

CYRUS AND THE ACHAEMENIDS*

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Understanding of early Achaemenid history has undergone significant changes in recent scholarship. Recent research has emphasised the familial distinction between Cyrus the Great and Darius I, and it has become difficult to give credence to the traditional, modern reconstruction of Darius' kinship claims that implies a dual descent from Achaemenes via Teispes: one line to Cyrus and the other to Darius. With Cyrus' inscriptions at Pasargadae demonstrated as spurious, and the "Achaemenid dynasty" demonstrated as Darius' creation *ex nihilo*, the relationship between Darius and his predecessors requires a new assessment.

Darius has been viewed as an unabashed liar, despite the consistent antipathy toward the Lie (Old Persian *drauga*) emphasised in his royal inscriptions. As typical of the genre of royal apologia, the truth therein reflects the truth as the sovereign portrayed it, with historical accuracy, as we would define it, not a priority. It was certainly not beyond Darius to fabricate a connection to his royal predecessors where none existed. But, to put it somewhat paradoxically, is Darius' mendacity so straightforward? Put another way, may any of Darius' genealogical claims be salvaged by careful consideration of his imperial rhetoric and other ancient sources?

This article supposes a negative answer to the first question and a positive one to the second. To find a link between the lines of Cyrus and Darius one need look no further than Cassandane, wife of Cyrus and daughter of Pharnaspes the Achaemenid (Hdt. III.2). Acceptance of Herodotus' account of the marriage of Cyrus and Cassandane, the evidence for which will be discussed below, serves as the foundation of this article's assertions.¹

In order to appreciate the historical ramifications of this union, one must not only differentiate the dynastic lines of Cyrus and Darius but also examine the ideological import of Darius' use of the label "Achaemenid". Darius placed great emphasis on being an Achaemenid, i.e., descended from his eponymous ancestor, Achaemenes. Achaemenes is first mentioned in the Bisitun Inscription, wherein Darius traced his lineage to

him through four generations: "Darius the king proclaims: My father is Hystaspes, the father of Hystaspes is Arsames, the father of Arsames was Ariaramnes, the father of Ariaramnes was Teispes, the father of Teispes was Achaemenes. Darius the king proclaims: For this reason we are called 'Achaemenids'."² This lineal descent, in subsequent inscriptions, became simply "Achaemenid" (i.e., minus the full genealogical progression), used as a dynastic marker. This Achaemenid emphasis is consistently reflected in Darius' titulary, for example, "I am Darius the Great King, King of Kings, King of many countries, son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenid" (DPe §1 — with minor variations in several other inscriptions).³

The name Achaemenes or title "Achaemenid" does not occur in Cyrus' inscriptions (notwithstanding the Pasargadae inscriptions, in fact commissioned and placed by Darius).⁴ Cyrus traced his lineage to his great-grandfather Teispes, who, based on the testimony of the Cyrus Cylinder, founded Cyrus' royal line.⁵ By tracing his descent to Achaemenes through Teispes, Darius thus established the basis for the traditional (in modern scholarship) dual Achaemenid line and Darius' and Cyrus' shared royal pedigree. The Achaemenid dynasty was a construct of Darius, one way by which he rationalised his claim to the throne.⁶ That Darius' accession represented a significant break with his predecessors (even if one retains the shared descent with Cyrus from Achaemenes) has been recognised, but the full magnitude of this break has yet to be explored.

If Cyrus was not an Achaemenid, what then? And what was the relationship between Cyrus and the Achaemenids? Answers to these questions, as best as they may be considered with the limited evidence, are important both with regard to Cyrus' establishment of the empire and Darius' victory in the crisis of 522 B.C. This article's assessment of these questions relies upon a variety of sources, and these are discussed subsequently (roughly in order) based on whether Cyrus or Darius is the focus. The argument rests upon the identification of Cassandane as a wife of Cyrus, as a member of the Achaemenid clan, and as the mother of

Cambyses (and Bardiya). Cassandane's identification as such stems primarily from Herodotus, but it is supported, directly and indirectly, by analysis of ancient Near Eastern evidence. It must be emphasised that the incomplete and sporadic source material precludes definitive conclusions and necessitates qualification even of provisional ones; the attendant analysis must thus be considered provisional.

CYRUS AND CASSANDANE

The marriage of Cyrus and Cassandane provides a key to understanding the relationship between Cyrus and the Achaemenids. That noted, it must be acknowledged that there are different traditions regarding Cyrus' marriages. Herodotus recounted that Cambyses was the son of Cyrus and Cassandane, the daughter of Pharnaspes, an Achaemenid: "...Cambyses was the son of Cassandane, the daughter of Pharnaspes, an Achaemenid, and certainly not of any Egyptian woman" (III.2, see also II.1 discussed below).⁷ Ktesias, conversely, reported that Cyrus married Amytis, daughter of Astyages (*Persika* §2). With regard to the Persian royal marriages it may not be necessary to accept one classical account and reject another. The practice of polygamy among subsequent Persian kings is well-attested, and it would be no surprise to learn that Cyrus engaged in it as well.⁸ The traditions wherein Cyrus is linked to the Median royal house by marriage may reflect Cyrus' own propaganda to link himself to the Median dynasty; thus Cyrus would have portrayed himself as a legitimate Median king.⁹

The Near Eastern evidence supports Herodotus' account of Cyrus' marriage to Cassandane. Herodotus' account of Cassandane's death echoes the Nabonidus Chronicle. Herodotus noted that Cyrus greatly lamented Cassandane's death and that he insisted on public mourning for her (II.1): "When Cyrus was dead, Cambyses inherited the kingdom. He was the son of Cyrus and Cassandane, the daughter of Pharnaspes, and Cassandane had died before Cyrus himself; Cyrus had mourned greatly for her and instructed all his subjects to do likewise. Cambyses, then, was a son of this woman and Cyrus."¹⁰ An entry in the Nabonidus Chronicle provides an exact parallel, which lends credence to (and may have indirectly served as the source of) Herodotus' account. The Chronicle related that Cyrus' wife (whose name is not given) died within

a few months after his conquest of Babylon and that there was an official mourning period: "In the month [x] the wife of the king died. From the twenty-seventh of the month Adar to the third of the month Nisan [there was] (an official) mourning in Akkad. All the people bared their heads."¹¹ The correspondence between these two accounts is too close to be coincidental. It is accepted here that Herodotus, having followed the Nabonidus Chronicle's account, correctly related the name of Cyrus' wife as well as her clan affiliation. A marriage alliance that afforded Cyrus support from a powerful group of Persian nobles (i.e., the Achaemenids) would have gone far in Cyrus' unification of Iran and the discrete, though culturally-similar, tribes therein. I interpret Cyrus' marriage to the Achaemenid Cassandane as just such an alliance.

CYRUS' EARLY CONQUESTS

One of the great conundrums of Cyrus' rise to power is how a seemingly obscure Persian from Fars challenged the might of the Median, Lydian, and Babylonian empires in the course of just over a decade. A significant part of this conundrum involves how and when north-eastern and eastern Iran fell under Cyrus' power. The rapid expansion of the empire under Cyrus was unlikely to have been accidental or incidental. In order to effect this expansion Cyrus, as the king of Anshan (Tall-i Malyan, in modern Fars), must have made alliances with several other Persian and Iranian families or groups, the Achaemenids (by way of Cyrus' marriage to Cassandane) foremost among them.

