</sup>; hitherto this title had not been known in Pahlavi texts. The *mōbadhān mōbadh* was the supreme head of the Mazdean Church. He controlled the priestly dignitaries, the *mōbadhs* and the great body of the inferior Magi (*mōgh*). The superior of all the fire-temple priests (*ēhrbadhs*) had the title of *ēhrbadhān ēhrbadh*. Other high functionaries of the Church were the *dasrovar* and the *vardabadh*, the 'Master of Observances<sup>6</sup>.' Some titles of court-officials are also known, such as those of the 'Chief of the Court,' the 'Chief Huntsman' and the 'Chief of the

<sup>1</sup> Thus the inscriptions (*Paik.* and *KbZ*) give several *Tahm-Shāhpuhr*, a *Shāhpuhr-shnūm* and a *Nokhv-Hormizd* (*tahm* = 'strong'; *shnūm* 'joy'; *nokhv* 'first').

<sup>2</sup> Old Persian *hazārapati*, Greek *χιλιάρχος*.

<sup>3</sup> The Secretaries (*dibhēr*) were a very important element in the administration. They drafted and registered the royal edicts, conducted the State correspondence and were experts in diplomacy.

<sup>4</sup> See Herzfeld, *Paikuli*, Glossary No. 558. The word is also found in *KbZ* l. 33.

<sup>5</sup> *KbZ* l. 33.

<sup>6</sup> This title is found in *KbZ* l. 32.

Servitors<sup>1</sup>. A curious title is that of the 'sword-wielder' (*shap-shērāz*)<sup>2</sup>.

In the Parthian period there was a division of the Empire into four toparchies, those of the north, south, east and west<sup>3</sup>. This is found again in the latest phases of the Sassanian period, the toparchs being then designated by the name of *marzbān* (the great *marzbāns* with the title of *shāh*), later by the name of *pādghōspān*. It may be assumed that the four-fold division of the Empire also existed in the first phase of Sassanian history, but we possess no definite information about it. The title of *marzbān* is not found in the inscriptions of this period, and the existence of the title of *pādghōspān* in the inscription of Paikuli is not certain<sup>4</sup>. Most probably the four toparchs, during the reigns of the earliest Sassanid Kings as in the age that preceded them, were called *bidhakhsh*<sup>5</sup>.

In the two inscriptions referred to above<sup>6</sup> there are also found the titles of a number of vassal kings and governors of royal blood which are made up of the name of the people or province and the word *shāh* (*Armenān-shāh*, *Marv-shāh*, *Kermān-shāh*, *Saghān-shāh*, etc.), and then certain analogous titles ending in *-khvadhāy* ('Master'). The latter inscription gives a series of titles of satraps (*shatrap*) who governed a city with the district round it, such as the satraps of Hamadan, of Gadh or Ispahan and of Nayriz<sup>7</sup>. A little later, under Shapur II, the word *bidhakhsh* was used to designate all the governors of the great provinces<sup>8</sup>, and finally, from about the beginning of the fifth century, this title was replaced by that of *marzbān*. Several other titles of administrative officials for the provinces are found in the inscriptions of the third century: for example, a *Saghastān-handarzbād*, 'Director of Education in Sacastene,' and a *shatrapav-āmārkār*, 'Superintendent

<sup>1</sup> *Darbadh*, *nakhchīrbadh*, *parastaghadh*.

<sup>2</sup> Found, like the preceding titles, in the *KbZ*.

<sup>3</sup> Despite the observations of M. Pagliaro in the *Rivista degli studi orientali*, XII, 1929, p. 160 sq. the present writer is inclined to believe that the title of the toparchs, in that period, was *bidhakhsh* (*bdeashkh* among the Armenians, who had borrowed their administrative system from the Parthians).

<sup>4</sup> Herzfeld, *Paikuli*, Glossary no. 798.

<sup>5</sup> In the inscription of Paikuli (*ib.* Glossary nos. 214 and 780-1) the *bidhakhsh* is named after the *hargobadh* and the chief of the Sassanid clan and before the *hazārobadh*; the *KbZ* gives the names of a *bidhakhsh* and a *bidhakhshān*, in both instances immediately before the name of a *hazārobadh*.

<sup>6</sup> *Paik.* and *KbZ*.

<sup>7</sup> *Ahmadān-shatrap*, *Gadhē-shatrap*, *Nagrīch-shatrap*.

<sup>8</sup> See the list of 'vitaxes' in Ammian. Marc. XXIII, 6, 14.

of accounts to the satrap.' As to the internal administration of the cities during the period in question we are completely without information, though a *vāzārbadh*, 'head of the bazaar,' a high police official, is mentioned in an inscription<sup>1</sup>.

### III. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The *Avesta* glorifies agriculture as the best form of livelihood: by working the land man assures himself of all kinds of divine rewards. But though agriculture always enjoyed high esteem, though good kings and good governors always paid attention to the irrigation system, upon which the cultivation of a land as arid as Iran primarily depends, the lot of the peasant, under the feudal system, was not enviable. He was tied to the soil, bound to furnish statutory labour, and to serve as a foot-soldier in war; in addition he was liable both to a personal tax and to a land tax. The personal tax was fixed at a yearly sum, which was divided out among the taxpayers by the authorities: the land tax, before the fiscal reform of the sixth century, was so arranged that after an assessment of the harvest each canton had to pay from a sixth to a third, according to the fertility of the soil. The lot of the city-dwellers was more pleasant: they had to pay the personal tax, but were probably relieved of military service, and they controlled commerce and other profitable professions.

Ctesiphon, the capital of the Empire, was an aggregate of two large fortified cities on the east and west of the Tigris, Ctesiphon proper, and Seleuceia, which had been destroyed by Avidius Cassius in A.D. 165 and was rebuilt by Ardashir I under the name of Veh-Ardashir. This double town lay outside Iranian territory proper, and its populace was a mixture of differing races, but it held a central position in international commerce. At Ctesiphon caravans coming from the west through Edessa and Nisibis (for the route through Palmyra and Doura was given up after the fall of the Palmyrene kingdom) could meet caravans that had come from India by the Cabul Valley, or from China along the Tarim basin, and then through Turkestan, Khorassan, Raï (Rhagae) and Hamadan (see above, p. 98). Other great routes linked Raï with the Caspian provinces, and Hamadan with Susiana and the Persian Gulf, crossing the kingdom of Persis. One provision in a treaty that Diocletian offered the Persians in 298 (p. 336), which would have restricted communication between Persia and Rome to Nisibis only, was firmly rejected by Narses. In Iran the Chinese

<sup>1</sup> *KbZ* I. 34.

bought Babylonian carpets, precious stones from Syria, Iranian rouge for the eyebrows, and textiles from Syria and Egypt; their principal export was silk, above all raw silk, which the Iranians re-exported, sometimes in the raw, sometimes after working it up. The sea-borne commerce of the Persians was concentrated mainly on the old harbours and those new ports recently constructed by Ardashir I within the Persian Gulf, at Mesene and at Charax; here the Arab population made splendid sailors.

Among the industries of the Persian Empire the making of textiles reached a high pitch of perfection. The Sassanid kings, like their Persian and Parthian predecessors, spared no pains to create new industries, for which they could call on the technical knowledge of their prisoners of war. Thus Shapur I exploited to the full the engineering skill of the Romans by making the prisoners from Valerian's army build the great dam at Shoshtar, a fine piece of construction that has survived to this day.

#### IV. THE STATE-RELIGION AND FOREIGN RELIGIONS

The *Gathas*, that is the metrical preaching of Zoroaster, expound the doctrines of the prophet in their original purity. The more recent parts of the *Avesta*, where older deities, rejected or ignored by Zoroaster, make a re-appearance, represent a compromise between Zoroastrianism and popular belief. In the last centuries before Christ two different systems of Mazdeism had sprung into being: one sect regarded Space, the other Time, as the original Principle, which produced the Good and the Bad Spirit (Ormuzd and Ahriman)<sup>1</sup>. Of these rival systems the second, 'Zervanism' (*zervān* = Time), was ultimately triumphant, and 'Vayism' (*vayu* = Space) has only left faint traces in the tradition. The Zervanist teaching, popularized in a creation-story in which first Ahriman and then Ormuzd were born from the bosom of the primordial god, Zervān (or according to other accounts, of his wife), in time prevailed completely, and this view breaks through in Mithraism as later in Manichaeism; indeed, the official Mazdeism of the Sassanid era is frankly Zervanist. But the Parsees after the fall of the Sassanids gave up Zervanism: the cosmogony myths of the Sassanid *Avesta* have disappeared, and the Pahlavi religious books have been so recast and edited that but few traces of Zervanism survive.

