

# **Persian Presence in the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula**

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There long has been a discussion in regard to the “Arabization” of the Persian Gulf. The question is when did the Arabs achieve dominance over the southern portion of the Persian Gulf? Unfortunately, some of these discussions have contributed to nationalist panegyrics and the renaming of this body of water, while scholarship has taken a backseat. This essay attempts to demonstrate that while Arabs had been living on the southern coast of the Persian Gulf, the Sasanian Persians dominated that region and coast in Late Antiquity. The reason for which the Sasanians attempted to control the coastal area was mainly for economic considerations, such as the dominance of silk trade and extraction of precious metals as well as cultivable land in the region.

With the beginning of the Sasanian dynasty, we have a new chapter in the history of the Persian Gulf. The Sasanians attempt to control not only the northern side, but also the southern side of the Persian Gulf. Hamza al-Isfahani informs us that Ardaxšir I (224-240 CE) built a series of cities<sup>1</sup> and after laying siege to

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<sup>1</sup>H. al-Isfahani, *Kitab ta'rikh sini muluk al-ard3wa'l-anbiya'*, ed. S. H. Taqizadeh, Berlin, 1921, p. 44.

Bahrain<sup>2</sup> (240 CE), Tabari states that he founded a new city named al-Hatt which was also known as Peroz-Ardaxšir.<sup>3</sup> Ardaxšir not only built cities and ports along the southern side of the Persian Gulf, but also on the northern side as well. The Middle Persian text, the *Karnamag i Ardaxšir Papagan* (*The Book of the Deeds of Ardaxshir*) describes the building of one of these ports (KAP V.10.):

*Ka-š drayab pad cašm be did andar yazdan spasdarih  
hangard ud anoh rostag-e i boxt-ardaxšir nam nihad*

“when he (Ardaxshir) saw the sea with his eyes, he gave homage to the Gods and named that rosta, Boxt-Ardaxšir (Bušihir).”<sup>4</sup>

Bušihir was still an important port until recent times and its foundation appears to have been Sasanian. Thus we have evidence of Sasanian building activity not only on the northern, but also the southern side of the Persian Gulf. The question that must be raised is what was the reason for such activities on the part of the Sasanians? Dan Potts has suggested that the reason for which Ardaxšir conquered the southern side of the Persian Gulf was that he wanted to secure his southern flank from attacks.<sup>5</sup> It will be shown that there were also economic reasons for such a move from the third through the seventh centuries CE. During

<sup>2</sup> For the history of Bahrain under the Sasanians see R.N. Frye, “Bahrain under the Sasanians,” eds. H.J. Nissen and J. Renger, *Mesopotamien und seine Nachbarn*, Berliner Beiträge zur Vorderen Orient, Berlin, vol. 2, 1983.

<sup>3</sup> D.T. Potts, *The Arabian Gulf in Antiquity*, vol. 2, Oxford, 1990., p. 233.

<sup>4</sup> *Karnamag i Ardaxšir i Pabagan*, ed. by B. Farahwashi, University of Tehran Press, 1354, p. 46; for general remarks on the importance of Iran, Vol. 9-10, (1972), pp. 97-109; M. Kervran, “Forteresses, entrepôts et commerce: une histoire à suivre depuis les rois sassanides jusqu’ aux princes d’ormuz,” *Itinéraires d’orient, hommages à claudes cahen*, eds. R. Curiel et R. Gyselen, Res Orientales, Vol. VI, 1994, pp. 325-350.

<sup>4</sup> I. Ra’in, *Darya nawardi-ye iranians* (The Seamanship of Iranians), Vol. I, 1350, Tehran, pp. 251-255.

<sup>4</sup> *Karnamag i Ardaxšir i Pabagan*, ed. by B. Farahwashi the Persian Gulf for Ardaxšir I see, V. F. Piacentini, “Ardashir I Papakan and the wars against the Arabs: Working hypothesis on the Sasanian hold of the Gulf,” *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies*, Vol. 15, London, 1985, pp. 57-78.

the reign of Šabuhr I (240-270 CE), we also have an imperial outlook which sees the southern side of the Persian Gulf as part of the Sasanian Empire. The boundary of *Eranšahr* as established by Šabuhr I (240-270CE) in his inscription at Ka'be-ye Zardošt is as follows (ŠKZ 1-3):