For Cyrus the Great's early history, a variety of sources may be considered, the vast majority written well after Cyrus' lifetime. Before Cyrus' defeat of Astyages (dated between 550–549 B.C.), the political relationship between Medes and Persians is obscure, confounded by contradictory classical accounts. Herodotus narrated a legend of Cyrus' early life and struggle against the Medes (I.107–30), one of four that he claimed to know (I.95). Herodotus' admission of several stories current in his day is authenticated in the variations found in other classical authors.¹² Babylonian sources disclose only sporadic details of Cyrus' early reign. The Nabonidus Chronicle reports that Astyages marched against Cyrus, was betrayed by a revolt among his troops, and was delivered to Cyrus. Cyrus then marched upon Ecbatana and took its plunder back to

Anshan.¹³ The Nabonidus Chronicle confirms Herodotus' account of Median treachery, but it offers no details to elucidate that tradition.

Extant sources do not preserve the course of Cyrus' progression from king of Anshan to the conqueror of Media. Classical authors' confusion disallows an authoritative account, and Near Eastern sources reveal little, and nothing explicitly, about Cyrus' reign as king before the Median conquest. Nothing in the historical record suggests that Cyrus held dominion beyond the territory roughly equivalent to modern Fars before his conquest of the Medes. The combined forces of Elamites and Persians in Fars may have made a formidable force, but is one to assume that they were able to challenge what both contemporary Near Eastern sources and later Greek tradition represent as a leading power of the late seventh and early sixth centuries? Internal troubles in Media contributed to Astyages' downfall, as indicated by his troops' revolt, but such disaffected Median elements would not have linked their fortunes with Cyrus unless he had something significant to offer. Did Cyrus have more resources at his disposal than those of the kingdom of Anshan alone?

According to Herodotus (I.214), Cyrus ruled twenty-nine years (559–530 B.C.). There are serious chronological problems and gaps in our knowledge of Cyrus' reign. The first few years (at least five) are almost a complete blank in the historical record. It seems reasonable to place Cyrus' marriage to Cassandane and the birth of Cambyses in this period (i.e., the 550s), if not before. Cyrus certainly spent these early years consolidating his power, presumably with an eye toward expansion.

By 539, Cyrus had conquered Media (c. 550–549), Lydia (c. 540s),¹⁴ and Babylon (539). Of these three, only the conquest of Babylon may be dated with any precision: Cyrus entered the city on October 29, 539.¹⁵ The chronology of Cyrus' activity in the east is uncertain. No Near Eastern source provides any explicit information on the incorporation of eastern Iran into the empire. The extent of Median power and influence is also unknown, and this convolutes the issue. Xenophon (*Cyro.* I.1.4) implied that the Hyrcanians accepted Cyrus' rule after he overthrew Astyages, while Ktesias claimed that they had joined Cyrus beforehand (*Persika* §9). After the conquest of Lydia, Herodotus (I.177) noted that Harpagus devastated "lower Asia" (κάτω τῆς Ἀσίας) while Cyrus himself destroyed "upper" (ἄνω) Asia, subduing all people (πάν ἔθνος).

Herodotus emphasised the great importance of the campaigns against Babylon, Egypt (which ultimately fell to Cambyses), the Bactrians, and the Saka (I.153), as opposed to the conquest of Ionia, which was entrusted to Harpagus. Ktesias (*Persika* §2) reported that Bactria and other eastern regions submitted to Cyrus shortly after he defeated Astyages.¹⁶

There are scattered and contradictory references in later classical sources to Cyrus campaigning in what became the provinces of Carmania, Drangiana, Areia, Arachosia, and Gandhara — the regions of modern Afghanistan and Baluchistan — between his conquests of Lydia and Babylonia, but the chronology and even sequence of these episodes are uncertain. Whether Cyrus added the territory of eastern Iran between the conquests of Media and Lydia or between the conquests of Lydia and Babylonia, whether in one campaign or over the course of several (perhaps in combination with diplomatic marriages), cannot be determined. Ktesias (*Persika* §8) labelled Bardiya, called Tanyoxarkes in his account, as the lord (δεσπότης) of Bactria. If accurate, Cyrus' assignment of one of his sons to this post demonstrates its importance. That Cyrus died campaigning in the extreme north-east suggests that the regions beyond the Oxus River were not secure, or were attractive targets, even at the end of his reign.¹⁷

Extant evidence for eastern Iran in the Achaemenid period is considerably less than that for western Iran and Mesopotamia. Relations between the various groups of early Iranians before and during the Achaemenid period are poorly documented, if at all. A great deal of archaeological work bearing on the Achaemenid period has been done in eastern Iran and Central Asia, but without supplementary textual sources it is difficult to posit the course of those regions' political history before Cyrus' conquests and, in many cases, even during the succeeding Achaemenid period.¹⁸ For some scholars, Cyrus' rapid conquests presuppose some sort of political framework, if not established kingdoms, in at least some of these regions (e.g., Bactria).¹⁹

CYRUS' TITULARY

The Cyrus Cylinder lists Cyrus the Great's forebears through three generations (Cyrus being the fourth) as kings of Anshan. Anshan, modern Tall-i Malyan, is located approximately 50 km. north-by-north-west

from Persepolis and approximately 75 km. west-by-south-west from Pasargadae.²⁰ A Cyrus “king of Persia” (Parsumaš) appears in the Assyrian annals paying tribute to Ashurbanipal after the Assyrian campaigns against Elam in the 640s. A sealing of Cyrus, son of Teispes, the Anshanite – generally acknowledged as Cyrus the Great’s grandfather – has been found on Elamite texts from the Persepolis Fortification archive. If one accepts the identification of this Cyrus, son of Teispes, with the Cyrus of Ashurbanipal’s annals, this pushes back Cyrus the Great’s line in Fars into the early seventh century B.C.²¹

It is assumed herein that by the mid-seventh century the toponyms Parsuash/Parsumash (in Fars) and Anshan have become roughly synonymous for the same geographic region, that was later called *Parsa* (Old Persian) and *Persis* (Greek).²² The only reference that explicitly differentiates Parsuash and Anshan, to my knowledge, is Sennacherib’s description of the forces of Huban-menanu arrayed at Halule in 691.²³ It seems clear that both refer to regions in Fars. Subsequently, Assyrian sources typically refer to the region as Parsuash or Parsumash (the orthographic variation has no significance). Anshan occurs in extant texts again only in the (Elamite) inscription on the seal of Cyrus son of Teispes, in some Neo-Babylonian documents, and in Cyrus’ royal inscriptions (all noted below). The choice of toponym may have had (and, I argue, frequently did have) ideological significance but did not have geographical significance by the mid-seventh century. Anshan occurs only in texts of, or referring to, Cyrus the Great; it does not occur in conjunction with, or in the titulary of, any subsequent Persian king. It is useful in this context to list the instances of Cyrus’ titulary as a reference point.