But it is not only the Zervanist view which differentiates Sassanid Mazdeism from medieval and modern Parseeism. Occa-

<sup>1</sup> Eudemus Rhodius (Damascius, *de primis principiis*, ed. Ruelle I, p. 322).

sional hints dropped by foreign writers—Armenian, Syrian, or Byzantine—which are confirmed here and there by survivals of the native tradition, reveal the religious beliefs of the Sassanids in an unexpected guise. True that Ormuzd was always revered as the divine head of all good creatures, and those peculiarly Zoroastrian abstract deities, the *Amesha-Spenta* (*Amahrspand* in Pahlavi), as his chief helpers. But sacerdotal lore was particularly busy with such deities as *Mihr* (Mithra), originally a god of the morning light, who became a sun-god, *Ādhur*, god of fire, *Dēn Mazdayasn*, 'Mazdean Faith' personified (also called *Bēdukhr*, 'Daughter of God')—and these three deities formed, together with Ormuzd, a tetrad of creative powers. Or by associating the primordial god, *Zervān*, with these four, a man had five supreme deities to worship. The *magi* apparently even took over some gods and goddesses who were not originally Iranian: *Nānā* or *Nānāi* (who was identified, probably, with the ancient goddess *Anāhīd*), *Bēl* and *Nabhō*.

Finally, Sassanid Mazdeism included some features which clashed curiously with the original spirit of Zoroastrianism, and which were undoubtedly due to the pessimistic mentality which dominated Western Asia during the first centuries of our era. According to the Zervanist view, *Ahriman*, the elder of the twins, held by right, from the very beginning, control of the world, and so the life of the universe, which is to last in all for 9000 years (after a preliminary stage of 3000 years), is filled throughout by a fight between the two Spirits, though it is true that the fight is to end in the victory of Ormuzd. Another Zervanist myth told how woman fell because *Ahriman* seduced her, and how in consequence she became his natural ally<sup>1</sup>.

Fire-worship is one of the elements of the ancient Aryan religion to which the *magi* gave new life. There were house-fires, village-fires, and provincial-fires. The most sacred of all were the *Farr-bagh* or Priest's fire, the *Gushnasp* or Warrior's fire, and the *Burzēn Mihr* or Farmer's fire. The exact position of the first is still disputed<sup>2</sup>. *Gushnasp* had his temple at Ganzak in Azerbaijan; it was the fire of the Kings too. The temple of *Burzēn Mihr* rose

<sup>1</sup> The most recent researches on the ideas and doctrines of Sassanid Mazdeism are: H. S. Nyberg, *Journ. Asiat.* 1931, II, pp. 1 *sqq.* and 193 *sqq.*; E. Benveniste, *Monde Orient.* 1932, pp. 170 *sqq.*; Christensen, *L'Iran sous les Sassanides*, pp. 136–54, and Nyberg, *Irans forntida religioner* (1937).

<sup>2</sup> See A. V. Williams Jackson, *J.A.O.S.*, 1921, pp. 81 *sqq.*; E. Herzfeld, *Arch. Mitt. aus Iran*, I, pp. 182 *sqq.*; A. Pagliaro, *Orient. Stud. in Honour of C. E. Pavry*, p. 383.

amid the mountains of Revan, to the north-west of Nishapur; the name (meaning 'Mithra the Lofty') betrays a close connection with *Mithra*, just as the common name for the provincial fires, 'Vahram-fires,' shows that these fires were dedicated to the god of the victorious assault and of war, *Vahrām (Vrthraghna)*. The present writer inclines to the view that the Gushnasp fire had special connections with Ormuzd—for in the rock sculptures it is Ormuzd who invests the king with power—and the Farrbagh fire with the *Dēn Mazdayasn*.

Sassan, the grandfather of Ardashir I, was, as has been observed (p. 109), the head of the temple of Anahita at Stakhr. It was a temple towards which the Sassanid family showed great devotion throughout, and it has recently<sup>1</sup> been identified with the 'Ka'ba of Zoroaster,' an Achaemenid building, at the foot of which has been discovered a long Pahlavi inscription, telling of the institution of fires for the souls of princes and of other great personages<sup>2</sup>.

Both the Arsacid and the Sassanid fire-temples conform to one type: a square building, surmounted by a cupola, within which the sacred fire was kept burning upon an altar in a room that remained completely dark, so that it could not be touched by the light of the sun<sup>3</sup>. Excavations carried out by the French at Shapur in 1935–1936 have brought to light the ruins of a fire-temple, which dates probably from the first century of the Sassanian era. It is a square building with an external vaulted corridor: four bull-headed corbels, two of which still survive upon the north-east wall, most of which is preserved, appear to have acted as supports for the roof-beams. Inside, a square flagstone was perhaps the base for the fire-altar<sup>4</sup>.

From the pictures given on the reverse of Sassanian coins we can recognize the different types of the fire-altar. On those of Ardashir I is depicted a fire burning upon a tripod, which stands upon a column<sup>5</sup>. Coins of later kings show us the altar, in the form of a column and without tripod, flanked by two men holding in their hands some rod-like object. Running round the coin is frequently found the legend 'Fire of. . .,' followed by the name of the king who issued it. Upon the votive monument of Shapur I,

<sup>1</sup> By M. Sprengling.

<sup>2</sup> See the Bibliography to this chapter, I, E.

<sup>3</sup> Herzfeld, *Arch. Hist. of Iran*, pp. 88 *sqq.*

<sup>4</sup> Volume of Plates v, 140, a. See G. Salles and R. Ghirshman, *Rev. des arts asiat.* x, 1936, pp. 117 *sqq.*

<sup>5</sup> Volume of Plates v, 234, a.

discovered not far from the above-mentioned temple, the words 'fire of Ardashir' and 'fire of Shapur' give the date of the coronation of these two kings. From this the present writer draws the conclusion that the fire shown upon the coins is the one that the king consecrated at the ceremony of his coronation, to be the symbolic protector of his reign<sup>1</sup>.

Each of these great temples and of the fires of Vahram, which were established in the provinces, had a considerable body of priests under the direction of a 'mōbadh' or of a 'mōghān mōgh' ('Magus of the magi') to serve it. 'Ehrbadhs' kept watch over the ceremonies of divine worship, assisted by lower clergy, each of whom had his special task.

In addition there were several foreign religious communities in the Sassanid Empire. Jews were numerous, above all in the cities of Mesopotamia and of Babylonia, particularly at Seleucia-Ctesiphon; here dwelt their civil and religious head, the *Rēsh Gālūtā*, whose election had to be confirmed by the Great King. At Doura *graffiti* and some short inscriptions in Sassanian Pahlavi have been found in the ruins of a synagogue<sup>2</sup>. Even in the purely Iranian territory there existed Jewish colonies in the cities.

Christianity first began to spread in Western Iran towards the end of the Arsacid era, thanks to the zeal of the missionaries of Edessa<sup>3</sup>. East of the Tigris there was a bishopric of Arbela. Then later the transplantation of prisoners of war, in obedience to the orders of Shapur I and of his successors, helped towards the propagation of Christianity even in the more distant provinces. Bishoprics were created, and in spite of internal dissensions a Christian Church, with Syriac for its language, was gradually organized in Iran under the primacy of the Bishop of Seleucia-Ctesiphon (the *katholikos*). In Armenia King Tiridates introduced Christianity towards the close of the third century.

In the eastern regions of the empire Buddhism claimed many followers. Paintings, which recall the style of the reliefs of the time of Shapur I, discovered in the niches of the colossal statues of Buddha at Bamiyan, to the east of Cabul<sup>4</sup>, and coins issued by 'the worshipper of Mazda,' the famous *Kūshānshāh* Peroz (brother of Shapur I), figuring the image of Buddha, bear striking testimony to a peaceful rapprochement between the two religions.

Apart from this the Mazdean clergy were somewhat disdainful

<sup>1</sup> See the Bibliography to this chapter, I, E.

<sup>2</sup> A. Pagliaro, *Excavations at Dura-Europos*, vi<sup>th</sup> Rep. 1932-33, pp. 393sqq.

<sup>3</sup> See below, p. 493.

<sup>4</sup> See below, p. 124.



in their relations with non-Mazdeans, and to a certain extent intolerant, especially towards dangerous innovators such as the Manichaeans<sup>1</sup>. But the adherents of foreign religions were able to live in peace, their organizations and their religious laws were respected, so long as they did not set themselves up against the authority of the State or conspire with its enemies. It was political reasons more than religious intolerance that brought about the first great persecution of the Christians under Shapur II.

## V. THE ARTS

Practically nothing is known of any literary activity during the first century of the Sassanian era. The only fact that demands notice is the reshaping and editing of the *Avesta*, which has already been mentioned (see above, p. 112).

