

Rémy Boucharlat. “Persia (including Khūzestān)”

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Rémy Boucharlat. “Persia (including Khūzestān)” in Bruno Jacobs, Robert Rollinger (eds.). *A Companion to the Achaemenid Persian Empire*. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2021, Vol. I, p. 189-212.

- 1 The Author overviews the archaeological evidence from the core-zone of the Achaemenid Persian empire in southwestern Iran, an area roughly coinciding with the modern Iranian Provinces of Fārs, Khūzestān, and Būshehr. The largest part of the contribution is obviously devoted to the monumental achievements attested at Pasargadae, Persepolis (and their surroundings), and Susa. Those three sites can only be interpreted as mere royal “residences”, since the absence of a permanent royal Achaemenid capital is retained by the Author as the main reason for the lack of “cities” (as those known in the previous Near Eastern tradition) in this area of the empire.
- 2 Evident signs of settlement increase in southern Fārs and near the shore of the Persian Gulf during the Achaemenid period are explained by the Author as the consequence of the introduction of subterranean water galleries for irrigation, a technology that greatly enhanced the agricultural productivity in the area. Those galleries derived from streams and did not tap the water table, as the *qanat/kariz* system. Indeed, the actual presence of the latter system in Iran during the Achaemenid period remains a matter of scholarly controversy.
- 3 The buildings at Sang-i Siah and Bardak-e Siah (near Borazjān, Būshehr Province) as well as the one at Qaleh Kali (near Nurabad, Fārs Province) are also hinted at.
- 4 A further paragraph is devoted to the archaeological evidence of ritual practices (religious, dynastic, and funerary) from the area at the issue. In the last section, devoted to artefacts, the Author stresses the paucity of diagnostic objects for the

Achaemenid period and the consequent difficulty to identify settlements related to that chronological horizon.

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