- 1) Ashurbanipal’s annals, edition H2 II’ 7’–13’:²⁴
“Cyrus, king of Persia”
ṁku-ra-áš LUGAL KURpar-su-ma-aš
- 2) Impressions of Persepolis Fortification Seal *93:²⁵
“Cyrus of Anshan (‘the Anshanite’), son of Teispes”
[*ṁku-ru-raš an-za-an-x-ra DUMU še-iš-be-iš-na*]
- 3) Sippar Cylinder of Nabonidus (i 29):²⁶
“Cyrus king of Anshan”
ṁku-ra-áš LUGAL KURan-za-an
- 4) Cyrus Cylinder (see note 5):
“Cyrus king of Anshan” (line 12)
ṁku-ra-áš LUGAL URUan-ša-an
“I am Cyrus king of the world, great king, strong

king, king of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad, king of the four quarters” (line 20)

a-na-ku ṁku-ra-áš LUGAL kiš-šat LUGAL GAL LUGAL dan-nu LUGAL TIN.TIR^{K1} LUGAL KUR šu-me-ri ù ak-ka-di-i LUGAL kib-ra-a-ti er-bé-et-tim

Cambyses I, Cyrus I, and Teispes each named “great king, king of Anshan” (line 21)

...LUGAL GAL LUGAL URUan-ša-an

5) Brick from Uruk:²⁷

“I am Cyrus, builder of Esagil and Ezida, son of Cambyses, strong king”

ṁku-ra-aš ba-ni-i[m] É.[SAG].ÍL u É.ZI.DA A ṁkam-bu-zi-ya [LUGAL] dan-nu a-na-ku

6) Brick from Ur:²⁸

“Cyrus, king of the world, king of Anshan, son of Cambyses, king of Anshan...”

ṁku-ra-áš LUGAL ŠÁR LUGAL KURaš-ša-an DUMU ṁkam-bu-zi-ya LUGAL KURaš-ša-an...

7) Nabonidus Chronicle:²⁹

“Cyrus king of Anshan” (ii 1)

ṁku-raš LUGAL an-šá-an

“Cyrus king of Persia” (ii 15)

ṁku-raš LUGAL KURpar-su

8) Verse Account of Nabonidus:³⁰

“Cyrus king of the world”

ṁku-ra-áš LUGAL kiš-šat

9) Miscellaneous economic documents:³¹

Cyrus “king of Babylon, king of lands” (and variants)

10) The Dynastic Prophecy:³²

“king of Elam” (ii 17), a reference to Cyrus the Great

LUGAL KURNIM.MA^{K1}

The inscriptions of Pasargadae (labelled CMA and CMc) are not included here, as they have been established as later additions commissioned by Darius (see n. 4). That Cyrus’ only extant royal inscriptions are from Babylonia must serve as a caveat for any analysis involving them. Cyrus I specifically referred to himself as the “Anshanite” (no. 2), yet Ashurbanipal referred to the region contemporaneously, or even earlier than this Cyrus the Anshanite, as Persia (i.e., Parsumaš, no. 1) — almost a century before Cyrus the Great came to power. Cyrus’ contemporary, Nabonidus, king of Babylon, also labelled Cyrus the “king of Anshan”, so there is external (i.e., non-Cyrus) evidence for its use. That Cyrus maintained the simple title “king of Anshan” in his own inscriptions (e.g., no. 6) is

noteworthy, especially after his kingdom encompassed much larger tracts of the ancient Near East.

Even if the title “king of Anshan” was, originally and simply, a designation of the geographic place that Cyrus the Great and his predecessors ruled, its continued use by Cyrus himself, as the conqueror of Media, Lydia, and then Babylonia, is significant. From a historiographic perspective the title underscores the impact of the Elamite tradition on Cyrus, especially in contrast with Darius’ shift to a Persian and Iranian ideology (see below). That this historiographic perspective reflects something of the historical reality seems beyond dispute, even if clarity on the issue remains elusive.

Adoption of royal titulary involves a conscious choice: to maintain or to change a traditional one, or to create a new one altogether. The use of the title “king of Anshan” supplied legitimacy to a Persian dynasty that had been victorious over indigenous Elamites. Whether it was original or taken from an Elamite dynast whom Teispes overthrew (and this is purely hypothetical), i.e., if the title was not original to Cyrus’ line, is not important in this context.³³ The use of the title “king of Anshan” by a Persian goes beyond that of a simple geographical marker; Persian domination of an Elamite area represented, by use of this title, an arrogation of an Elamite tradition. With the decline of Elam by the late 650s and 640s, the legitimately-claimed title “king of Anshan”, an Elamite centre of great antiquity, may have carried great weight in a milieu of mixed Elamite and Persian populations, wherein Persians were the relative newcomers. Only with the Cyrus Cylinder may we trace the progression from “king of Anshan” to an expanded titulary of the newly-victorious ruler of Babylonia and most of the ancient Near East (no. 4).

Elamite influence on the Persians was pervasive.³⁴ For example, a very fragmentary passage of the Nabonidus Chronicle reveals that Cyrus, during Cambyses’ investiture ceremony, visited the Nabû temple in east Babylon dressed in Elamite garb.³⁵ The incident cannot be fully reconstructed, but, if accurately interpreted, it does show that Cyrus (or is it possible to assume Cambyses?) wore Elamite accoutrements even in an age-old Babylonian ceremony — an event notable enough for mention in the chronicle. This harmonises with Cyrus’ perpetuation of an Elamite-styled titulary.

In the early seventh century B.C., the Neo-Elamite king Huban-menanu still had political influence in (if not sovereignty over) Fars, as evinced by the participation of troops, including Persians, from that region in

the Battle of Halule (691).³⁶ Elamite political influence was dissipated over the subsequent five decades. Sometime after the sack of Susa (dated to 647 or 646), Ashurbanipal received tribute from Cyrus, king of Parsumash (i.e., in modern Fars). By the mid-seventh century, at least parts of Fars were no longer under Elamite political domination.

While Cyrus’ titulary reflects his Elamite orientation, it provides little information with regard to his status as a *Persian* king, i.e., his relations with those Persians who provided the base of his support. With Darius, we encounter a shift in royal titulary: a conscious exclusion of Cyrus’ “king of Anshan”, which was supplanted by a focus on “Achaemenid” descent and, in some inscriptions, on Persian and Iranian ethnicity (see below).³⁷ In the Bisitun Inscription, Darius emphasised that he was “an Achaemenid” and “king of Persia”. Notably, even in those numerous inscriptions Darius commissioned at Persepolis and Naqsh-e Rostam, “Anshan” never occurs; it has disappeared from the titulary. The same geographic region was meant, i.e., Persia as Anshan, but the nomenclature had changed.

