

## THE INSCRIPTION OF SHAPUR I AT NAQSH-E RUSTAM IN FARS\*

1. I, the Mazda worshipping lord Shapur, king of kings of Iran and non-Iran, whose lineage is from the Gods, son of the Mazda worshipping divinity Ardashir, king of kings of Iran, whose lineage is from the Gods, grandson of king Papak, am ruler of Iranshahr, [and I hold ?] the lands:

Persis, Parthia, Khuzistan, Mesene, Assyria, Adiabene, Arabia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, 2. Georgia, Segan [Makhelonia = Mingrelia], Arran [Albania], Balasakan, up to the Caucasus mountains and the Gates of Albania, and all of the mountain chain of Pareshtar, Media, Gurgan, Merv, Herat and all of Aparshahr,<sup>1</sup> Kerman, Seistan, Turan, Makuran, Paradene, Hindustan [India = Sind], the Kushanshahr up to Peshawar, and up to Kashgar, Sogdiana and to the mountains of Tashkent, and on the other side of the sea, Oman. And we have given to a village district the name Peroz-Shapur and we made Hormizd-Ardashir by name Shapur.<sup>2</sup> 3. And these many lands, and rulers and governors, all have become tributary and subject to us.

When at first we had become established in the empire, Gordian Caesar raised in all of the Roman Empire a force from the Goth and German realms and marched on Babylonia [Assyria] (Asuristan) against the Empire of Iran and against us. On the border of Babylonia at Misikhe, a great 'frontal' battle occurred. Gordian Caesar 4. was killed and the Roman force was destroyed. And the Romans made Philip Caesar. Then Philip Caesar came to us for terms, and to ransom their lives, gave us 500,000 *denars*, and became tributary to us. And for this reason we have renamed Misikhe Peroz-Shapur.

And Caesar lied again and did wrong to Armenia. Then we attacked the Roman Empire and annihilated at Barbalissos a Roman force of 60,000 5. and Syria and the environs of Syria we burned, ruined and pillaged all. In this one campaign we conquered of the Roman Empire fortresses and towns: the town of Anatha with surroundings, (Birtha of Arupan ?) with surroundings,<sup>3</sup> Birtha of Asporakan, the town of Sura, Barbalissos, Manbuk, [Hierapolis], 6. Aleppo [Berroia ?], Qennisrin [Khalkida], Apamea, Rhephania, Zeugma, Urima, Gindaros, Armenaza, Seleucia, Antioch, 7. Cyrrhe, another town of Seleucia, Alexandretta, Nicopolis, Sinzara, Hama, Rastan, Dikhori, Dolikhe, Dura, 8. Circusium, Germanicia, Batna, Khanar, and in Cappadocia the towns of Satala, Domana, Artangil, Suisa, Sinda, Phreata, 9. a total of 37 towns with surroundings.

In the third campaign, when we attacked Carrhae and Urhai [Edessa] and were besieging Carrhae and Edessa Valerian Caesar marched against us. He had with him a force of 70,000 from Germany, Raetia, Noricum, Dacia, Pannonia, Moesia, Istria, Spain, Africa (?), Thrace, 10. Bithynia, Asia, Pamphylia, Isauria, Lycaonia, Galatia, Lycia, Cilicia, Cappadocia, Phrygia, Syria, Phoenicia, Judaea, Arabia, Mauritania, Germania, Rhodes [Lydia], Osroene (?), 11. Mesopotamia.

And beyond Carrhae and Edessa we had a great battle with Valerian Caesar. We made prisoner ourselves with our own hands Valerian Caesar and the others, chiefs of that army, the praetorian prefect, senators; we made all prisoners and deported them to Persis.

And Syria, Cilicia and Cappadocia 12. we burned, ruined and pillaged.

In that campaign we conquered of the Roman Empire the town of Samosata,<sup>4</sup> Alexandria on the Issus, Katabolos, Aegaea, Mopsuestia, Mallos, Adana, Tarsus,

Augustinia, 13. Zephyrion, Sebaste, Korykos, Anazarba ([Agrippas]), Kastabala, Neronias, Flavius, Nicopolis, Epiphaneia, 14. Kelenderis, Anemurion, Selinus, Mzdu-[Myonpolis], Antioch, Seleucia, Dometiopolis, Tyana, Caesarea [Meiakariri], Komana 15. Kybistra, Sebasteia, BIRTHA, Rakundia, Laranda, Iconium, altogether all these cities with their surroundings 36.

And men of the Roman Empire, of non-Iranians, 16. we deported. We settled them in the Empire of Iran in Persis, Parthia, Khuzistan, in Babylonia and in other lands where there were domains of our father, grandfathers and of our ancestors.