*Eranšahr xwaday hem [ud daram] šahr Pars, [Par]?aw, Xuzestan, Mešan, Asurestan, Nodširagan, Arbayestan, Adurbayagan, Armin, Wiruzan, Sigan, Arran, Balasagan ta fraz o Kaf kof ud Alanan dar, ud hamag Padišwar kof, [Mah, Gurgan, Marw, Harew], ud hamag Abaršahr, Ki[r]m[an], Sagestan, [Turan, Mak(u)ran, Par(a)dan, Hindestan, Kušanšahr ta fraz o Paškabur ud ta o Kaš, Sugd, Cacestan ud az an (?) alag i draya Mazunšahr.*

I am the ruler of Eranšahr and hold these *šahrs*: Persia, Parthia, Xuzistan, Mešan, Assyria, Adiabene, Arabia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Geogria, Segan, Albania, Balaskan, up to the Caucasus mountains and the Gates of Albania, and all of the mountain chain of Pareshwar, Media, Gurgan, Merv, Herat and all of Abaršahr, Kerman, Sistan, Turan, Makran, Paradene, India, Kušanšahr up to Peshawar and up to Kašgar, Sogdiana and to the mountains of Taškent, and on the other side of the sea, Oman.<sup>6</sup>

The last line of the inscription the *draya* is to be identified with the Persian Gulf, while *Mazunšahr* with Oman.<sup>7</sup> This encounter of Ardaxšir with the Omanis is also presented in the *Karnamag i Ardaxšir i Pabagan* (The Vitae of Ardaxšir, the son of Pabag), where the battle is given in such a manner (KAP VII.12):

*andar an gah pus-e i pad erhestan bud abag was spah az tazigan ud mazunigan pad draya widarag mad ud abag ardaxšir o koxšišn ested*

At that time, a son (of the Kirm-Xwaday) who was at Erhestan, with a large number of forces from the Arabs and Omanis who were on the coast of the sea came and fought with Ardaxšir.

<sup>5</sup> Potts, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

<sup>6</sup> Ph. Huyse, *Die dreisprachige Inschrift Šabuhrs I. an der Ka'ba-i Zardušt*, vol. I, Copus Inscriptionum Iranicarum, London, 1999, pp. 22-24. An identical list is supplied at Naqš-e Rostam, see M. Back, *Die Sassanidischen Staatsinschriften*, Acta Iranica, 18, Leiden, 1978, pp. 285-288; R.N. Frye, *The History of Ancient Iran*, Munchen, 1983, Appendix 4, p. 371.

<sup>7</sup> For the evidence of Sasanian presence see B. de Cardi, "A Sasanian Outpost in Northern Oman," *Antiquity*, Vol. XLVI, No. 184, Dec. 1972, p. 308; also D. T. Potts, "A Sasanian Lead Horse from North Eastern Arabia," *Iranica Antiqua*, Vol. XXVIII, 1993, p. 197.

During the reign of Šabuhr II in the fourth century CE, the Arabs raided the northern shores of the Persian Gulf from Bahrain. Tabari tells us that they settled on the shores of the province of Fars.<sup>8</sup> The Sasanians had to not only defeat the raiders, but also find a solution to an impending problem of Arab tribes such as ‘Abd al-Qays and others who lived in the inland region of Nejd from further raids. He was to resettle designated Arab tribes in various regions under Persian control. For examples the tribe of Tahlīb who were in Bahrain were placed at Darīn, al-Samahij, and al-Hutt.<sup>9</sup>

In this way he alleviated the Arab raids from the desert and exerted control over the southern Persian Gulf population, and made new allies in the region. The ‘Abd al-Qays were also settled in Qatif and Bahrain to further secure the region. We are less informed about the Persian-Arab relations in the fifth century and it appears that there was a peaceful cooperation between the two people. It is again during the sixth century CE with the reign of Kawād I and his son Xusrō I and their reforms that we get news of the southern coast of the Persian Gulf.

In the late Sasanian administrative division inducted by Kawād I and Xusrō I, the Persian Gulf fell under one of the four *kusts* “sides,” or “quarters.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The History of Tabari, *The Sasanids, the Byzantines, the Lakmids, and Yemen*, translated by C.E. Bosworth, New York, 1999, p. 51.

<sup>9</sup> Tabari, p. 55.