In architecture, the ancient Sassanid palaces preserved the arrangement of the rooms practically as it had been under the Achaemenids. But the exterior of the buildings was entirely altered. The essential features of this new architecture have been briefly summarized thus<sup>2</sup>: 'The pillared halls, with a flat roof, were henceforth and for ever replaced by vaulted and domed rooms. The Sassanids transformed the square and octagon in their rooms into the round and the cupola by introducing for this purpose in the four corners pendentives, angle-brackets which are equally adapted to the square and to the dome. This profound talent for construction enabled them to create new proportions: the great hall at Ctesiphon has a diameter of nearly eighty feet.'

There still exist considerable remains of two large palaces, which allow us to form some idea of this third-century architecture; one, the palace at Firuzabad (Ardashir-Khvarreh), south of Stakhr, built by Ardashir I, the other the palace at Ctesiphon, now called the Taq-e-Kesra, which Herzfeld regards as the work of Shapur I<sup>3</sup>. The outer walls of Firuzabad were windowless, but furnished with blind arcading and lofty attached columns. At Taq the north wing collapsed in 1888; in the centre of the façade of this was a lofty arch that opened on to a huge elliptical vault extending over the whole depth of the building, which formed the hall of audience<sup>4</sup>; here, too, the outer wall was windowless, but ornamented with niches, attached columns, and blind arcading in four storeys. Herzfeld regards this as an imitation of a Roman

<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. 504 *sqq.*

<sup>2</sup> See L. Morgenstern, *Esthétiques d'Orient et d'Occident*, p. 91.

<sup>3</sup> See Herzfeld, *Arch. Hist. of Iran*, p. 94.

<sup>4</sup> Volume of Plates v, 140, *b.*

theatre. None the less, this colossal ruin, rising in the midst of the desert, produces an overwhelming effect.

The rock-hewn sculptures of the first Sassanid kings usually represent the investiture of the king by Ormuzd or depict scenes of triumph or battle. The arrangement of the figures is formal. Some reliefs have an accompanying inscription: in others the shape of the crown affords us a means of identifying the king, since each king had a crown peculiar to him, and the shape of these crowns is known from coins. The king's hair falls in regular ringlets and the end of the beard is knotted into a ring; behind his head pleated ribbons float out; he usually wears a necklace, earrings and other ornaments. If he is on horseback the harness of the royal mount is furnished with various ornaments, and a large pear-shaped ball, attached to the horse's flanks by chains, hangs loosely down.

In most of these investiture reliefs Ormuzd is seen, in archaic dress, a mural crown on his head, stretching out to the king the ribboned ring, symbol of royal power. Ardashir I has left two such reliefs; one, in a poor state of preservation, at Naqsh-e-Rajab, where both god and king are on foot; in the second, at Naqsh-e-Rostam<sup>1</sup>, they are both on horseback<sup>2</sup>; the same attitude is found in the relief of Shapur I at Naqsh-e-Rajab and that of Vahram I on the rock of Shapur<sup>3</sup>—one of the finest works of art of this whole period. On the relief of Narses at Naqsh-e-Rostam, the king and the goddess Anahita, who is bestowing the royal ring on him, are both on foot<sup>4</sup>.

The triumph of Shapur I over Valerian is depicted no less than five times, at Naqsh-e-Rostam and at Shapur<sup>5</sup>. In the rock-hewn carvings at Shapur, the chief scene, common to all these reliefs, showing the Roman Emperor throwing himself on his knees before the Great King on horseback, forms the centre of a vast composition in which Persian soldiers and Roman prisoners are depicted in several ranks one above the other. The workmanship of these

<sup>1</sup> The cliffs of Naqsh-e-Rajab and of Naqsh-e-Rostam are in the neighbourhood of Stakhr and Persepolis; those of Shapur more to the south-west, near Kazerun.

<sup>2</sup> See Sarre and Herzfeld, *Iranische Felsreliefs*, Pls. 12 and 5; Volume of Plates, v, 142, a.

<sup>3</sup> *Felsreliefs*, pls. 13 and 41. It should be observed that the relief of Vahram I has an inscription of Narses, who annexed this monument for himself: Herzfeld, *Paikuli* p. 173. See Volume of Plates v, 142, b.

<sup>4</sup> *Felsreliefs*, pl. 9.

<sup>5</sup> *Felsreliefs*, pls. 7, 44, 45 and 43; Herzfeld, *Arch. Hist. of Iran*, pp. 83-86, pl. 11 below and 12 above; see Volume of Plates, v, 148.

carvings differs greatly, and this difference in style proves, as has been observed, 'how strongly not only foreign influences but foreign hands must have been at work in Sassanian sculpture<sup>1</sup>.'

A relief carved on the cliff at Shapur, representing the triumph of a king (possibly Shapur I) over an Indian people<sup>2</sup>, is of great interest because it depicts the king seated in the centre with legs crossed, in that position of frontality which stresses the imposing figure of the monarch<sup>3</sup>. In a relief at Naqsh-e-Rajab Shapur I is shown on horseback, in front of a gathering of notables of the Empire<sup>4</sup>.

Vahram II had carved on the cliff at Shapur his triumph over some tribe (probably Arabian)<sup>5</sup>, and is perhaps the hero of a battle-scene; here the king, on his horse, with the royal banner flying, is shown galloping at full speed upon an enemy, whose lance drops broken before his victorious onslaught<sup>6</sup>. A similar scene is met earlier in a relief of Ardashir I at Firuzabad, where the foe overthrown by the king's lance is probably Artabanus the Arsacid<sup>7</sup>. At Naqsh-e-Rostam, on the right of the investiture-scene of Ardashir I, Vahram II had himself depicted in peaceful guise in the bosom of his family<sup>8</sup>.

The effect of these Sassanid reliefs is pictorial rather than sculptural; they are paintings reproduced in stone. We can recognize some elements of this style in wall-paintings and in Arsacid and Sassanid *graffiti* at Doura<sup>9</sup> and in three *graffiti* discovered at Persepolis<sup>10</sup>. A wall-painting, partially preserved, at Dokhtar-e-Nushirvan, to the north of Bamiyan in Afghanistan, shows us a Sassanid prince, governor of the country, seated on his throne in a frontal position<sup>11</sup>. Some Manichaean paintings from the caves of Khotcho<sup>12</sup>, and some delicate Manichaean miniatures, depicting a concert and a group of Manichaean priests, pen in hand, seated at

<sup>1</sup> *Arch. Hist. of Iran*, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> *Felsreliefs*, pl. 40; *Arch. Hist.* pl. 12.

<sup>3</sup> See below, p. 558.

<sup>4</sup> *Felsreliefs*, pl. 11.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* pl. 42.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* pl. 6.

<sup>7</sup> Herzfeld, *Arch. Hist. of Iran*, pl. 11, above.

<sup>8</sup> *Felsreliefs*, pl. 5.

<sup>9</sup> Fr. Cumont, *Les Fouilles de Doura-Europos*, II, Atlas, Paris, 1926, pls. 98 and 99; M. Rostovtzeff and A. Little, 'La maison des fresques', *Mém. de l'Ac. des inscriptions*, XLIII, 1932, pp. 167 *sqq.*; Rostovtzeff, *Caravan Cities*, pp. 194-5, 211, and pl. 35.

<sup>10</sup> Herzfeld, *Arch. Hist. of Iran*, p. 80.

<sup>11</sup> A. and Y. Godard and J. Hackin, *Les antiquités bouddhiques de Bāmiyān*, pp. 65 *sqq.* and pl. 42.

<sup>12</sup> A. von le Coq, *Chotscho*, Berlin, 1913, with plates (esp. pl. 5).

their desks, furnish us with some further ideas upon this branch of Sassanid art<sup>1</sup>.

The French excavations at Shapur have brought to light a hitherto unprecedented piece of work. It is a monument dedicated in honour of Shapur I, and clearly carried out by Roman workmen<sup>2</sup>. So far there have been uncovered the lower part of two columns, on the shaft of one of which is a Pahlavi inscription (referred to as *Sh. Shap.*), two Corinthian capitals which crowned these columns, a knee in marble (probably the remains of a statue of Shapur, of which the inscription speaks); and the torso of a woman, dressed in antique costume, also in marble<sup>3</sup>.

Carved and chased silver cups were a speciality of the Sassanid Empire. Among existing examples two at least belong to the early period of Sassanian art<sup>4</sup>. One, in the British Museum, represents Shapur I hunting deer; the other, in the Hermitage Museum at Leningrad, shows us Vahram I hunting wild boars<sup>5</sup>.

