Map 92 Ecbatana-Susa
Compiled by A. Hausleiter, E.J. Keall and M. Roaf, 1997

Introduction

The area covered by the map lies in Iran—except for the top left and bottom left corners, which are in Iraq. The main feature is the band of parallel mountain ridges running from north-west to south-east (part of the Zagrus chain: see further Map 3 D2). These make it difficult to cross the mountains from the Babylonian and Elamite plains in the south-west to the desert region south of the foothills of the Alburz mountains at the top right of the map. Though impossible to mark with precision, there was nonetheless a major route through these mountains. This is the Great Khorassan Road, part of the “Silk Road,” which from prehistoric times provided a link between the Mesopotamian plains and the resources of the Iranian highlands. As early as the Parthian period, traders and diplomats used it to travel between the Near East and China. In the first century A.D., the settlements and districts along it were recorded in Isidore of Charax’s Parthian Stations—Chala, Karina, Kambadene, Concobar, Ahmadan, Rhaga(i), and thence to central Asia and beyond. East of Concobar, there were alternative routes around the Alvand mountain. Further routes ran parallel to the Zagrus ridges, leading north-west to Media Atropatene (Map 90) and south-east to Susiana and Persis (Maps 93, 94); other, more difficult routes allowed contact between Susiana and the highland areas to the north and east.

The relative emptiness of most areas of the map reflects not so much absence of ancient settlement as the lack of detailed, published archaeological survey work. It is true that the highest parts of the mountains have only ever been used as summer pastures for transhumant tribes, while the inhospitable waterless desert of central Iran (the western edge of which appears here) has never sustained more than a minimal population. It may be confidently predicted, however, that future survey in the valleys and plains between, and to the east of, the steep ridges of the Zagrus chain will identify ancient settlements—some of them in all likelihood with substantial populations, because there is certainly sufficient rainfall here for the cultivation of cereal crops.

Changes in the physical landscape since classical times have yet to be studied in great detail. The courses of the rivers in the low-lying plains have always been subject to movement, and these are discussed in the Introduction to Map 93. The extent and character of the lakes and salt-marshes in the eastern part of the map vary from season to season and from year to year.

The major cities Susa, Ecbatana and Rhaga(i) remained important from the Achaemenid to the Sasanian periods. Also marked are a few other cities which can be identified either through archaeological discoveries or through texts; the latter include Arab geographers who include information about earlier periods. Otherwise textual information about this area is sparse. It is impossible to identify most of the places mentioned by Pliny, Ptolemy and other classical authors, and there are very few indigenous inscriptions of classical date that offer any useful geographical information. Many of the names that are recorded in Greek and Latin texts seem to be erroneous.

Despite difficulties of dating, the Chahar Taq (Four Arch) monuments found in the Zagrus mountains are marked (A2–B3; note also Map 94). These buildings, which include four arches supporting a dome, are thought to have been fire-temples built by the Zoroastrian population in the Sasanian and Islamic periods. All those known are marked, even though in fact some may have been built after the rise of Islam (EncIr 4, 634-38). A further problem with several of these monuments is their remote location, which has prompted contradictory reports by travelers and archaeologists; hence the use of a hollow symbol in these instances. A similar uncertainty about dating applies to the bridges marked; they are normally assigned to the Sasanian period, but may be later.

Today, tribal groups such as the Kurds, Lurs and Bakhtiari dominate the Zagrus mountains. To locate similar tribes mentioned in ancient texts is difficult. This is partly because the tribes were (and are) transhumant, spending the winters in the lower-lying plains and the summers in the mountain pastures; partly, too, because tribal groups have often moved from one region to another; and partly because different groups are given similar names, although
in Greek and Roman texts these may in fact be merely descriptive (thus Scenitae, “tent-dwellers”). For these reasons it has proved impossible to mark names of tribes on the map.

The location and extent of different regions or districts must be regarded as approximate for the most part; for the Sasanian period, they are based on Gyselen (1989).