<sup>10</sup> The administrative reforms have been associated with Xusrō I in the sixth century. The reforms probably began during the reign of Kawād as a result of the Hephthalite victories during his father’s rule and as a result of Sasanian attempt in contending with several fronts at the same time. Ph. Gignoux has doubted that if ever such a quadripartition took place, “Les quatre régions administratives de l’Iran sasanide et la symboliques des nombres trois et quatre,” *Annali dell’Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli*, vol. 44, 1984, pp. 555-572; but not only the Middle Persian and Islamic texts, but also the numismatic evidence suggest this fact. See the comments of G. Gnoli, “The Quadripartition of the Sassanian Empire,” *East and West*, vol. 35, 1985, pp. 270; and for the numismatic evidence, F. Gerent, Deux notes à propos du monnayage du Xusrō

This *kust* was called *kust i xwarwaran* “southwestern quarter,” and in a Middle Persian text the area was protected as such from two locations (*Šahrestaniha i Eranšahr* 25):

*šahrestan i hert šabuhr i ardaxširan kard u-š mihr-zad  
i hert marzban pad war i tazigan be gumard*

The city of Hira was built by Šabuhr, the son of Ardaxšir, and he appointed Mihrzad the margrave of Hira over the wall of the Arabs.<sup>11</sup>

(*Šahrestaniha i Eranšahr* 52):

*šahrestan i asur ud šahrestan i weh-ardaxšir ardaxšir i  
spandyada? kard u-š ošag i hagar marzban do-sar ud  
bor-gil pad war i tazigan be gumard*

The city of Asur and the city of Weh-Ardaxšir, were built by Ardaxšir, the son of Spandyad, and he appointed Ošag, of Hagar as the margrave (over the) Do-sar and Bor-gil by the wall of the Arabs.<sup>12</sup>

These two passages suggest that from the early third century the Sasanian had a especial interest in the Persian Gulf region, where margraves and troops were stationed till the Arab Muslim conquest in the sixth century CE. In the first passage we have the name of the margrave, Mihrzad who ruled the region in the third century, but the second passage may refer to the sixth century CE. This is

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II,” *Revue belge de Numismatique*, vol. 140, 1994, p. 37; The same ordering is also found in the Armenian Geography of Xorenatsi, J. Marquart, *Eranšahr nach der Geographie des Ps. Moses Xorenac'i*, Berlin, 1901; one is reminded of the trilingual plates found at Persepolis from the time of Darius I where the limits of the Achaemenid empire is demarcated. What is interesting is that the order of the corners of the empire are supplied in the same manner, from northeast to southwest, from southwest to southeast, and from southeast to northwest. Could it be that there was a set formula in describing of the empire which survived into the Sasanian empire? For possible avenues of transmission via the oral tradition see, P.O. Skjærvø, “Thematic and Linguistic Parallels in the Achaemenid and Sassanian Inscriptions,” *Papers in Honor of Professor Mary Boyce*, Acta Iranica 25, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1985, 593-604; P. Huyse, “Noch einmal zu Parallelen zwischen Achaemeniden - und Sasanideninschriften,” *Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran*, vol. 23, 1990, pp. 173-183.

<sup>11</sup> T. Daryaee, *Šahrestaniha i Eranšahr, A Middle Persian Text on Late Antique Geography, Epic and History*, Mazda Publishers, Costa Mesa, 2002, pp. 18-19.

because Ošag is mentioned with Hagar which is based on Syriac *hagar* known for the Bahrain region. As for Do-sar and Bor-gil, we now know that these were the name of two armies sent by the Sasanians which were known as Dausar and Šahba'.<sup>13</sup> These two forces along with a third were the elite warriors sent by the Sasanians to control the region.<sup>14</sup>

In the Sasanian geographical treatise, the *Šahrestaniha i Eranšahr*, Yemen and the Arabian Peninsula is mentioned as part of the southern most direction. If this is based on historical realities it would point to the late fifth and early sixth centuries CE. An Arabic source suggests that even as early as the rule of Kawad I in the late fifth century the Persians were involved in Mecca, where he is said to have imposed the religious ideas of Mazdak on the Arabs of Najd and Tihama. It is stated that when some of the population of Mecca refused to convert, he ordered one of his Arab commanders to destroy the Ka'ba which he did not comply.<sup>15</sup> By the sixth century Arabia had become a major scene of activity. Yemen had been conquered in 575 CE by the Sasanians and placed under the governorship of Badhan who ruled from Sana'. From Yemen envoys had been sent to Medina by a Persian governor to collect taxes from the people,<sup>16</sup> and also

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>13</sup> G. Rothstein, *Die Dynastie der Lahmiden in al-Hira. Ein Persischen Geschichte zur Zeit der Sasaniden*, Berlin, 1899, pp. 134-138.