Society in Sassanid Iran rested on three pillars: the monarchy, the aristocracy, the Zoroastrian clergy. These three factors worked together or strove against each other according as the central power was strong or weak. In this play of forces the personality of the king was all-important. In the first century of the Sassanid period the royal power was, during most of the time, strong enough to unite the higher classes in a common task, which resulted in the strengthening of the State against foreign enemies and the consolidation of the social structure. From the achievement of this task the period derived its characteristic spirit and style. The seeds of Sassanian civilization had begun to germinate in the soil of Iran before Alexander, but hellenism continued to influence it across the national and religious consciousness which was made active by the first Sassanid kings. Upon this union of iranism and hellenism was built up the imposing edifice of the Sassanian State and society, that Empire which was a worthy antagonist of Rome in the wars to be described in the following section.

<sup>1</sup> See Volume of Plates v, 144, a.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 144, b.

<sup>3</sup> G. Salles and R. Ghirshman, *Rev. des arts asiat.* x, 1936, pp. 117-129.

<sup>4</sup> Volume of Plates v, 146, a, b.

<sup>5</sup> K. Erdmann, *Jahrb. der preuss. Kunstsammlungen*, LVII, 1936, p. 197, figs. 1 and 2.

## VI. THE PERSIAN WARS WITH ROME

The rise to power of Ardashir, the first king of the Sassanid dynasty, and his conquest of the provinces of Parthia have already been described. It was the extension of this power to the west of what had been Parthia that led Persia to a clash with Rome.

After the fall of Ctesiphon Ardashir extended his authority over Assyria—the land on the upper Tigris, the later Mosul, for in after years the official name of this province was Budh-Ardashir<sup>1</sup>. But an attack on the strongly fortified desert city of Hatra was a failure. The king, however, succeeded in reducing Greater Media whose principal city Ecbatana-Hamadán he captured. Under the impression produced by this success Parthia also, it would seem, came over to his side<sup>2</sup>. A further attack on Lesser Media—Atropatene (Azerbaijan)—and Armenia met with a resolute resistance. The Armenian king, Chosroes I<sup>3</sup>, was an Arsacid, a near relative, though hardly blood-brother<sup>4</sup>, of the dethroned Parthian king, Artabanus. It was with him that the sons of Artabanus had found an asylum and support. A tetradrachm of Artavasdes of the year 227–8 was probably minted in Atropatene and from it we learn of the rule of one of the sons of Artabanus in this district. Though a bas-relief of Ardashir in Salmas may represent the homage of an Armenān-shāh<sup>5</sup>, considering the evidence derived from our other sources we have no ground for inferring at the most more than a partial success. For the king of Armenia reinforced by contingents from the tribes of the Caucasus<sup>6</sup> was able to hold up the advance of Ardashir's armies in Atropatene and, if we may trust the Armenian authorities, also in Adiabene, and compelled the Persians to retreat. It is possible that Chosroes also appealed for support to Severus Alexander, though it is certain that at that time no help of any importance was given him. In Rome, it is true, as reports came in from the frontier provinces, the new situation in the East was watched with anxiety, but it was still hoped that peace could be maintained. But Ardashir might reasonably suspect in the unyielding

<sup>1</sup> E. Herzfeld, *Paikuli*, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Dio LXXX, 3, 2 sq. (p. 475 Boissevain).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Baumgartner in P.W. s.v. Chosroes (3), col. 2445 and F. Justi, *Iranisches Namenbuch*, p. 134 s.v. Husrawanh, no. 8.

<sup>4</sup> So the Greek Agathangelus I, 9 (*F.H.G.* v, 2, p. 115a).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Herzfeld, *op. cit.* p. 37.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. P. Asdourian, *Die politischen Beziehungen zwischen Armenien und Rom*, p. 122 sq. with Von Gutschmid, *Z.D.M.G.* xxxi, 1877, p. 47 sq.

resistance of Armenia, Rome's ally, the influence of the Roman government; it is therefore not surprising that his next attack was directed against the Empire itself. In 230 the Sassanid invaded Mesopotamia. He besieged, though without success, the fortress of Nisibis, while his cavalry already threatened Cappadocia and Syria. The watchword of the campaign was restoration of the ancient frontiers of the Persian Empire—the frontiers which had formerly been held under the Achaemenids. It was an expression of that strong national feeling with which Ardashir had inspired his followers and which, united with the conviction that possessing the true and genuine religion they might rest assured of the divine favour, gave alike to the King and to his army a new enthusiasm.

In Rome men had still not realized, they had not even dreamed, that the new master of the neighbouring Eastern Kingdom was a man of a different mould from that of his Parthian predecessors. Only thus is it conceivable that a reference to former victories of Rome should be thought sufficient to drive him back to his own land. Indeed he was the less likely to be impressed thereby since the last engagement of the Romans under Macrinus with that Artabanus whom Ardashir had conquered was in no wise such as to suggest the superiority of the imperial forces (p. 50). The Roman embassy thus returned without success. In A.D. 231, while Severus Alexander was mobilizing his army, it would seem that further attacks of the Persians were made on border fortresses<sup>1</sup>, although with no more favourable result for Ardashir than in the preceding year. The Roman army of the East received its marching orders, and the Emperor in person brought up considerable reinforcements from the West. The troops which were at his disposal in the East, at least as far as the legions were concerned—to which their auxiliary regiments must be added—can be determined from a list given by Cassius Dio<sup>2</sup>. According to that list there were in Cappadocia the legion XV Apollinaris with its principal garrison in Satala in Lesser Armenia and XII Fulminata in Melitene. I and III Parthica were in Mesopotamia at Singara and perhaps at Resaina. In Syria XVI Flavia was in garrison at Samosata, IV Scythia probably at Zeugma. In Syria Phoenice III Gallica was in Raphanaeae. In Palestine VI Ferrata was at Caparcotna or Legio in Galilee and X Fretensis in Jerusalem. In Arabia III Cyrenaica was at Bostra, and finally in

<sup>1</sup> Herodian VI, 2, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Dio LV, 23 sq.

Egypt II Traiana was at Nicopolis in the neighbourhood of Alexandria; from this last legion detachments were certainly drawn (see p. 70). A late Armenian source (Moses of Chorene<sup>1</sup>), in spite of its very confused statements, is thus to this extent accurate in affirming that the Emperor had raised troops from Egypt to the Black Sea and then adds 'and from the desert,' for one may safely presume that reinforcements composed of auxiliary troops—especially light cavalry and bowmen—drawn from Osrhoëne and Palmyra were added to those contingents from these districts which had certainly been recruited under Septimius Severus for the protection of the Eastern frontier. At this time the twentieth cohort of the Palmyrenes was in garrison at Doura<sup>2</sup>, and it may be that the defences of the town were now strengthened<sup>3</sup>. Indeed it is probable that the Palmyrenes were the more ready to place their troops and their resources at the Emperor's disposal since through the more rigorous governmental control within the new Persian Empire their trade connections with the Persian Gulf were if not completely interrupted yet at least seriously interfered with. Further, the Romans could rely upon the co-operation of Armenia. What forces Ardashir could oppose to the legions we cannot determine in detail; it is however certain that for the time being the Persian army did not differ in composition or in armament from that of the Parthians (cf. vol. XI, p. 119 *sq.*). But his troops had been well trained in the recent campaigns; the King could rely upon their loyalty and they were inspired by a new spirit.

In the winter of 231-2 the Roman headquarters were in Antioch. But Severus Alexander was compelled to settle difficulties which had arisen in his own army (see p. 69 *sq.*) before he could advance with the three columns into which his forces were divided. A renewed attempt to establish peace through negotiation had failed, since Ardashir had declined to discuss terms. The plan of campaign as laid down by the headquarters staff included a left wing column which was to march through Armenia, perhaps led by Junius Palmatus, and a right wing column which was to follow the Euphrates down to Ctesiphon, while the main army led by the Emperor in person was to hold a middle course through northern Mesopotamia. It remains doubtful whether the two last mentioned armies were to advance together as far as

<sup>1</sup> II, 72.

<sup>2</sup> F. Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos*, pp. liv, lix and 357. Cf. M. Rostovtzeff, *Yale Class. Stud.* v, 1935, p. 202.

<sup>3</sup> Cumont, *op. cit.* p. lix.