Despite this shift in titulary, Darius actively sought to identify himself with Cyrus in other ways. The inscriptions of Pasargadae, ostensibly commissioned by Cyrus but, in fact, left by Darius (see n. 4), explicitly label Cyrus as an Achaemenid. This label linked Cyrus to Darius’ line in order to bolster Darius’ legitimacy. Darius’ marriages to Cyrus’ daughters (Hdt. III.88) strengthened this link in reality for Darius’ successors, and they could claim legitimacy both as Achaemenids and as descendants of Cyrus.³⁸

When Cyrus is taken out of the Achaemenid line, the dynamics of the early Persian empire and the crisis of 522 change. The accession of Darius was not the reassertion of the Achaemenid dynasty but the creation of that dynasty, with a royal lineage defined by Darius after he took power. Darius’ family line or (in the wider sense) clan, the Achaemenids, was one of great influence and import in Persia, but it was not on a par with Cyrus’ royal line until Darius made it so — and incorporated Cyrus’ line in the process.

HERODOTUS AND THE ACHAEMENIDS

For Herodotus, the term “Achaemenid” was a clan designation. This is in apparent opposition to the sense in which Darius used the term throughout his inscrip-

tions, as a dynastic marker indicative of direct descent from Achaemenes. This opposition is not, however, irreconcilable. Darius emphasised direct descent from an eponymous ancestor, while Herodotus considered the term in its wider, clan sense (I.125): the Achaemenid clan (φρήτην) was one clan of the Pasargadae tribe (γένος).³⁹

The term “Achaemenid” occurs infrequently in Herodotus’ *History*. It is used primarily to distinguish a particular individual as a member of the Achaemenid clan.⁴⁰ Achaemenes, the eponymous founder of the clan is mentioned twice (III.75 and VII.11), and the clan designation itself, used to refer not to an individual but to the clan or its members in a general sense, occurs twice as well (I.125 and III.65). The Persian kings who appear in the work are not explicitly identified as “Achaemenid”, but the implication is clear at, among other places, Xerxes’ rehearsal of his lineage in VII.11: “May I be no son of Darius, son of Hystaspes, son of Arsames, son of Ariaramnes, son of Teispes, son of Cyrus, son of Cambyses, son of Teispes, son of Achaemenes...”⁴¹

Cyrus is also implicitly identified as an Achaemenid by Prexaspes’ tracing of Cyrus’ family “from Achaemenes downward” (III.75), as he confesses his murder of the real Smerdis (i.e., Bardiya). Herodotus created a dramatic scene here to enliven his narrative, but he was consistent throughout on this matter. The report that the Persian kings came from the foremost clan, that is the Achaemenid clan (I.125), indicates that Herodotus viewed all the Persian kings as Achaemenids — as members of the clan so-named. If Herodotus felt that there was any ambiguity in this regard, it is not obvious.

Darius asserted that his ancestors were kings (DB §3), but the evidence argues against this claim. Xerxes divulged that Darius became king even though both his grandfather Hystaspes and great-grandfather Arsames were yet alive (XPf §3). The spurious inscriptions of Ariaramnes and Arsames were attempts to legitimise Darius’ line by claims of royal descent, a further propagation of the dynastic principle established by Darius.⁴² Even if Arsames was too advanced in age to claim the kingship, Hystaspes was certainly still capable. The Bisitun Inscription relays that Hystaspes dwelt (Akkadian *ašābu*) in Parthia and that some of the people there revolted (Akkadian *alāku lapani*) against him. This passage indicates that Hystaspes held an important post (i.e., satrap) there, awarded or authorised

by Cyrus and/or Cambyses, and that Hystaspes was active in putting down rebellions against Darius (DB §35–36).⁴³

Herodotus did not adopt Darius’ claim that he and his forebears had been kings. Herodotus indicated that Hystaspes held a position of importance under Cyrus, although he confused his role, calling him the governor (ὑπαρχος) of Persia (III.70). Further, Darius was “not yet a man of great account” before he took the kingship — Herodotus’ negative exaggeration of Darius’ place as a “spear-bearer” (δορυφόρος) of Cambyses.⁴⁴ It is obvious from the place of Gobryas on the sculpture of Darius’ tomb at Naqsh-e Rostam, where Gobryas is given the same title — *arštibara* in Old Persian — that this position was one of high honour, but it did not mark an heir to the throne.⁴⁵

According to Herodotus, it was Otanes who was the moving force among the seven conspirators in the plot to overthrow the false Smerdis. Darius was a late addition to the conspiracy. It is difficult to judge the significance of Otanes as the main figure here and the rationale of his withdrawal from the contest for kingship. It may reflect a pro-Otanes source, one that emphasises his standing (evident elsewhere in Herodotus, e.g., III.68) and at the same time explains why he was not king.⁴⁶ Elsewhere, Herodotus described this Otanes as a son of Pharnaspes (III.68). By this account, Otanes and Cassandane were siblings, both children of Pharnaspes the Achaemenid. However, with regard to the identity of Otanes’ father, it is possible to check Herodotus against DB §68, where Otanes is named son of Thukhra, a Persian. In matters of Darius’ cohorts and their lineage, the Bisitun Inscription must, of course, take precedence over Herodotus. Otanes’ father’s name Thukhra is irreconcilable with Herodotus’ Pharnaspes.

Further, if Cassandane were truly the sister of Otanes, one of the Seven, the evidence from the Bisitun Inscription precludes Pharnaspes being her father. Either Herodotus confused Cassandane and Otanes’ relationship or he confused the name of one of their fathers. It is more likely, because of the numerous, homonymous Otanes in Herodotus, that Herodotus erred in naming that Otanes of the Seven to be the son of Pharnaspes. Since he also noted that Darius married Phaidyme, who was a daughter of Otanes and previously wed to Cambyses and to Bardiya (III.68 and III.88), Herodotus may have carried this link between Otanes and the Persian kings back one generation.⁴⁷

This is just the type of tangled genealogy that a Greek source, though informed of Persian politics and the succession legends, may easily have conflated.

CAMBYSES THE ACHAEMENID

The marriage of Cyrus and the Achaemenid Cassandane also lends a measure of credence to Darius' genealogical claims in the Bisitun Inscription. As demonstrated by his own inscriptions, Cyrus did not view himself as an Achaemenid but rather placed emphasis on his lineage as king of Anshan, son of Cambyses, descended from Teispes. But, although Cyrus was not born one, he became linked to the Achaemenids by marriage. Darius did not hesitate to exaggerate this link, even if, in the truest sense, a shared descent from Achaemenes did not exist. Cyrus may have profited immensely (both politically and militarily) from his marriage to an Achaemenid woman, but he did not need it for legitimacy.

Cambyses, as the legitimate son of Cyrus, had an Achaemenid mother, so Darius' claim that Cambyses was of his family (*amāxam taumāyā*, DB §10) may be defensible. This assumes a reading of the Old Persian term *taumā-* in a wider sense of "clan" or the like.⁴⁸ Understood in that wider sense, *amāxam taumāyā* intimates that Cambyses was descended from Achaemenes — whether of direct lineal descent or not would not have been of primary concern to Darius. While Cyrus was linked to the Achaemenids only by marriage, Cambyses was linked by blood, courtesy of his mother. Cassandane's kin-relationship with Darius, if there was one, is nowhere elucidated. Even if she was a distant cousin, however, her descent from Achaemenes would have been good enough for Darius. It is upon this relationship that Darius staked his claim to kinship with Cambyses and, by extension, with Cyrus.