<sup>14</sup> M.J. Kister, "Al-Hira, Some Notes on its Relations with Arabia," *Arabica*, vol. xi, fasc. 2, 1968, pp. 168, p. 167.

<sup>15</sup> For other sources for Arabia see, R.N. Frye, *The History of Ancient Iran*, C.H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, München, 1984, pp. 324-328.

<sup>16</sup> M.J. Kister, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

to inquire about the rising power of the prophet Muhammad. As for northern Arabia, Oman had also been placed under Persian rule.<sup>17</sup>

We also have the name of the governor of Bahrain during the rule of Xusro I, Azad-Peroz the son of Gušnasp, who seem to have been quite harsh in his treatment of the population. He was given the title of *al-Muka'bir* "the Mutilator" and was sent to battle the tribes of Banu Tamim.<sup>18</sup> By this time Persian influence on the Arabian Peninsula was well known. According to Tabari when the Sasanians defeated the Romans in the seventh century, we are told the population of Mecca, specifically the Quraysh rejoiced.<sup>19</sup>

Thus based on the early Sasanian inscriptions (Šābuhr I), the *Šahrestaniha i Eranšahr* and Tabari we can see the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula was seen as part of the Sasanian Empire. This view based on the imperial ideology of the Sasanian kings had consequences on the way in which they dealt with the Persian Gulf and hence brought a new period to the history of the Gulf. One of the reasons for this control of the both sides of the Persian Gulf, I would contend was the economic interest. The Persian Gulf was not only important itself, but it also connected the Sasanian Empire to the larger world. When major empire around them made passage, contact and trade difficult, the Persian Gulf connected the Persians to the waters, lands and people beyond their neighbors.

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<sup>17</sup>J.C. Wilkinson, "The Julanda of Oman," *The Journal of Oman Studies*, vol. 1, 1975, p. 98.

<sup>18</sup>Tabari, p. 290.

<sup>19</sup>Tabari, p. 327.

The existence of natural resources such as copper in Oman and silver mining as well as textile and leather industries in Yemen must also have been an important reason for Sasanian interest in the region.<sup>20</sup> The Persians also controlled the agricultural lands of Bahrain and Oman.<sup>21</sup> This becomes important when we mention that in the sixth century, the Romans forbade the sale of copper and iron to the Persians,<sup>22</sup> and so the natural resources of Arabia became important. We have archaeological evidence for the occupation on the southern side of the Persian Gulf from several locations which complement Tabari and other literary attestations.

At Qatif there is the existence of *qanats* which point to Persian involvement in that area.<sup>23</sup> The importance of Qatif is that it was an entry port for silk in the late Sasanian period.<sup>24</sup> At Tarut, Sasanian material culture suggests some sort of presence, especially the stucco finds beside those of the stamp seals.<sup>25</sup> At Dammam, again, Sasanian material culture is present;<sup>26</sup> at al-Khobar again the Persian *qanat* system as well Sasanian coins from the sixth and seventh centuries suggest a presence,<sup>27</sup> and at Jabal Kenzan the presence of Sasanian coins from the fourth and seventh centuries suggest a continuous presence in the region.<sup>28</sup> In north-eastern Arabia along the Persian Gulf, Persian presence is better

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<sup>20</sup> M.G. Morony, "The Late Sasanian Economic Impact on the Arabian Peninsula," *Name -ye Iran-e Bastan, The International Journal of Ancient Iranian Studies*, vol. 1, no. 2, 2002, p. 37.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>22</sup> V. Lukonin, "Administrative Institutions During the Parthian and the Sasanian Period," *The Cambridge History of Iran*, ed. E. Yarshater, Vol. 3(2), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1984, p. 744.

<sup>23</sup> H. St. J.B. Philby, "Southern Najd," *The Geographical Journal*, vol. 55, 1920, p. 168; Potts, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

<sup>24</sup> M. Ibrahim, *Merchant Capital and Islam*, Austin, 1990, p. 48.

<sup>25</sup> Potts, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-216.