We searched out for conquest many other lands, and we acquired fame for heroism, which we have not engraved here, except for the preceding. We ordered it written so that whoever comes after us may know 17. this fame, heroism and power of us.

Thus, for this reason, that the gods have made us their ward,<sup>5</sup> and with the aid of the gods we have searched out and taken so many lands, so that in every land we have founded many Bahram fires and have conferred benefices upon many magi-men, and we have magnified the cult of the gods.

And here by this inscription, we founded a fire 18. Khosro-Shapur<sup>6</sup> by name for our soul and to perpetuate our name, a fire called Khosro-Aduranahid by name for the soul of our daughter Aduranahid, queen of queens, to perpetuate her name, a fire called Khosro-Hormizd-Ardashir by name for the soul of our son, Hormizd-Ardashir, great king of Armenia, to perpetuate his name, another fire call Khosro-Shapur by name, for the soul of our son Shapur king of Mesene, to perpetuate his name, and 19. a fire called Khosro-Narseh by name, for the sould of our son, the noble, Mazda worshipping Narseh, king of Sind, Seistan and Turan to the edge of the sea, to perpetuate his name.

And that which we have donated to these fires, and which we have established as a custom, all of that we have written upon the document [of guaranty]. Of those 1000 lambs, of which custom gives us the excess, and which we have donated to these fires, we have ordered as follows: for our soul each day 20. a lamb, one and a half measures<sup>7</sup> of bread and four quantities of wine.

For that of Sasan the lord, King Papak, King Shapur son of Papak, King of Kings Ardashir, the Empire's Queen Khoranzim, Queen of Queens Aduranahid, Queen Dinak, King of Gilan Bahram, King of Mesene Shapur, Great King of Armenia Hormizd-Ardashir, King of the Sakas Narseh, Queen of the Sakas 21. Shapurdukhtak, Lady of the Sakas Narsehdukht, Lady Chashmak, Prinz Peroz, Lady Mirdut [Myrrod], mother of King of Kings Shapur, Prince Narseh, Princess Rud-dukhtak, daughter of Anoshak, Varazdukht [Gorazdukht], daughter of Khoranzim, Queen Stahyrad, Hormizdak, son of the king of Armenia, Hormizd, Hormizdak, Odabakht, Bahram, Shapur Peroz, son of the king of Mesene, Shapurdukhtak, daughter of the king of Mesene, and Hormizddukhtak, daughter of the king of Sakas 22. for their souls a lamb, a measure and a half of bread and four quantities of wine.

And the lambs which remain, as much as remain to be completely used, are for the souls of those for whose souls we have ordered rites, who by name are found in writing, every day a lamb, one and a half measures of bread and four quantities of wine.

Among those who lived under the rule of King Papak: Sasan Ornekan, Farrak son of Farrak, Vartragnipat son of Khur, Asporik son of Asporik, Pohrik son of Mardin, Zik the master of ceremonies, 23. Shapur son of Wezan, Shapur son of Mihrozan.

Among those who lived under the rule of King of Kings Ardashir: Satarp king of Abrenak,<sup>8</sup> Ardashir king of Merv, Ardashir king of Kerman, Ardashir king of the Sakas, Dinak mother of king Papak, Rodak mother of King of Kings Ardashir, Dinak daughter of Papak queen of queens, Ardashir *bidakhsh*, Papak *chiliarch*, Dehin Varaz, Sasan Suren, Sasan lord of Andegan, Peroz Karen 24. Gok Karen, Abursam 'glory of Ardashir,' Geliman of Demavend, Rakhsh the army chief, Mard head of scribes, Papak master of ceremonies, Pazihir Vaspurigan, Vifard son of Farrak, Mihr-khwast Baresigan, Khumaftrat chief of the elite guard (?), Diran chief of the armory, Chihrak the judge, Vardan chief of stables, Mihrak son of Tosar, Zik Zabrigan, Sagbus master of the hunt, Khudik chief steward, Zayen chief of wine.