Without better knowledge of ancient Persian kinship and social organisation, it is admittedly difficult to assess the formal significance (if any) in Darius' kinship implication, i.e., that Cambyses was an Achaemenid by matrilineal descent. Perhaps there is no need to seek any such significance; once Darius had prevailed on the battlefield, he simply exaggerated, or even created, the significance — based on a real, if extended, kinship relationship — to formalise or legitimise his claim. A link to Cyrus and Cambyses was

important, and a familial one (by way of Cassandane), however stretched, may have provided this legitimacy. That Darius literally claimed Cambyses, not Cyrus, as a member of his *taumā-* in DB §10 is telling for this interpretation. Modern scholarship (with few exceptions) no longer maintains that Cyrus was of Achaemenid descent. Cambyses is another matter.

The marriage of Cyrus and Cassandane, then, serves as a backdrop to Darius' and his father Hystaspes' positions of prominence under Cyrus and Cambyses. Hystaspes received an important position in Parthia. Darius' position as a spear-bearer of Cambyses may also be attributed to this vinculum. Other Achaemenids presumably received important posts as well. When the crisis occurred in 522, this Achaemenid support, given to Cyrus (by way of his marriage to Cassandane) and subsequently to Cambyses, reverted to Darius, and it was crucial to Darius' success.

DARIUS THE KING

Darius related in his Bisitun Inscription that in 522. Cambyses, still in Egypt, faced a revolt in his own country by a magus whom Darius named Gaumata. According to Darius, this Gaumata was an impostor of Cambyses' true brother Bardiya, who had been killed by Cambyses sometime before (DB §10–14). Herodotus followed this account in outline and in some of the particulars (III.61–79). With the help of six cohorts, all identified as "Persian", (DB §68), Darius claimed that he slew the magus Gaumata and claimed the kingship. In reality, Darius slew Cambyses' true brother Bardiya to take the throne. Numerous revolts then threw much of the empire into chaos.

Darius' Bisitun Inscription is a victory-monument to the numerous battles he and his supporters fought against a myriad of enemies. Darius included the names, lineages (i.e., "son of" x), and ethnic backgrounds of many of his supporters and enemies. Of Darius' six supporters, Intaphernes, Hydarnes and Gobryas are named in the Bisitun Inscription as active participants in quelling the revolts: Intaphernes against a Babylonian revolt (§50); Hydarnes against rebellious Medes (§25); and Gobryas against an Elamite revolt (§71).⁴⁹ Neither the Bisitun Inscription, nor Greek tradition, records where Intaphernes or Hydarnes dwelt or in what regions they held power and influence. Gobryas is identified as a Pateischorian by the

Babylonian version of DB §68 and also in the trilingual DNa; Strabo (XV.III.1) identified the Pateischorians as one of the tribes of Persia.

The Bisitun Inscription does not relate the specific contributions of the other three, although Greek tradition preserves much information regarding all six co-conspirators and their subsequent fates. Intaphernes soon fell out of favour and was apparently replaced by Aspathines, who is prominent at Naqsh-e Rostam but is not named in the Bisitun Inscription.⁵⁰ Beyond the six co-conspirators and those individuals already in power under Cambyses and Cyrus (Hystaspes, Vivana and Dadarshi; see below), the names of several other men, who led armies against various rebel forces, are provided. These individuals' political backgrounds, like those of the six conspirators, are unknown — whether they were officials and generals appointed by Cyrus and Cambyses who came over to Darius, or were “new men” selected by Darius.

Only Darius' father Hystaspes and the satraps Vivana and Dadarshi apparently held their political positions before Darius became king. Vivana was the satrap of Arachosia, active against the rebel Vahyazdata in Arachosia (§45). Hystaspes dwelt in Parthia and, presumably, was satrap there.⁵¹ Dadarshi was the satrap of Bactria, active against the rebel Frada in Margiana (§38).⁵² All three are identified ethnically as Persians. Thus, beyond the six co-conspirators, Darius had additional supporters who held important positions based in the north (Parthia), east (Arachosia) and north-east (Bactria), from a compass point based in Persis. This indicates a significant, if not broad, base for Darius in central, northern, and eastern Iran. Darius relied upon them to quell trouble on the Iranian plateau and in eastern Iran, while he and others addressed the far more significant and expansive trouble at the core of the empire: Persis itself, Elam, Media and Babylonia. These regions were the mainstays of Cyrus' family's power, and it is probably not a coincidence that they gave Darius so much difficulty.

DARIUS' TITULARY

There are no extant royal inscriptions of Cyrus the Great's sons Cambyses and Bardiya from Mesopotamia, Elam or Persia, so it is uncertain if the title “king of Anshan” was still in use after Cyrus' death. If so, its use would have been strictly traditional,

in light of the extent of the Persian Empire even early in Cyrus' reign. With the accession of Darius I, conversely, there is a wealth of inscriptional material, and the change in focus is plain. Darius' earliest titulary reads “Great King, King of Kings, King of Persia, King of countries” (DB §1 and DBa §1) and emphasises descent from Achaemenes (DB §2–3), but nowhere does he name himself or any of his predecessors “king of Anshan”. This title is not even used in the Elamite version of the Bisitun Inscription.

After Darius was firmly established, he presented additional, new elements in some inscriptions. Darius was not only king of Persia and an Achaemenid but also the son of a Persian (an ethnic designation, not a royal one) and of Aryan (i.e., “Iranian”, also an ethnic designation) lineage. The emphasis on Persian and Aryan ethnicity does not occur in the Bisitun Inscription but finds expression in subsequent dedicatory inscriptions of Darius at Naqsh-e Rostam (DNa §2) and Susa (DSe §2) and of Xerxes at Persepolis (XPh §2).⁵³

This emphasis on Persian and Iranian ethnicity in Darius' titulary may be considered in opposition to the emphasis on Anshan (highlighting an Elamite orientation) in Cyrus'. Darius, exhibiting his Persian and Iranian heritage, acknowledged his broader base among Iranian peoples to the apparent exclusion of the Elamite — at least in his titulary. Darius inaugurated a new Persian and Iranian royal ideology, reflected in the creation of an Old Persian script, his inscriptions, his architecture and his art.⁵⁴ The disappearance of “Anshan” from the titulary is just one result of this new emphasis.

Darius' identification of himself as an “Iranian” reflects an eastern orientation, an acknowledgement of the importance of his non-Persian, Iranian supporters.⁵⁵ This acknowledgement probably reflected the base of Darius' power, the Iranians in a wider sense than the more restrictive (at this time) sense of “Persia” in the geographical sense, i.e., Fars. This was an acknowledgement based upon a political reality that Cyrus (to judge from the extant record) did not make.