<sup>26</sup> Potts, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

<sup>27</sup> Potts, *op. cit.*, pp. 216-217.

<sup>28</sup> Potts, *op. cit.*, p. 218.



known. Christian Persian communities had settled there, where the Persian was known to be spoken as the language of the population.<sup>29</sup>

In the south-eastern Arabia, Sohar provides evidence of Sasanian contact, but more importantly at Jazirat al-Ghanam and Ghubb 'Ali there seems to have been a Sasanian settlement.<sup>30</sup> At Sohar, at the mouth of the Persian Gulf in the Sea of Oman, there appears to have been a Sasanian fort which may have participated in trade, as well as at Dama and Jurrafar.<sup>31</sup> There was a Persian outpost at Ghanam, in the Strait of Hormuz which may have overseen shipping.<sup>32</sup> The same scenario appears for Banbhore in Sind, at Kilwa, where few Sasanian-Islamic wares were found.<sup>33</sup> These Sasanian-Islamic wares were produced in Iraq and were exported to Siraf on a massive scale in the Islamic period.<sup>34</sup> In the Umm al-Ma region there is also evidence of Sasanian contact, where green-glazed pots from Iraq were found.<sup>35</sup> There is also evidence of Sasanian material at Salihyah near Khawran in Ras al-Khaimah.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Potts, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

<sup>30</sup> Potts, *op. cit.*, pp. 296-297.

<sup>31</sup> J. C. Wilkinson, "Suhar in the Early Islamic Period: The Written Evidence," *South Asian Archaeology*, 1973, ed. E. Taeddi, Vol. 2, p. 888.

<sup>32</sup> B. de Cardi, "A Sasanian Outpost in Northern Oman," *Antiquity*, Vol. XLVI, No. 184, Dec. 1972, p. 308; Besides this evidence, A. A. Ezzah believes that the Sasanians had little presence in Oman other than commercial interest, but later goes on to state that the Arabs in the region wanted to free themselves from the yoke of the Persians. How much the Sasanians were involved in Oman is difficult to say until more archaeological evidence becomes manifest, *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies*, Vol. 9, 1979, p. 56 & 61; there was probably more interaction than is known, see D. T. Potts, "A Sasanian Lead Horse from North Eastern Arabia," *Iranica Antiqua*, Vol. XXVIII, 1993, p. 197.

<sup>33</sup> D. Whitehouse, "Maritime Trade in the Arabian Sea: The 9th and 10th Centuries AD," *South Asian Archaeology*, 1977, ed. M. Taddei, vol. 2, p. 874-879.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 881.

<sup>35</sup> B. de Cardi, "The British Archaeological Expedition to Qatar 1973-1974," *Antiquity*, Vol. XLVIII, No. 191, Sept. 1974, p. 199.

<sup>36</sup> B. de Cardi, "Archaeological Survey in N. Trucial States," *East and West*, IsMEO, Vol. 21, No. 3-4, Sept.-Dec. 1971, p. 260 & 268.

This is also true of Dubai where excavations by D.C. Barmaki in the 1970s has brought to light several buildings, including a caravan station, a governors residence and a market-place and a hunting lodge from the Sasanian period.<sup>37</sup> Other places controlled by the Sasanians included such places as Muscat in Oman during the time of Xusro I.<sup>38</sup> The importance of Muscat for Persian traders continued into the Islamic period, for ships sailing from India to Aden stopped at this port.<sup>39</sup> Economic considerations went beyond the coastal areas. Sources describe silver and copper mining at Šamam in the Najd where it is said some one thousand Zoroastrians lived along their two fire-temples.<sup>40</sup>

Gold and silver mines appear to have been scarce in Fars and hence the control of silver and copper mines in Yemen and Oman was imperative. This is clear in that while the province of Fars had a tremendous and steady output of *drahms* (silver coin) from its main centers in the late Sasanian period, it needed mines. The large amount of *drahms* minted in Fars in the late Sasanian period were from five major mints:<sup>41</sup> 1) ART=Ardaxshir-Xwarrah; 2) BYŠ=Beshabuhr ; 3) DA=Darabgrid ; 4) ST=Istaxr ; and in the late Sasanian period 5) WYHC=Weh-az-Amid-Kawad.<sup>42</sup> With all these active mints, the *Hudud al-'Alam*

<sup>37</sup> D.C. Barmaki, "An Ancient Caravan Station in Dubai," *Illustrated London News*, vol. 2903, 1975; Potts, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

<sup>38</sup> H. M. al-Naboodah, "The Commercial activity of Bahrain and Oman in the early Middle Ages," *Proceedings of the Seminar For Arabian Studies*, Vol. 22, London, 1992, p. 81.