Palmyra, where an inscription attests the presence of the Emperor<sup>1</sup>. If this were so, the aim might have been to camouflage the Emperor's real intentions, as Julian on a later occasion sought to disguise his plan of campaign<sup>2</sup>. Or should it be supposed that Severus Alexander at the outset accompanied the right wing column in order to persuade the enemy that it was on this line that the main army was to attack? It is probable that the former alternative should be adopted, for the statement that soldiers—especially the European troops—suffered severely from ill health caused by the climate is more easily explained on the supposition of such a march. In this case, the Emperor's advance must have led by Nicephorium, not by Doura<sup>3</sup>, which will have lain upon the route of the right wing column. Rutilius Pudens Crispinus, who later defended Aquileia (see p. 79 *sq.*), will have belonged to this column and was perhaps its leader: he is named as commanding the legionary *vexillationes* in the inscription from Palmyra which has been previously mentioned. Ardashir first marched against Armenia and met the enemy while still in Media Atropatene. He contrived though not without difficulty to bring the Roman advance to a halt. Receiving information of a threatening attack upon his capital, he left only an observation corps in Atropatene and led his main army southwards. We do not know where he came up with the Roman right wing column. That column suffered a severe defeat. But the Persian losses also cannot have been inconsiderable, for Ardashir did not pursue the Romans. And it is further worthy of remark that later Persian tradition is completely silent on Ardashir's wars with Rome, perhaps because they did not lead to any decisive result. When after this reverse Alexander brought the campaign to an end and in the following year left the East (see p. 70) no formal peace was, it is true, concluded, but the position occupied by the Empire before the war was restored. In detail we can trace the efforts which were made to strengthen the defences of the threatened areas. The legion III Gallica was now moved to Danaba to cover the road leading from Damascus to Palmyra: perhaps the legion VI Ferrata was also moved—from Palestine to Phoenice<sup>4</sup>. And if not previously, it was assuredly at this time that the walls of Doura were strengthened under an order of general application directing the further development of defensive fortifications<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> O.G.I.S. 640.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Cambridge Medieval History*, I, p. 81.

<sup>3</sup> So Cumont, *op. cit.* p. lix.

<sup>4</sup> Ritterling in P.W. s.v. Legio, col. 1594.

<sup>5</sup> Herodian VI, 7, 5.



Ardashir's action, we must suppose, was further determined by conditions in the east of his empire. Although we cannot recover the immediate reason for the shift of his interest, it is certain that from the year 233 it is in the east that his forces are engaged (see above, p. 109 *sq.*). A series of conquests confirmed his power in these regions and increased the strength with which Ardashir could turn against the West, and in the last year of Maximinus Thrax (A.D. 237-8) Mesopotamia was overrun; Nisibis and Carrhae fell. The rare coins of Ardashir which show him adorned with a mural crown may perhaps commemorate this success<sup>1</sup>. When word reached Rome of the loss of the two cities and of the perilous position on the Euphrates frontier which was thus revealed it is possible that Gordian III, in order to save all that could still be preserved, once more revived the client state of Osrhoëne under Abgar X in Edessa<sup>2</sup>. For the succeeding period we have no information. But towards the end of his reign the first Sassanid king is said to have created his son Shapur co-regent. A rare coin-type that represents Shapur with a helmet of which the crest ends in an eagle's head proves that he had been declared the successor to the throne<sup>3</sup> and on coins of Ardashir his portrait appears together with that of his father<sup>4</sup>. Since the capture of Hatra is ascribed in tradition both to Shapur and to Ardashir it is reasonable to conclude that Shapur overcame the resistance of the fortress as co-regent with his father, consequently in A.D. 241. Towards the end of this year Ardashir died and then on 20 March 242<sup>5</sup> under favourable auspices Shapur was crowned king.

With Shapur I there had come to the throne a man who represented even more energetically than his father and with more resolute determination the imperialism of the New Persian Empire. The struggle with Rome was immediately resumed. The enthusiasm of the first onset carried the Persians far into Syria; even Antioch was threatened<sup>6</sup>. At this time the Osrhoënian

<sup>1</sup> Volume of Plates v, 234, g. A. D. Mordtmann, *Z.D.M.G.* xxxiv, 1880, p. 10 thought that these coins belonged to the latest period of the Arsacids or to the time of the war against Severus Alexander. Cf. F. D. J. Paruck, *Sasanian Coins*, p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. A. R. Bellinger, *Yale Class. Stud.* v, 1935, p. 146.

<sup>3</sup> Volume of Plates, 234, h. So Herzfeld, *op. cit.* p. 37. Cf. Paruck, *op. cit.* p. 322, no. 97.

<sup>4</sup> Paruck, *op. cit.* pp. 78, 315, nos. 58 *sqq.*

<sup>5</sup> Nöldeke, *Tabari*, p. 412 *sq.*

<sup>6</sup> M. Fluss in P.W. *s.v.* Sapor (I), col. 2327, ll. 45 *sqq.* dates to the year 224 the siege and capture of Nisibis. That, however, is inconsistent with the testaments of Syncellus and Zonaras, who place the capture of the city under

kingdom of Abgar must have come to an end. In the following year Gordian III or rather his father-in-law and Praetorian Prefect Timesitheus (see p. 87) restored the honour of the Roman arms. Antioch was secured, Carrhae recovered, while a decisive victory at Resaina opened up the way to Nisibis which once more became Roman. But at this time Timesitheus died (before October 243)<sup>1</sup>. The ambition of his successor in the Praetorian Prefecture, Philip the Arabian, led in the end to the fall of Gordian and to the termination of the campaign which had opened with such success. Philip, now emperor, concluded a treaty of peace with Shapur I; which secured to the Roman Empire its former frontiers. There was no talk of a cession of Mesopotamia and Armenia (which must here mean Armenia Minor), though this is asserted in a late source. The Armenian kingdom cannot have been expressly surrendered under the terms of the treaty, although in the further course of events the condition of the Roman Empire hindered any consistent support of the Armenians. This fact naturally caused them to think that they had been sacrificed and the Roman failure to render them effective assistance was the more bitter since the Armenians up to A.D. 243 had loyally fulfilled their duties as allies of Rome. For we must conclude from Agathangelus that Chosroes I had intervened with success in the war under Gordian: according to Agathangelus<sup>2</sup>, indeed, the Armenian king after a victory against Persia continued the war for another ten years until he was dethroned.

It would further appear that quite apart from the defeats which he had suffered Shapur needed peace for other reasons. According to the Chronicle of Arbela<sup>3</sup> Shapur was forced to fight with the Chorasmians and then with the Medians of the mountains. The chronicler, it is true, is in error when he dates these operations to the first year of Shapur's rule; but from his account we may conclude that they fall early in the King's long reign. After his victory Shapur could maintain a firm hold upon Atropatene and

Maximinus Thrax, and fails to recognize the significance of Tabari's dating, whose account (Nöldeke, *op. cit.* pp. 31 sqq.) connects this event with the victories of Shapur which led up to Valerian's capture, but is once more silent as far as the initial successes and the setbacks are concerned.

<sup>1</sup> *O.G.I.S.* 640 already names Philip as Praetorian Prefect in the year 554 of the Seleucid Era (October 242–October 243).

<sup>2</sup> II, 12 (*F.H.G.* v, 2 p. 118a), where indeed the chronology is not distinctly marked, but it is clear that the Persian king is Shapur.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. 8 in E. Sachau, *Berl. Abh.* 1915, Nr. 6, p. 64; cf. Christensen, *L'Iran...*, p. 214 and above, p. 111, for a different dating of these operations.

the districts which lay to the north-east and to the east. Thus the way was opened for operations against Armenia. At first Shapur was content to seek to remove Chosroes, whose courage and energy had created difficulties in the past and were still to be feared in the future. In this he was successful and Chosroes was murdered. Tiridates, a minor, succeeded his dead father as king of Armenia shortly before A.D. 252. For in this year a Persian army appeared in Armenia and compelled Tiridates to take flight into Roman territory: in this expulsion relatives of the young king were implicated. Whether one of these was Artavasdes, king of the Armenians, who is mentioned in the *Historia Augusta*<sup>1</sup>, cannot be determined, but it is certain that this king owed his throne to Shapur's favour. The attempt<sup>2</sup> to see in this Artavasdes the saviour of Tiridates who bore the same name, and therefore to regard him not as king but as regent is unsatisfactory, since Artavasdes could hardly have been permitted to play such a part under Persian supremacy.

The loss of Armenia meant for Rome the collapse of the one bulwark of the Empire's eastern defences. The Persian king had in any future war with Rome secured his right flank, which had hitherto always been threatened. And it would seem that forthwith in the same year Shapur attacked Mesopotamia and thus once more created a grave danger for the Empire. According to Tabari<sup>3</sup>, he appeared before Nisibis "after the course of eleven regnal years", which would bring us to A.D. 252; and when a Syriac source<sup>4</sup> mentions an attack on Syria and Cappadocia under the year 563 of the Seleucid Era, i.e. A.D. 251/2, this would, despite the anticipation of later events, point to the year 252 as the date of the resumption of the war with Rome. But the king was forced to raise the siege of Nisibis before any success had been won. New disturbances had broken out in the east of his empire. In this time probably fell the war against the 'Turian king' Pahlzagh<sup>5</sup> mentioned above (p. 111). The next attack on Nisibis which ended in the capture of the town may thus be dated to A.D. 254. To what extent Shapur may have in this year followed up his success it is difficult to say, for our scanty sources for the most part give us only the general course of this new war without any details of its separate phases and without any certain chrono-

<sup>1</sup> S.H.A. *Trig. tyr.* 3, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Made by Asdourian, *op. cit.* p. 128.