In consideration of Darius' eastern orientation, one recalls the question of the connection between the early Persian kings and the Zoroastrian religion, or, as more commonly termed now in reference to the Achaemenid period: “Mazdaism”. This question has occupied pages of scholarly discussion, but a few remarks must suffice in this context.⁵⁶ Ahura-Mazda is ubiquitous in Darius' inscriptions, another indicator of

his Iranian sensibilities. The Elamite scribe(s) of the Bisitun Inscription differentiated Ahura-Mazda as “the god of the Aryans” (DB §62). The gloss in the Elamite version, even though omitted in the subsequent Old Persian and Babylonian versions, suggests (as does the entire inscriptional corpus) that Ahura-Mazda may have been a relatively recent introduction to western Iran, at least among its non-Iranian (i.e., Elamite) inhabitants. This is not to imply that Ahura-Mazda was unknown there before Darius’ reign. Cyrus’ personal views on religion are unknown, though it was not beyond him to manipulate religion for his political purposes (e.g., the Cyrus Cylinder’s Mesopotamian religious elements).

Defining Mazdaism as it existed in the sixth century B.C., or for that matter how it was practiced by the Achaemenid kings, is currently impossible. It is uncertain whether Cyrus may be considered Mazdaean or to what extent he may have been sympathetic to a correlative belief system. Regardless of Cyrus’ attitude, political sensibilities (reflected in continued use of the title “king of Anshan”) may have precluded the prominence of a non-traditional, i.e., a non-Elamite, deity. On the other hand, Cyrus may simply not have felt any desire or compulsion to acknowledge Ahura Mazda.

The names of some prominent individuals at this time also reflect Mazdaean and eastern Iranian influence. Darius’ father Vishtaspa (Greek *Hystaspes*) had the same name as Zoroaster’s patron. The name of Cyrus’ daughter Atossa is usually interpreted as of Mazdaean and eastern Iranian origin.⁵⁷ Zoroaster’s homeland was located in eastern Iran, and later Zoroastrian tradition points to eastern Iran as the ancestral homeland of the Iranians.⁵⁸ Other parallels may be cited, but the preceding are generally acknowledged if not wholly accepted. Darius and the Achaemenids’ links to the Mazdaean tradition and eastern Iran should not strike one as coincidences, as Mazdaean and eastern Iranian elements indisputably came to the fore in Darius’ reign. In light of the fact that Cyrus’ family had been entrenched in Fars and immersed in Elamite tradition for at least four generations, when we find eastern Iranian and Mazdaean elements during Cyrus’ time it may be productive to look to Cassandane and the increasing prominence of the Achaemenids as the source.

Notes

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¹ Note the remarks of D. Lewis, “Persians in Herodotus”, in P.J. Rhodes (ed.), *Selected Papers in Greek and Near Eastern History* (Cambridge, 1997), with whom I agree in principle: “The assumption has to be that Herodotus is right, except when he can be shown to be wrong” (p. 345). I would qualify this statement to include also those instances where Herodotus’ testimony is contradictory to our knowledge of ancient Persia.

² DB §2–3 (Old Persian version): *θātiy Dārayavauš xšāyaθiya manā pitā Vištāspa Vištāspahyā pitā Aršāma Aršāmahyā pitā Ariyāramna Ariyāramnahyā pitā Cīšpiš Cīšpāiš pitā Haxāmaniš θātiy Dārayavauš xšāyaθiya avahyarādiy vayam Haxāmanišiyā θahyāmahy*. Old Persian texts and translations herein are after R.G. Kent, *Old Persian: Grammar, Texts, Lexicon* (New Haven, 1953); for the Bisitun Inscription, see also R. Schmitt, *Bisitun: Old Persian Text* (London, 1991).

³ DPe §1 (Old Persian version): *adam Dārayavauš xšāyaθiya vazraka xšāyaθiya xšāyaθiyānām xšāyaθiya dahyūnām tyaišām parūnām Vištāspahyā puça Haxāmanišiya*. The significance of Darius’ titulary will be taken up again later in the paper.

⁴ For the inscriptions, see H. Schaudig, *Die Inschriften Nabonids von Babylon und Kyros’ de Großen*, AOAT 256 (Münster, 2001), 557–61; for discussion see D. Stronach, “Darius at Pasargadae: A Neglected Source for the History of Early Persia”, *Topoi: Orient-Occident*, Suppl. 1 (Lyons, 1997), 351–63; “On the Interpretation of the Pasargadae Inscriptions”, in *Ultra Terminum Vagari: Scritti in onore di Carl Nylander* (Rome, 1997), 323–29; and “Anshan and Parsa: Early Achaemenid History, Art, and Architecture on the Iranian Plateau”, in *Mesopotamia and Iran in the*