Directory
All place names are in Iran unless otherwise noted

Names

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<td>Apamea</td>
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<td>Isfahan Shahristan district</td>
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<td>Badra IRQ</td>
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<td>RL</td>
<td>Le Strange 1905, 238</td>
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<td>C?H?</td>
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<td>rock inscription</td>
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<td>Young 1974</td>
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<td>Goyman/ Kumanand/ Eran-vinard-Kavad</td>
<td>R?L</td>
<td>Qom</td>
<td>Gyselen 1989, 73</td>
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<td>Gulpaygan</td>
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<td>[Hulwan]/ Valashfar/ Beth Lashpar/ Chala/ Albania § Chalonitis</td>
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<td>Sar Pol-i Zohab IRQ</td>
<td>IsidChar 3; Herzfeld 1968, 12; Oppenheimer 1983, 146-49</td>
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<td>Iasonius? M.</td>
<td>HRL</td>
<td>Kuh-i Damavand</td>
<td>Strabo 11.13.10; Ptol. 4.2, 4.6; AmmMarc 23.6.28; EncIran Damavand</td>
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<td>[Jundishapur]/Veh-Andiyok-Shapur/Beth Lapat/Bendosaboron/Jurbadhakan = Gurbayigan</td>
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<td>Kangavar</td>
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<td>H?R</td>
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<td>IRN / IRQ</td>
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<td>Karin/Pasitigris? fl.</td>
<td>IRN / IRQ</td>
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<td>See Map 93</td>
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<td>Kas(h)kar/Kermanshahan = [Qirmisin]</td>
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<td>See Map 93</td>
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<td>H?R?L?</td>
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<td>B1</td>
<td>Khurmal/Syarazur?/Siasouron?</td>
<td>R?L</td>
<td>IRQ</td>
<td>Le Strange 1905, 190; Safar 1974, 196-97; cf. RE Σιαζούρ, τό</td>
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<td>K5391</td>
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<td>Wenke 1975, map 21.28</td>
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<td>G2</td>
<td>Lang-i Rud/Laodicea = Nemavand</td>
<td>L?</td>
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<td>Schippmann 1971, 422; Kleiss 1986</td>
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**Mad(aya) = Media**
- B3 | Maimeh | L? | | Vanden Berghe 1977, 177-78 |
- D2 | Malaver | R?L | | Gyselen 1989, 53-54 |
- H1 | Mandros fl. | | | See Map 90 |
- B3 | Masabadan/Massabatene | HR | Luristan / Pusht-i Kuh | Pliny, NH 6.134; cf. RE Μασσαβάτης |
- A4 | Mesene | IRN / IRQ | | See Map 93 |
- C4 | Mihraigd Kadag | R?L | | Gyselen 1989, 53-54 |
- G3 | Natanz | L? | | Schippmann 1971, 450-51; Kleiss 1977, 231-32 |
<table>
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| D2   | Nemavand/  
|      | Laodicea/  
|      | Niphaunda | HRL | Nihavand | Strabo 11.13.6; Pliny, *NH* 6.115;  
|      |          |      |            | Ptol. 6.2.14; Robert, *Hell.* 7, 20;  
|      |          |      |            | Gyselen 1989, 53-54, 82-84;  
|      |          |      |            | cf. RE *Nippaunda* |
| C2   | Otaq-i Farhad/  
|      | Surkhadeh | C?H? | EncIran Deh-e Now | |
| E3   | Paraetacene | CHR | Luristan | RE Suppl. 10 Paraitakene 1;  
|      |          |      |            | Le Rider 1965, 323;  
|      |          |      |            | Oppenheimer 1983, 245-46, 311  
|      |          |      |            | Vanden Berghe 1972, 16-17; 1977, 175-77 |
| B3   | Push-i-Arisht | L?     | Ray = Rhaga(i) | Calmeyer 1978 |
| G1   | Qaleh Gabri | L?     | L? | Kleiss 1987 |
| A2   | Qaleh-i Yazdigird | RL | Re Rya; RE Europos 7 | Keall 1982; Boardman 1994, 86 |
| C2   | [Qantara al-Rum] = Dezful  
|      | [Qirmisin]/  
|      | [Kermanshahan] | RL | Kirmanshah / Bakhtraran? | Schwarz 1896, 480 |
| G1   | Rhaga(i)/  
|      | Europos/  
|      | Arsakia/  
|      | Ray | ACHRL | Ravy | RE Raga; RE Europos 7 |
|      | Saimarreh/  
|      | Eulaeus?/  
|      | Ula(ya)? fl. | B3 | Ray = Rhaga(i) | Habsman 1967 |
| F1   | [Saveh] | R?L | F1 | CHI 3(2), 767; Kleiss 1990  
| B3   | Seh Pa Aivan | L? | F1 | Vanden Berghe 1977, 184-88; 1984, 216 |
| B4   | Sella/  
|      | Silhu fl.  
|      | Shapur Khwast? = Khurramabad | IRQ | See Map 93 |
| D4   | Shaur R. | L? | Shaur R. | See Map 93 |
| D4   | Shush(n)/  
|      | Susa/  
|      | Seleucia ad Eulaeum/  
|      | Shush-i er-Kar  
|      | Siasoun? = Khurmāl  
|      | Silhu fl. = Sella fl.  
|      | Spahan = Aspadana  
|      | Surkhadeh = Otaq-i Farhad  
|      | Susa = Shusha(n)  
|      | Susiana = Elymais  
<p>|      | Syarazur? = Khurmāl | IRQ | See Map 93 |
| C2   | Taq-i Bustan | L | Taq-i Bustan | Enclran 2, 305; von Gall 1990 |
| B2   | Taq-i Girra | L? | Taq-i Girra | Enclran 2, 305 |
| A4   | Tell Abu Khay | IRQ | Tell Abu Khay | See Map 93 |
| A4   | Tell Bismaya | IRQ | Tell Bismaya | See Map 91 |</p>
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### Bridges

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### Canals

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<td>winter camp for Antigonus, near Isfahan</td>
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<td>Herakleia</td>
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<td>Herzfeld 1968, 188-90</td>
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<td>Media Ano/Mihiragan-Kadag</td>
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<td>Onoadas/Orubicaria</td>
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<td>Orudicarta? Burujird?</td>
<td>ItMiller 792; RE</td>
</tr>
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<td>Pharaspa</td>
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<td>RE Pharaspa; Metzler 1977, 1057</td>
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<td>Oppenheimer 1983, 391-93; RE Sabdata</td>
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<td>Sigriane</td>
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<td>Herzfeld 1968, 23; cf. RE Σιγριανή, Ψ; cf. TAVO B VI 3</td>
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