<sup>3</sup> Nöldeke, *op. cit.* p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> Land, *Anecd. Syr.* 1, p. 18.

<sup>5</sup> Christensen, *op. cit.* p. 214 sq. Cf. Herzfeld, *op. cit.* p. 41.

logical indications. Perhaps if one uses with caution a passage in the Chronicle of Malalas<sup>1</sup> it may be suggested that at this time or in the following year Persian squadrons in their further advance were beaten back before Emesa. Here the usurper Uranius Antoninus (p. 92 *sq.*) had maintained his position as Roman emperor; and from the dating of the coinage he would seem to have held out until the year 565 of the Seleucid Era, i.e. until A.D. 253/4. It is thus to his efforts that this partial Roman success must be attributed. But his rule must have been brought to an end in the storms of the following years. His final overthrow should perhaps be connected with the intervention of Valerian: the reports from the East had become so threatening that the Emperor decided to take action in person. But we must assume that now in accordance with Persian military usage the attacks upon the Roman eastern provinces were made continuously every year and thus gave to Shapur the opportunity to enlarge his father's title of *Shāhānshāh ī Ērān* (King of Kings of Iran), which he too always bears on his coinage, to that of *Shāhānshāh ī Ērān u Anērān* (King of Kings of Iran and Non-Iran) which he employs on his inscriptions<sup>2</sup> (p. 111).

Previous attempts to understand with closer accuracy the situation in the Roman East before the arrival of Valerian are based upon a passage in Zosimus, which places the capture of Antioch before Valerian's arrival, and further they rely for the time of the city's capture on a year-date of the Antiochene Era preserved in Malalas<sup>3</sup>. But Zosimus in this passage<sup>4</sup> is clearly giving an anticipatory survey of all the losses suffered by the Empire through the weakness of Roman emperors up to the capture of the Syrian capital, while the year-date as given in the text of Malalas cannot be retained. Consequently the tradition must be followed which speaks of Persian successes before the intervention

<sup>1</sup> Malalas, XII, p. 296, 12 *sqq.* (ed. Bonn). Cf. A. Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg, *Die römische Kaisergeschichte bei Malalas*, p. 372 *sq.*

<sup>2</sup> Christensen, *op. cit.* p. 215.

<sup>3</sup> Malalas, XII, p. 296, 9 (ed. Bonn; I, 391, n. 1, ed. Oxford), where the  $\delta\tau\iota'$  of the MSS. is corrected into  $\tau\iota\delta'$ . Since, however, the 314th year of the Antiochene Era would bring us to A.D. 265-6 C. Müller in *F.H.G.* IV, 192 emended to  $\tau\delta'$  and in this he is followed by A. Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg (*op. cit.* p. 366, n. 89) reading  $\delta\tau'$ . This would give A.D. 255/6. But if we see in the  $\delta$  a misunderstanding of an original  $\angle$ , the sign for 'year', we might rather emend the text to  $\tau\iota'$  and this 310th year would then correspond to A.D. 261/2, which at least agrees better with the account of Malalas, who also places the fall of Antioch after the capture of the Emperor.

<sup>4</sup> I, 27, 2.

of Valerian, yet does not place the fall of the city of Antioch until after Valerian's overthrow<sup>1</sup>. According to this tradition the Persians spread devastation throughout Syria up to the walls of Antioch, while Cappadocia was likewise overrun. The leadership in the latter campaign was in the hands of Hôrmizd<sup>2</sup>, the son of Shapur, who was supported by a Roman deserter from Antioch with the Syrian name Mariades, i.e. Mâryâd'a, 'My Lord discerns,' a name which in half-graecized form becomes Kyriades<sup>3</sup>. Tyana was captured at this time, and Caesarea (Mazaca) may already have had to endure the Persian onset. By the time that Valerian reached Antioch (probably 256) the Persians had conveyed the booty won in these campaigns across the Euphrates. The fall of Doura must also be placed in this or the following year, when the town fell after a formal siege through the undermining of part of the city-wall, as the excavations have proved<sup>4</sup>.

From his headquarters in Antioch in A.D. 257 the Emperor successfully met a renewed Persian invasion. It is to this that the coin legends *Victoria Parthica*<sup>5</sup> and *Restitutor Orientis*<sup>6</sup> must refer. Valerian then summoned to his support Successianus, who had victoriously defended the town of Pityus, far distant on the east shore of the Black Sea, against the attacks of the Borani, the neighbours of the Goths in the Crimea<sup>7</sup>. Successianus was created Praetorian Prefect. The view that the attacks of these barbarians, which were shortly after repeated in alliance with the Goths, were instigated by Shapur has little probability<sup>8</sup>. They can be adequately explained by the difficult position of the Empire at this time of which these tribes can hardly have remained in ignorance. Another Gothic foray into Asia Minor caused Valerian together with his main army to march northward to

<sup>1</sup> Georg. Syncellus, p. 715, 16 sqq. (ed. Bonn). *Orac. Sibyll.* XIII, 89 sqq. and XIII, 119 sqq. (ed. A. Rzach). Zonaras XII, 23 (p. 594).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. S.H.A. *Trig. tyr.* 2, where an Odomastes is mentioned in whom Nöldeke (*op. cit.* p. 43, n. 2) recognized an Oromastes, i.e. Hormizd.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. A. Stein in P.W. s.v. Mariades, col. 1744.

<sup>4</sup> A. R. Bellinger, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos, Prelim. Report of Third Season 1929-1930, 1932*, p. 163 sq.; C. Hopkins, *ib. Prelim. Rep. of Fifth Season 1931-1932, 1934*, pp. 10 sqq.; R. Du Mesnil du Buisson, *ib. Prelim. Rep. of Sixth Season 1932-1933, 1936*, pp. 188 sqq.; M. Rostovtzeff, *Yale Class. Stud.* v, 1935, p. 202.

<sup>5</sup> P. H. Webb in M.-S. v, i, p. 104, no. 453; cf. p. 33.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* p. 60, nos. 286-7; p. 103, no. 448; cf. p. 33.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. L. Schmidt, *Geschichte der deutschen Stämme*, 1<sup>2</sup>: *Die Ostgermanen*, pp. 210, 212 sq.

<sup>8</sup> Asdourian, *op. cit.* p. 128.

repel the invaders. But he got no farther than Cappadocia. A plague decimated his army and reduced its military efficiency. After the departure of the troops a new Persian attack had to be met. Coins of A.D. 259 with the legend *Victoria Parthica*<sup>1</sup> are evidence for a further victory of the Emperor, but whether the victor engaged the enemy on the soil of Cappadocia or whether he met the Persians only on his return march to Antioch, or indeed whether these events both fall in one and the same year it is not possible to determine.

In A.D. 260 Shapur none the less once more took the field and encamped before Edessa which defended itself with resolution. Finally the Emperor decided to attack the enemy. But sickness still prevailed in his army, and the spirit of his men was depressed. He, therefore, sought to negotiate and to induce the Persian king to conclude peace by the offer of a large payment in money. Shapur had, however, learned the reasons for this submission; at first he declined the offers and then expressed his desire for a personal interview with Valerian. The Emperor agreed: in fatal confidence he met the Persian king and was taken prisoner. On the fact of the capture our sources are in complete accord, but they disagree in their accounts of the manner in which it was effected. While Zosimus represents it as a treacherous breach of faith on the part of Shapur, others would place it after a battle with insufficient forces against the superior strength of the enemy, others again—and this must certainly be false—will have it that Valerian had fled from beleaguered Edessa to the Persian king in face of a mutiny of his own starving soldiers<sup>2</sup>. In one way or another, a Roman emperor had become a Persian captive. The very foundations of the Roman world seemed shaken, and it is no wonder that Shapur commemorated the event on rock reliefs, which still survive (see above, p. 123). There also appears three times on these representations another Roman whom once Shapur even leads by the hand: he has been rightly identified<sup>3</sup> with Kyriades (Mariades); we must therefore conclude that he was still co-operating with the Persians at the time of Valerian's capture. This event is to be dated to midsummer 260, since the mint of Alexandria issued coins of the eighth year of Valerian, which

<sup>1</sup> M.-S. v, i, p. 39, no. 22; p. 58, no. 262; p. 60, no. 291.

<sup>2</sup> For references see L. Wickert in P.W. *s.v.* Licinius (Valerianus), col. 492.

<sup>3</sup> F. Sarre, *Die Kunst des alten Persien*, p. 41; see Volume of Plates v, 148.

began on 29 August 260<sup>1</sup>, whereas a papyrus of 29 September 260<sup>2</sup> is already dated under Macrianus and Quietus<sup>3</sup>.