Among those who live under the rule of King of Kings Shapur: Ardashir king of Adiabene, Ardashir 25. king of Kerman, Dinak queen of Mesene ward of Shapur, Hamazasp king of Georgia, Prince Valash son of Papak, Prince Sasan who is adopted by the Farrak family, Prince Sasan who is adopted by the Kiduk family, Prince Narseh son of Peroz, Prince Narseh son of Shapur, Shapur *bidakhsh*, Papak chiliarch, Peroz chief of cavalry, Ardashir Varaz, Ardashir Suren, Narseh lord of Andegan, 26. Ardashir Karen, Vahunam *framadar*,<sup>9</sup> Frik satrap of Gundeshapur, Sritoy son of Shahimust, Ardashir 'joy of Ardashir,' Pazihir 'valiant of Shapur,' Ardashir satrap of Qom, Chashmak 'brave of Shapur,' Vahunam 'joy of Shapur,' Tir-mihr chief of fortress of Shahrkart, Zik master of ceremonies, Artaban of Demavend, Gondofarr Abgan 'who seeks combat,' Pabish 'Perozshapur' son of Shanbit 27. Varzin satrap of Isfahan, Kirdisro *bidakhsh*, Papak Vaspurigan, Valash son of Seleucus, Yazdbad counselor of queens, Papak swordbearer, Narseh satrap of Rund,<sup>10</sup> Tiyanik satrap of Hamadan, Vardbad [Gulbad] chief of services, Yoymard son of Rastak, Ardashir son of Vifar, Abursam-Shapur head of the harem, Narseh son of Barrak, Shapur son of Narseh, Narseh chief steward, 28. Hormizd chief scribe son of Hormizd chief scribe, Naduk chief of the prison, Papak gate keeper, Pasfard son of Pasfard, Abdagash son of the castle lord, Kerdir magus, Rastak satrap of Weh Ardashir, Ardashir son of the *bidakhsh*, Mihrkhwast treasurer, Shapur commander,<sup>11</sup> Arshtat Mihran of Rayy secretary, Sasan the eunuch son of Sasan, Virod chief of markets, Ardashir satrap of Neriz, Bagdad son of Vardapad [Gulbad], Kerdir Ardavan, Zurvandad son of Bandak, 29. Vinnar son of Sasan, Manzik the eunuch, Sasan the judge, Vardan son of Nashbad, Gurik ([Vardik]) chief of boars, altogether one lamb, one and a half portions of bread, four measures of wine every day.

Now as we serve and worship the gods with zeal, since we are the wards of the gods and with the aid of the gods we have searched out these peoples, have dominated them and have acquired fame for bravery, also whoever comes after us and rules, may he also serve and worship the gods with zeal, so the gods may aid him and make him their ward.<sup>12</sup>

(The Parthian version alone is signed: "This is the writing by my hand, Hormizd, the scribe, son of Shirak, the scribe.")

\* The first edition of the text in three languages (Parthian, Middle Persian and Greek) was by M. Sprengling, "Shahpuhr I, the Great on the Kaabah of Zoroaster (KZ)," *AJSI*, 57 (1940), 341-420, followed by his *Third Century Iran, Sapor and Kartir* (Chicago, 1953), with photographs. The Greek text formed the basis of the translation by A. Maricq, "Res Gestae Divi Saporis," *Syria*, 35 (1958), 295-360, with his detailed study

together with E. Honigmann, *Recherches sur les Res Gestae Divi Saporis* (Brussels, 1953). Other references may be found in these publications as well as in the popular work by J. Gagé, *La montée des Sassanides* (Paris, 1964). The translation here is based mainly on the MP and Parthian versions with additions in parentheses and with Greek additions or differences in brackets. The line division follows the Parthian (the most legible) text but names are in modern or Classical forms.

<sup>1</sup> Balasakan = Derbend area; Pareshwar = Elburz mountains; Aparshahr = Islamic Khurasan.

<sup>2</sup> Spengling seems correct in seeing the name of Shapur above that of Hormizd-Ardashir, which is unclear, but the meaning escapes us. Maricq ignores the letters, reading Shapur, above line 2. Perhaps the sentence is to be read: we, Shapur, have made (the town) of Hormizd-Ardashir (in Khuzistan).

<sup>3</sup> The phrase 'with surroundings' is found after each place name and has been omitted here. Modern identifications of the place names are found in Maricq, in *Syria*, 338-339.

<sup>4</sup> Same as the preceding list 'with surroundings.' For modern identifications see Maricq, *op. cit.*, 340-41.

<sup>5</sup> This word, *dastkirt*, can mean 'domain' as well as 'creature,' but here I translate it as 'ward,' meaning 'under the protection of.'

<sup>6</sup> Or to be translated 'fame of Shapur.'

<sup>7</sup> For a discussion of the amount of bread and wine, see Maricq, *op. cit.*, 318-19.

<sup>8</sup> This probably means the Aparni or Khurasan.

<sup>9</sup> This title is general, perhaps something like modern *ra'* is 'chief.'

<sup>10</sup> Unknown, but in western Iran, possibly modern Kashan.

<sup>11</sup> The word *framadar* is general in meaning and his specific functions are unclear.

<sup>12</sup> The MP is different from Greek and Parthian, all conflated here.

Entered by Warren Soward