- Persian Period: Conquest and Imperialism 539–331 B.C.* (London, 1997), 35–53.
- ⁵ Line 21 of the Cyrus Cylinder; see Schaudig, *Die Inschriften*, 550–56 and A.L. Oppenheim’s translation in, *ANET*, 3rd edition (Princeton, 1969), 315–16.
- ⁶ See, for example, Stronach, “Darius at Pasargadae”, 360–62; A. Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East c. 3000–330 BC*, Vol II (London, 1995), 664–65; and P. Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire* (Winona Lake, 2002), 111 and 138 — (hereafter, *HPE*). Note in particular the detailed discussion of R. Rollinger, “Der Stammbaum des achaimenidischen Königshauses oder die Frage der Legitimität der Herrschaft des Dareios”, *AMIT* 30 (1998), 155–209. For another perspective, see F. Vallat, “Cyrus l’usurpateur,” in *Topoi*, Suppl. 1, 423–34.
- ⁷ Hdt. III.2: ... δὲ ὄτι Κασσανδάνης τῆς Φαρνάσπεω θυγατρὸς ἦν παῖς Καμβύσης, ἀνδρὸς Ἀχαμενίδεω, ἄλλ’ οὐκ ἐκ τῆς Αἰγυπτίας. Translations from Herodotus herein are after D. Green, *The History: Herodotus* (Chicago, 1987).
- ⁸ Brosius, *Women in Ancient Persia, 559–331 BC* (Oxford, 1996), 35–38. See C. Herrenschildt, “Notes sur la parenté chez les Perses au début de l’Empire achéménide”, in H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg and A. Kuhrt (eds.), *Achaemenid History II: The Greek Sources* (Leiden, 1987), 53–67 and Briant, *HPE*, 24 for a general overview of Persian dynastic marriages.
- ⁹ Note the remarks of P. Briant, “La Perse avant l’empire (un état de la question),” *IA* 19 (1984), 74–75, echoed by Brosius, *Women in Ancient Persia*, 42–43, regarding Ktesias’ account as a “Median version” of Cyrus’ conquest. For a translation of the Verse Account of Nabonidus, see Schaudig, *Inschriften*, 563–78; *ANET*, 312–15; and note the discussion of P.A. Beaulieu, *The Reign of Nabonidus, King of Babylon 556–539 B.C.* (New Haven, 1989), 171–72, 206–7, and 214–16.
- ¹⁰ Hdt. II.1: Τελευτησαντος δὲ Κύρου παρέλαβε τὴν Βασιλιήν Καμβύσης, Κύρου ἐὼν παῖς καὶ Κασσανδάνης τῆς Φαρνάσπεω θυγατρὸς τῆς προαποθανούσης Κῦρος αὐτὸς τε μέγα πένθος ἐποιήσατο καὶ τοῖσι ἄλλοισι προεῖπε πᾶσι τῶν ἤρχε πένθος ποιέεσθαι ταύτης δὴ τῆς γυναικὸς ἐὼν παῖς καὶ Κύρου Καμβύσης.
- ¹¹ A.K. Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles*, Texts from Cuneiform Sources, Vol. 5 (Locust Valley, New York, 1975), 110–11, iii 22–24: *ina* IT[I x] ṽaššar¹ šarri mītat^{at} ultu XXVII ša ṽAddari adi UD III šá ṽNisanni bi-ki-tum *ina Akkadī*^{KI} šakna^{at} ni]šū^{MES} gab-bi qaqqad-su-nu ipattarū^{(du₈)MES}. Cassandane died in March, 538. For parallel passages, see Brosius, *Women in Ancient Persia*, Chapter 3.
- ¹² For a summary of the variant versions of Cyrus’ origins in classical literature, see B. Jacobs, “Kyros der Grosse als Geisel am medischen Königshof”, *IA* 31 (1996), 85–100 and Briant, *HPE*, 14–16.
- ¹³ Grayson, *Chronicles*, 106, ii 1–4. The preceding section of the chronicle is broken, so this event may only be dated in or before the sixth year of Nabonidus (i.e., 553 to 549 B.C.); the Sippar Cylinder of Nabonidus indicates that Astyages’ defeat occurred in 553. See Briant, *HPE*, 31–32 for discussion.
- ¹⁴ For the problems with dating the Lydian conquest, see J. Cargill, “The Nabonidus Chronicle and the Fall of Lydia”, *AJAH* 2 (1977), 97–116 and Briant, *HPE*, 34–35.
- ¹⁵ Grayson, *Chronicles*, 109f., iii 12–23.
- ¹⁶ See Briant, *HPE*, 33–34 and 882 for discussion of these traditions.
- ¹⁷ Herodotus related that Cyrus met his death battling the Massagatae in the extreme north-east (I.201–14). Most other versions of Cyrus’ death point to this same area, even if the details diverge; see W.J. Vogelsang, *The Rise and Organisation of the Achaemenid Empire* (Leiden, 1992), 187–89 and Briant, *HPE*, 49–50. The latest Babylonian administrative text dated by Cyrus is 12 August 530 and the first by Cambyses is 31 August 530; see M. Dandamaev, *A Political History of the Achaemenid Empire*, translated by W.J. Vogelsang (Leiden, 1989), 70–71. Details of Cyrus’ activities between the years 539 and 530, the conquest of Babylon and his death in the north-east, are lacking.
- ¹⁸ Vogelsang, *Rise and Organisation*, especially Chapters 1 and 6, contains discussions of the archaeological evidence and references; see also Briant, *HPE*, 38–40, 76–79, and 753–54.
- ¹⁹ For discussion and references, see Vogelsang, *Rise and Organisation*, 58–68; Briant, *HPE*, 76, 892–93, and 1026–27; and Briant, *Bulletin d’histoire achéménide II*, Persika I (Paris, 2001), 162–65.
- ²⁰ Distances gauged from map 94 of the *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World*, ed. R. Talbert (Princeton, 2000). For the difficulties in determining settlement patterns in mid-first millennium B.C.E. Fars, see W. Sumner, “Archaeological measures of cultural continuity and the arrivals of the Persians in Fars”, in H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, A. Kuhrt, and M.C. Root (eds.), *Achaemenid History VIII: Continuity and Change* (Leiden, 1994), 97–105.
- ²¹ Some historians do not view this Cyrus as Cyrus the Great’s grandfather, because of the necessity of assigning the reigns of Cyrus I and Cambyses I to span the period between 646 and 559; e.g., Briant, *HPE*, 17–18 and 878.

- ²² See my “The Earliest Persians in Southwestern Iran: The Textual Evidence”, *Iranian Studies* 32 (1999), 99–107. Compare P. de Miroschedji’s discussion in “La fin du royaume d’Anšan et de Suse et la naissance de l’Empire perse”, *ZA* 75 (1985), 265–306.
- ²³ D.D. Luckenbill, *The Annals of Sennacherib*, OIP 2 (Chicago, 1924), 43 l. 43–44 (both preceded by the determinative KUR).
- ²⁴ R. Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Ashurbanipals* (Wiesbaden, 1996), 191–92.
- ²⁵ For this sealing, see M.B. Garrison and M.C. Root, *Achaemenid History IX: Persepolis Seal Studies* (Leiden, 1996), 6–7 and fig. 2a–c.
- ²⁶ See Schaudig, *Inschriften*, 409–40 and Beaulieu, *Nabonidus*, 108.
- ²⁷ O.E. Hagan, “Keilschrifturkunden zur Geschichte des Königs Cyrus”, *Beiträge zur Assyriologie* 2 (1894), 257 for the text and 214–15 for the transliteration; Schaudig, *Inschriften*, 548.
- ²⁸ C.J. Gadd *et al.*, *Ur Excavation Texts* (London, 1927), Vol. I — Plates, pl. 194 for the text and Vol. I — Texts, p. 58 for the transliteration; Schaudig, *Inschriften*, 549.
- ²⁹ Grayson, *Chronicles*, 106–7. The alteration “king of Anshan” and “king of Persia” does not appear to be historically significant; compare F. Vallat, “Cyrus l’usurpateur”, 428.
- ³⁰ S. Smith, *Babylonian Historical Texts* (Chicago, 1924), 85, v 4 and plate VIII and Schaudig, *Inschriften*, 569.
- ³¹ Usually the conjunctive title “king of Babylon, king of lands” was used, but sometimes one or the other appears alone; see Dandamaev, *Political History*, 55 n. 9. Regarding the evolution of this titulary, see A. Kuhrt and S. Sherwin-White, “Xerxes’ Destruction of Babylonian Temples”, in *Achaemenid History II*, 72–73 and F. Joannes, “La titulature de Xerxès”, *Nouvelles assyriologiques brèves et utilitaires* 1989 no. 2, p. 25.
- ³² A.K. Grayson, *Babylonian Historical Literary Texts* (Toronto, 1975), 25 and 32–33.
- ³³ The dynamics of the Persian-Elamite synthesis in Fars is a topic beyond the scope of this article. Is it possible that the title “king of Anshan” was used consciously as a variation of the traditional Elamite title “king of Anshan and Susa”? At the least, it would have recalled a key component of the traditional title that in itself encapsulated a glorious, Elamite past. For a brief discussion of Elamite titulary, see F. Malbran-Labat, *Les Inscriptions royales de Suse: Briques de l’époque paléo-élamite à l’Empire néo-élamite* (Paris, 1995), 176–79.
- ³⁴ See, among others, D. Stronach, *Pasargadae* (Oxford, 1978), 52–54; Miroschedji, “La fin du royaume”, 299–300; and E. Carter, “Bridging the gap between the Elamites and the Persians in Southeastern Khuzistan”, *Achaemenid History VIII*, 65–95.
- ³⁵ Grayson, *Chronicles*, 111, iii 24–28. This passage has been understood in various ways (e.g., Dandamaev, *Political History*, 56–57 and references). The interpretation here reflects A.R. George’s collations and discussion, “Studies in Cultic Topography and Ideology”, *BiOr* 53 (1996), 379–80. See also A. Kuhrt, “Some Thoughts on P. Briant, *Histoire de l’empire perse*”, *Topoi*, Suppl. 1 (1997), 300–2. The temple was the É.GIDAR.KALAM.MA.SUM.MA “House which Bestows the Sceptre of the Land” (A.R. George, *House Most High: The Temples of Ancient Mesopotamia* [Winona Lake, 1993], 132–33.)
- ³⁶ See also p. 4 and n. 22.
- ³⁷ There are no extant Mesopotamian or Elamite royal inscriptions, and thus no knowledge of formal titulary, of Cambyses (r. 530–522). The Akkadian version of the Bisitun Inscription (line 12, DB §10) identifies Cambyses as “king of Persia, king of lands” (as is typical in Babylonian economic texts dating to Cambyses’ reign): LUGAL ¹par¹-su LUGAL KUR.KUR. The Old Persian and Elamite versions note only that “he was king here” (DB, Old Persian, i 29: *hauvam idā xšāyaθiya āha*) and that “he held the kingship” (DB, Elamite, i 23: *SUNKI-me marriš*). Egyptian texts name Cambyses “King of Upper and Lower Egypt” and “son of Re” (both as expected) as well as “The Great King of All Foreign Lands”; see, for example, G. Posener, *La Première domination perse en Égypte* (Cairo, 1936), 7, 28, and 36. Note also the discussion of A.B. Lloyd, “The Inscription of Udjahorresnet: A Collaborator’s Testament”, *JEA* 68 (1982), 166–80.
- ³⁸ See Briant, *HPE*, 132–33.
- ³⁹ See Briant, *HPE*, 18–19 and 111.
- ⁴⁰ Non-royal individuals whom Herodotus labelled as “Achaemenid” are Hystaspes (I.209), Pharnaspes (III.2), Sataspes (IV.43), Megabates (V.32), Tigranes (VII.62) and Artachaees (VII.117).
- ⁴¹ Hdt. VII.11: *μη γὰρ εἶην ἐκ Δαρείου τοῦ Υστάσπετος τοῦ Ἀρσάμεος τοῦ Ἀριαράμινω τοῦ Τεῖσπεος τοῦ Κύρου τοῦ Καμβύσεω τοῦ Τεῖσπεος τοῦ Ἀχαμένεος γεγονώς* ... Notably, Darius is the first of nine kings in Xerxes’ recitation, a direct echo of DB §4 and DBa, wherein Darius claimed to be the ninth king in succession; see Rollinger, “Der Stammbaum”, 189–99 and especially pp. 193ff.
- ⁴² For the inscriptions of Ariaramnes and Arsames, see Briant, *HPE*, 16 and 877; compare Vallat, “Cyrus l’usurpa-