With Valerian a captive, Shapur for a time had no more serious opposition to fear. It is true that the Roman troops were united in Samosata under the command of Macrianus, but it would seem that the army retreated into Asia Minor. Edessa maintained its resistance, but the way to the west was open. Shapur with the help of Kyriades (Mariades) whom he had probably created Roman emperor was now able by a surprise attack to gain possession of Antioch<sup>4</sup>. (The traitor Kyriades later fell into disfavour with Shapur and was burnt to death.) But before this, it would seem that a part of the army under Spates<sup>5</sup> had been dispatched against Cilicia; Tarsus and other cities were captured at this time. The main Persian force, however, marched into Cappadocia, where Caesarea (Mazaca) fell through treachery after a heroic defence by Demosthenes. Meanwhile in Cilicia opposition began to be organized through the efforts of a Roman general Callistus who is probably to be identified with the Ballista known to us as Praetorian Prefect under Macrianus and Quietus<sup>6</sup>. The Persian forces were scattered, aiming at different objectives, and thus Callistus could successfully surprise Soloi (Pompeiopolis) and win further successes in Cilicia Trachea at Sebaste and Corycus. Shapur then led back to Persia his army together with much booty and many captives. But already a foe had arisen in Odenathus of Palmyra

<sup>1</sup> J. Vogt, *Die alexandrinischen Münzen*, p. 204.

<sup>2</sup> P. Oxy. XII, 1476. Cf. Wickert in P.W. *loc. cit.* col. 493.

<sup>3</sup> After the foregoing account was in print Professor Alföldi kindly informed the present writer that reasons will be given for a different chronology in his forthcoming article in *Berytus*, which adduces the evidence of a hoard of coins recently found in Northern Syria and placed at his disposal by Professor H. M. Ingholt. If the results of this paper are accepted, it must be supposed *inter alia* that Valerian came to the East as early as A.D. 253 and that Antioch was taken three times by the Persians, twice before and once after, the capture of the Emperor. This proposed course of events is adopted by Professor Alföldi in the narrative of chapter VI (pp. 170 *sqq.*).

<sup>4</sup> Ammian. Marc. XXIII, 5, 3 says expressly *et haec quidem Gallieni temporibus evenerunt*, therefore only after Valerian was taken prisoner.

<sup>5</sup> Malalas, XII, p. 297, 19 *sq.* (ed. Bonn). For the name cf. F. Justi, *Iranisches Namenbuch*, p. 308. It might perhaps be suggested that the name Spates represents a corruption of *spāhbaadh* (cf. Christensen, *op. cit.* p. 125), the title of the General of the Army (see above, p. 115).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Henze in P.W. *s.v.* Ballista (2), col. 2831; A. Stein in P.W. *s.v.* Fulvius (74), col. 257, ll. 45 *sqq.*

(cf. p. 172) who in the sequel was to rob the Persian king of the fruits of his victory.

Whether Valerian lived long enough to see this we do not know; the Emperor died in captivity, probably at Gundeshapur. The statements of Christian sources with their story of a cruel and humiliating treatment of the captive Emperor inflicted by God as punishment for his persecution of the Christians must be accepted with great reserve. It is more certain that Shapur settled the Roman prisoners of war in the district of Gundeshapur and Shoshtar and through their labour built the dam in the neighbourhood of Shoshtar (p. 118) which still bears the name of the Emperor's Dam (*Band-e-Kaisar*) and thus preserves the memory of an achievement which signified a unique victory of the East over the West. The youthful vigour of the Sassanid Empire had become a real danger for the East of the Empire: to repel that danger greater forces were necessary and that at the very time when from Rhine to Danube and to the shores of the Black Sea the newly increased strength of the Germanic peoples was surging against the northern frontiers, while soon within the Empire itself there was to begin a period of revolutions which hopelessly divided the imperial forces and wore them down in murderous battles. But even when these domestic difficulties were overcome the powerful pressure which was the consequence of a defensive on two fronts was bound to strain the resources of the State and thus considerably to increase the burdens laid upon the subject population. That defensive on two fronts, which since the rise of the New Persian kingdom had become a vexatious necessity, thus exercised also upon the internal development of the Roman Empire a manifest and permanent influence.



# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

[See also General Bibliography, Parts II and IV.]

Abh. Arch.-epig.	Abhandlungen d. archäol.-epigraph. Seminars d. Univ. Wien.
Aeg.	Aegyptus. <i>Rivista italiana di egittologia e di papirologia.</i>
A.J.A.	American Journal of Archaeology.
A.J. Ph.	American Journal of Philology.
Ann. épig.	L'Année épigraphique.
Arch. Anz.	Archäologischer Anzeiger (in J.D.A.I.).
Arch. Pap.	Archiv für Papyrusforschung.
Arch. Relig.	Archiv für Religionswissenschaft.
Ath. Mitt.	Mitteilungen des deutschen arch. Inst. Athenische Abteilung.
Atti Acc. Torino	Atti della reale Accademia di scienze di Torino.
Bay. Abh.	Abhandlungen d. bayerischen Akad. d. Wissenschaften.
Bay. S.B.	Sitzungsberichte d. bayerischen Akad. d. Wissenschaften.
B.C.H.	Bulletin de Correspondance hellénique.
Berl. Abh.	Abhandlungen d. preuss. Akad. d. Wissenschaften zu Berlin.
Berl. S.B.	Sitzungsberichte d. preuss. Akad. d. Wissenschaften zu Berlin.
B.J.	Bonner Jahrbücher.
B.M. Cat.	British Museum Catalogue.
B.S.A.	Annual of the British School at Athens.
B.S.R.	Papers of the British School at Rome.
Bull. Comm. Arch.	Bullettino della Commissione archeol. comunale.
Bursian	Bursian's Jahresbericht.
C.I.L.	Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.
C.J.	Classical Journal.
C.P.	Classical Philology.
C.Q.	Classical Quarterly.
C.R.	Classical Review.
C.R. Ac. Inscr.	Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres.
Dessau	Dessau, <i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae.</i>
Ditt. <sup>3</sup>	Dittenberger, <i>Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum.</i> Ed. 3.
Eph. Ep.	Ephemeris Epigraphica.
F.Gr. Hist.	F. Jacoby's <i>Fragmente der griechischen Historiker.</i>
F.H.G.	C. Müller's <i>Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum.</i>
Germ.	Germania.
G.G.A.	Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen.
Gött. Abh.	Abhandlungen d. Gesellschaft d. Wissenschaften zu Göttingen.
Gött. Nach.	Nachrichten von der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Phil.-hist. Klasse.
Harv. St.	Harvard Studies in Classical Philology.
H.Z.	Historische Zeitschrift.
I.G.	Inscriptiones Graecae.
I.G.R.R.	Inscriptiones Graecae ad res Romanas pertinentes.
Jahreshefte	Jahreshefte d. österreichischen archäologischen Instituts in Wien.
J.D.A.I.	Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts.
J. d. Sav.	Journal des Savants.
J.E.A.	Journal of Egyptian Archaeology.
J.H.S.	Journal of Hellenic Studies.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

J.R.S.	Journal of Roman Studies.
Mém. Ac. Inscr.	Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres.
Mem. Acc. Lincei	Memorie della reale Accademia nazionale dei Lincei.
Mem. Acc. Torino	Memorie della reale Accademia di scienze di Torino.
Mnem.	Mnemosyne.
Mon. Linc.	Monumenti antichi pubblicati per cura della reale Accademia nazionale dei Lincei.
Mus. B.	Musée belge.
N. J. f. Wiss.	Neue Jahrbücher für Wissenschaft und Jugendbildung.
N. J. Kl. Alt.	Neue Jahrbücher für das klassische Altertum.
N.J.P.	Neue Jahrbücher für Philologie.
Not. arch.	Notiziario archeologico del Ministero delle Colonie.
N.S.A.	Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità.
Num. Chr.	Numismatic Chronicle.
Num. Z.	Numismatische Zeitschrift.
O.G.I.S.	Orientalis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae.
Phil.	Philologus.
Phil. Woch.	Philologische Wochenschrift.
P.I.R.	Prosopographia Imperii Romani.
P.W.	Pauly-Wissowa-Kröll's Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft.
Rend. Linc.	Rendiconti della reale Accademia dei Lincei.
Rev. Arch.	Revue archéologique.
Rev. Belge	Revue Belge de philosophie et d'histoire.
Rev. E. A.	Revue des études anciennes.
Rev. E. G.	Revue des études grecques.
Rev. E. L.	Revue des études latines.
Rev. H.	Revue historique.
Rev. Hist. Rel.	Revue de l'histoire des religions.
Rev. N.	Revue numismatique.
Rev. Phil.	Revue de philologie, de littérature et d'histoire anciennes.
R.-G. K. Ber.	Berichte der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission.
Rh. Mus.	Rheinisches Museum für Philologie.
Riv. Fil.	Rivista di filologia.
Riv. stor. ant.	Rivista di storia antica.
Röm. Mitt.	Mitteilungen des deutschen arch. Inst. Römische Abteilung.
Sächs. Abh.	Abhandlungen d. sächs. Akad. d. Wissenschaften zu Leipzig.
S.B.	Sitzungsberichte.
S.E.G.	Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum.
Suppl.	Supplementband.
Symb. Osl.	Symbolae Osloenses.
Wien Anz.	Anzeiger d. Akad. d. Wissenschaften in Wien.
Wien S.B.	Sitzungsberichte d. Akad. d. Wissenschaften in Wien.
Wien. St.	Wiener Studien.
Z. D. Pal.-V.	Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins.
Z. d. Sav.-Stift.	Zeitschrift d. Savigny-Stiftung f. Rechtsgeschichte, Romanistische Abteilung.
Z.N.	Zeitschrift für Numismatik.