<sup>39</sup> B. Spuler, "Trade in the Eastern Islamic Countries in the Early Centuries," *Islam and the Trade in Asia*, 1970, p. 14.

<sup>40</sup> Morony, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

<sup>41</sup> For the identification of the following mints see, R. Gyselen, "Ateliers monétaires et cachets sasanides," *Studia Iranica*, Tome 8, fasc. 2, 1979, p.210.

<sup>42</sup> The location of this mint is controversial and has been attributed to several mints. Mitchner has identified that mint as NIHC for Ctesiphon in the province of Asurestan, "Mint Organization in the Sassanian Empire," *The Numismatic Circular*, Vol. LXXXVI, No.9, September 1978, Spink & Son LTD, London, p.473. Gyselen has identified it as Weh-az-Amid-Kawad or Arrajan known in the Islamic period, *ibid.*, p. 210, her reading is based on a seal with three cities mentioned: Staxr, Bišabuhr, and Veh-az-Amid-Kavad, thus located in Fars, *ibid.*, *La géographie administrative de l'empire Sassanide*, Res orientales, Peeters, Leuven, 1993, for the discussion see p.62, for the seal see p.112; Mochiri has read it as VSP for Visp-Shad-Xosrow in Media, *Etudes de numismatique*

mentions only a mine at Istakhr,<sup>43</sup> and in eastern Persis at Na'in.<sup>44</sup> Istakhri mentions that Fars had little silver.<sup>45</sup> Neither *Masalik wa Mamalik*, nor the *Fars-name* of Ibn Balxi mention any significant silver mines in Fars. Although it is usually thought that the reason for such a great output of coinage in Fars was due to the military campaigns of Xusro I and later on Xusro II, I would like to suggest that the volume of trade was partially responsible for this amount of coinage output, and Oman and Yemen made this output possible. In this regard metal analysis of the Sasanian coinage would be most welcome.

We can conclude by stating that from the third century CE, the Sasanians began a campaign of dominating the Persian Gulf and the lands around it. This military action translated into economic control and success against the Romans on the seas. The textual and archaeological as well as the material remains from the Sasanian period suggest a new chapter in the history of the Persian Gulf. This presence appears to have been based on strategic and economic considerations. As competition with the Romans made access to natural resources difficult, the Persians began exploring Arabia and to hold dominance over its cities or established new ports and cities. This is why that the Arabs themselves attested that in the late Sasanian period that the Persians controlled the shores and strands

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*iranienne sous les Sassanides et Arabe-Sassanides*, Vol. II, Tehran, revised edition, Leiden, 1982, p. 454; Mordtmann and Sellwood have proposed New-shabuhr in Xwarasan, Sellwood, *An Introduction to Sasanian Coins*, Spink & Son Ltd., London, 1985, p.49. Mitchner's suggestion is simply untenable. Malek doubts that Veh-az-Amid-Kavad (Arrajan) was such an important town in Sasanian times to have such a large output of coins, Malek, "Sasanian Numismatics," in *The Numismatic Chronicle*, London, 1993, p.90. I have been able to see affinities on the Arab-Sasanian coins to this mint with the other mints of Fars identified by Michael Bates, which make it certain that Gyselen's suggestion is correct. Thus New-shabuhr seems to be less plausible; see also S. Tyler-Smith "Sasanian Mint Abbreviations," *The Numismatic Chronicle*, Vol. 143, London, 1983, pp. 244-245.

<sup>43</sup> *Hud, d al-'Alam*, p. 131.

<sup>44</sup> *Hud, d al-'Alam*, p. 136.

<sup>45</sup> *Masalik wa Mamalik*, p. 135.

of the Persian Gulf, while the Arabs lived in the mountains and deserts.<sup>46</sup> Arabia and the southern coast of the Persian Gulf was all too precious to be neglected by the Sasanians.

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<sup>46</sup>S.M. Awtab, *Kitab ansab al-'arab*, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Arabe 5019, 271r., after R. Hoyland, *Arabia and the Arabs from the Bronze Age to the coming of Islam*, Routledge, New York and London, 2001, p. 28.