The Reign of Queen Būrān

Then there succeeded to the royal power Būrān, daughter of Kizrā (II) Abarwīz, son of Hurmuz (IV), son of Kizrā (I) Anūshharvān.1 It has been mentioned that she proclaimed on

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1 Also named as Buran-dukht and, according to Hamzah al-Isfahani, Ta'rikh, 54, a sister of Sheroy and the daughter of Khosraw Abarwez's Byzantine princess wife, Maryam, daughter of Heraclius. Her descent on both sides would thus make her a very acceptable queen. The Anonymus Guide, tr. 32-33, describes Buran as not only Sheroy's sister but also his wife, this being quite possible in Noldeke's view, ibid. 32 n. 5. For the name Buran/Boran, see Justi, Namenbuch, 70; Gignoux, Norms propres sassanides en Moyen-Perse épigraphique, no.209, cf. no. 208, considered by him as a hypocoristic form *baurasp-,
the day when she was hailed as queen, "I will pursue righteousness and ordain justice," and she entrusted Shahrbaraz's office to Fus Farrūkh and invested him with the office of her chief minister. She behaved kindly toward her subjects and spread justice among them. She gave orders for silver coins to be minted, and she repaired masonry bridges (al-qanāṭir) and bridges of boats (al-jusūr).\(^2\)

She remitted for the people the arrears of land tax (ba-qāyā) due, and she wrote to them in general open letters concerning the policies of benevolence toward them that she intended to follow, and she mentioned the topic of the members of the royal house [of the Sāsānids] who had perished. At the same time, she expressed the hope that God would show them, through solicitude for their welfare and firm policies deriving from her elevated position, what would let them realize that lands were not subdued through the strength and energy of men, that military camps were not laid open to plunder through men's stratagems and hatred extinguished, but all that comes from God, He is exalted and magnified. She further exhorted them to be obedient and urged them to be faithful. Her letters brought together everything that was necessary (i.e., for the subjects' guidance and welfare). She restored the wood of the [True] Cross to the ruler of Byzantium through the intermediacy of the Catholics called Ishū'hab.\(^3\) Her tenure of royal power lasted one year and four months.\(^4\)


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\(^2\) Noldeke noted, trans. 391 n. 3, that Buran also built a fire temple at Istiniya (a village near the later al-Kufah, according to Yaqut, Buldan, I, 176, pace Noldeke that it was near Baghdad), according to al-Mas'udi, IV 86 = § 1412, cf. Morony, Iraq after the Muslim Conquest, 283. Restoration of the True Cross had been a prominent point in the peace negotiations begun by Heraclius with Sheryo and dragging on into the times of Shahrbaraz or Buran, but the Cross was actually restored by Sheryo and was back in Jerusalem in late summer 629 or spring 630; see on the problem of exact dating here, n. 951 above. The Catholicoi in question was Isho'yahb II of Gadala, formerly bishop of Balad in northern Mesopotamia and in office 628-46; hence he was head of the Nestorian Church when the Arabs arrived in Iraq. See Morony, Iraq after the Muslim Conquest, 341, 343-44. Isho'yahb and several other Nestorian bishops the Persian empire went on a mission to Heraclius in northern Syria as part of the peace negotiations. See Noldeke, trans. 392 n. I; Labourt, Le Christianisme dans l'empire perse, 243-45.

\(^3\) In Noldeke's surmise, trans. 433, there was a short interregnum of intrigues and anarchy in the capital Ctesiphon after Shahrbaraz's assassination on 9 June 630. Buran's coins, extending over three regnal years, began with the regnal year 1, which would have ended on 16 June 630. Her reign must have extended over a year and four or six months, hence into autumn 631. The Anonymus Guidi, tr. 33, and the Nestorian Chronicles of Se'ert state that she was strangled, according to the latter source, by the general Firuz. Buran's name appears on her coins as BWL'N. See on her coins Paruck, Sasanian Coins, 69, 392-93, Plate XXII; Gobl, Sasanian Numismatics, 54-55, Table XIII, Plate 15; Sellwood, Whitting, and Williams, An Introduction to Sasanian Coins, 21, 166-68; Malek, "A Survey of Research on Sasanian Numismatics." 238; Jenny Rose, "Three Queens, Two Wives, and a Goddess. The Roles and Images of Woman in Sasanian Iran." 43-45. See also: Jenny Rose, "Three Queens, Two Wives, and a Goddess. The Roles and Images of Woman in Sasanian Iran." 43-45. Of the other Arabic sources for her reign include Ibn Qutaybah, Ma'arif, 666; al-Ya'qubi, Ta'rikh, I, 197; al- Dinawari, al-Akhbar al-tiwal, III; al-Mas'udi, Muruj, II, 233 = § 654; idem, Tanbih, 102, tr. 147; Hamzah al-Isfahani, Ta'rikh, 54; Ibn al-Athir, Kamil, I, 499. Of Persian sources, see Tabari-Bal'ami, tr. II, 349-50. Of modern studies, see Christensen, Sassanides, 498; Frye, "The Political History of Iran under the Sasanians," 171, 178; Elr, s.v. Boran (Marie Louise Chaumont).