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## CHAPTER IV

## SASSANID PERSIA

## SECTIONS I-V

## I. ANCIENT SOURCES

A. *Greek and Roman*

The notices in classical authors such as Dio Cassius, Herodian, Dexippus, Trebellius Pollio, Lactantius, Vopiscus, Eusebius, Rufinus, and Aurelius Victor deal mainly with the political contacts of Iran with Rome. Ammianus Marcellinus supplies some information about the military and administrative organization of the Sassanid Empire. A summary of the history of the Sassanid dynasty is to be found in Agathias, book II.

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D. *The Iranian Tradition*

Both the Pahlavi *Khwadhāy-nāmagh* ('Book of Kings'), composed towards the end of the Sassanian era, and the Arabic translations and adaptations, of which the most famous was the work of Ibn-el-Moqaffa' (died c. A.D. 760), have perished. But these Arabic translations formed the chief source for the summaries of ancient Iranian

history that are still to be found in the Arab chronicles (such as those of Ya'qūbī, Ibn Quteiba, Euty chius, Dīnawarī, Tabarī, Hamza of Ispahan, Mas'ūdī, Ta'alībī, and Bīrūnī) and in the Persian (the Shāhnāmeḥ of Firdausī, the Fārsnāmeḥ, and the Mujmilū't-tawārīkh). A short Pahlavi historical romance, of which the text survives, the Kārnamagh ('Book of Great Deeds') of Ardashir Pabḥagan, is a mixture of historical fact and older legends, among which several features of the legendary history of Cyrus the Great are recognizable. Nearly all the details of the political and organizing work of Ardashir supplied by our Persian and Arab sources derive from Pahlavi works of the sixth century; these really describe institutions in the time of Chosroes I, but try to enhance their credit by attributing them to the founder of the dynasty; see A. Christensen, *Les gestes des rois dans les traditions de l'Iran antique*, Paris, 1936, chap. III.

### E. Inscriptions: Coins: Seals

#### (a) Inscriptions

Some of the investiture-reliefs (e.g. those of Ardashir I, of Shapur I, and that of Vahram I which Narses annexed) bear inscriptions indicating only the name, the titles, and the genealogy of the king.

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- SH. SHAP. A bilingual inscription (in Sassanid Pahlavi and Arsacid Pahlavi) on a monument erected at Shapur in honour of Shapur I, found by R. Ghirshman in the French excavations of 1935-6. It furnishes important chronological details, fixing the date of the accession of Ardashir I to the throne of Persis, that of his coronation as Great King of Iran, and that of the coronation of Shapur I. A description of it by R. Ghirshman, with some remarks by A. Christensen, will be found in the *Rev. des arts asiat.* x, 1936, pp. 123-9.
- HJB. A bilingual inscription of Shapur I at Hajiabad. It gives an account of how the Great King shot an arrow in front of a solemn gathering of the notables of the empire. It was first published on pages 83-4 of Westergaard's edition of the Bundahishn (*Bundehesh, liber pehlevicus*), Havniae, 1851; text and translation in E. Herzfeld, *Paikuli*, pp. 87-9.
- KB. Z. An inscription containing 34 long lines in Sassanid Pahlavi, carved at the foot of the building called the 'Ka'ba of Zoroaster,' which lies in front of the cliffs of Naqsh-e-Rostam in Persis. It was discovered, deep in the sand, by the expedition sent out by the Chicago Oriental Institute, in 1936, headed by Erich F. Schmidt. The first part of it, which is unfortunately seriously damaged, contains a catalogue of towns and districts, above all in the western region of the empire. The remainder gives an account of the institution of fires and the presentation of offerings for the souls of a large number of royal personages, princes and others, of both sexes; they are named with their titles, beginning with Prince Sassan, Kings Pabḥagh and Shapur of Persis, and the King of Kings Ardashir I. M. Sprengling, of the University of Chicago, who has published a preliminary report together with a provisional translation (*Amer. Journ. of Sem. Lang. and Lit.* LIII, no. 2, January, 1937), is inclined to date the composition of it to the reign of Narses. In the opinion of the present writer, it should be attributed to Shapur I; but any discussion of this topic would exceed the bounds of this bibliography.
- N. RJB. KRT. and N. RST. KRT. Two inscriptions, at Naqsh-e-Rajab and Naqsh-e-Rostam respectively, in which the *Mobadh Kartir* Hormizd gives an account of his pious life and career of service to the empire under the reigns of Shapur I, Hormizd I, Vahram I and Vahram II. Text and provisional translation in Herzfeld, *Paikuli*, pp. 89-93.

PAIK. The lengthy inscription of Narses at Paikuli, to the North of Qasr-e-Shirin in Kurdistan, was engraved on the stones of a square tower; this collapsed, and the stones which remain were scattered on the ground. Herzfeld has tried to arrange the fragments of this inscription in order; it contains the names and the titles of client-kings and great nobles, and gives us a rough idea of the extent and the boundaries of the empire at this period. Text, transcription, a provisional translation into English, and vocabulary will be found in Herzfeld's *Paikuli*, I, pp. 84-102; photographs in Vol. II.

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(c) *Seals*

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## SECTION VI. THE PERSIAN WARS WITH ROME

## I. ANCIENT SOURCES

(A) *Texts*

Apart from the relevant passages in the continuous histories of Aurelius Victor, the *Epitome de Caesaribus*, Eusebius, Eutropius, Malalas, Orosius, the *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, Georgius Syncellus, Zonaras and Zosimus, detailed reference may be made here to more special sources:

- Agathangelus. Chapters I-III (Fr. trans. by V. Langlois) in *F.H.G.* vol. v, 2, pp. 110-22: 26/7: IV, 23/4: pp. 121 *sq.*: pp. 256 *sqq.*  
 Agathias. II (ed. B. G. Niebuhr, Bonn, 1828): *Hist. Graeci Min.* (ed. L. Dindorf), II, pp. 224 *sqq.* and 330 *sqq.*  
 Ammianus Marcellinus. XXIII, 5, 3 (ed. C. U. Clark).  
 Anonymus continuator Dionis. Frags. I, 3 (*F.H.G.* IV, pp. 192-3).  
 Michael Syrus. French trans. by V. Langlois, Venice, 1868, pp. 109-10.  
 Moses of Chorene. II, 56, 67, 71, 76, 81. (Ital. trans. by the Armenian Mechitarist monks of San Lazzaro, ed. 2, Venice, 1850.)  
*Oracula Sibyllina*. xiii *passim* (ed. J. Geffcken).  
 Petrus Patricius. Frags. 8, 9, 11. *F.H.G.* IV, pp. 186-8: *Hist. Graeci Min.* I, pp. 429-31.  
 Tabarî. In Nöldeke's translation, pp. 1-42. (See II A above.)

(B) *Inscription*

Dessau 8879. Cf. *ib.* 8878, note 1 = *C.I.G.* 1253, and *O.G.I.S.* 640.

## II. MODERN WORKS

- Asdourian, P. *Die politischen Beziehungen zwischen Armenien und Rom von 190 v. Chr. bis 428 n. Chr.* Venice, 1911, pp. 120-9.  
 Christensen, A. *L'Iran sous les Sassanides*. Copenhagen-Paris, 1936, pp. 79-91; 213-20.  
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 Fluss, M. Art. in *P.W. s.v.* Sapor I.  
 von Gutschmid, A. *Geschichte Irans*. Tübingen, 1888, pp. 156-64.  
 Mommsen, Th. *Römische Geschichte*. Vol. v, pp. 419-33.  
 Nöldeke, Th. *Aufsätze zur Persischen Geschichte*. Leipzig, 1887, pp. 86-94.  
 — Art. in *P.W. s.v.* Artaxerxes (Ardaschir) I.  
 Sykes, (Sir) P. *A History of Persia*. Vol. I, ed. 2, London, 1921, pp. 391-402.  
 Wickert, L. Art. in *P.W. s.v.* Licinius (173) Valerianus.