- teur” and P. Lecoq, *Les inscriptions de la Perse achéménide* (France, 1997), 126 (with qualification).
- ⁴³ DB §35 (Old Persian): *hauv Parθavaīy āha avam kāra avaharda hamičiya abava*. Elamite: ^vMištašpa ^uattata ^hPartumaš šarir hupiri ^{taššup} ir maztemaša beptip. Akkadian: ^mUštasi AD-ū-a ina ^{KUR}Partū ašibma uqu lapanišu ana ^mParmartiš ittalku.
- ⁴⁴ Hdt. III.139: καὶ λόγου οὐδενός κω μεγάλου. Plato stated outright that Darius was not the son of a king (*Laws* 695c). For further discussion, see Briant, *HPE*, 108–12. Note also that Aelian, *Varia Historia* XII.43 identified Darius as a “quiver-bearer” (φαρμακρόφορον) for Cyrus.
- ⁴⁵ For the Bisitun relief, see Schmitt, *Bisitun*, pl. 5. For DNc (Naqsh-i Rostam) see R. Schmitt, *The Old Persian Inscriptions of Naqsh-i Rostam and Persepolis* (London, 2000), 45 and plate 22.
- ⁴⁶ See Briant’s discussion, *HPE*, 107–12.
- ⁴⁷ See Briant, *HPE*, 132–35 and Brosius, *Women in Ancient Persia*, 53–54. If the Otanes, son of Thukhra, of the Seven was an Achaemenid, this identification would offer more intriguing possibilities of the links between Cyrus’ family and the Achaemenids. However, Otanes is nowhere identified as an Achaemenid; like the other six helpers of Darius, he is identified in the Bisitun Inscription only as a Persian. This, though, does not preclude a link to the Achaemenid clan.
- ⁴⁸ Note W. Brandenstein and M. Mayrhofer’s definition of *taumā-*, *Handbuch des Altpersischen* (Wiesbaden, 1964), 145: “Geschlecht, Sippe, Familie, Nachkommenschaft”. Compare the Akkadian *ša zēriya* “of my line (literally ‘seed’)” and the Elamite NUMUN.meš *nukami* “of our line”. See Rollinger, “Der Stammbaum”, 183–86.
- ⁴⁹ Herodotus records that another of the Seven, Otanes, was active in the conquest of Samos (III.141–49); see Briant, *HPE*, 122.
- ⁵⁰ Since Intaphernes is still named in the Bisitun Inscription, his fall from grace (Hdt. III.118–19) presumably occurred after 519. See Briant, *HPE*, 128–37 for a discussion of Darius’ six co-conspirators.
- ⁵¹ See p. 6 and n. 43.
- ⁵² This Dadarshi was different than the homonymous individual, an Armenian, who was sent against rebels in Armenia (DB §26).
- ⁵³ DNc §2 and DSe §2 (Old Persian version): *adam Darayavauš xšāyaθiya vazraka xšāyaθiya xšāyaθiyānām xšāyaθiya dahyūnām vispazanānām xšāyaθiya ahyāyā būmiyā vazrakāyā dūraiapiy Vištāspahyā puça Haxāmanišiya Pārsa Pārsahyā puça Ariya Ariya čiça* “I am Darius the Great King, King of Kings, King of countries containing all kinds of men, King in this great earth far and wide, son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenid, a Persian, son of a Persian, an Aryan, having Aryan lineage”; Kent, *Old Persian*, 138 and 142 and Schmitt, *Old Persian Inscriptions*, 25 and 30 (DNc §2).
- ⁵⁴ See, for example, the seminal treatment of M. Cool Root, *The King and Kingship in Achaemenid Art* (Leiden, 1979) and *HPE*, Chapters 5–6 (with references). Note that there is not unanimity on the question of the creation of the Old Persian script, see, for example, Vallat, “Cyrus l’usurpateur” and P. Lecoq, *Les inscriptions*, 77 and 85–87.
- ⁵⁵ For some of the broader implications of the “Aryan” (Iranian) character of Achaemenid ideology, a complex issue, see G. Gnoli, *The Idea of Iran: An Essay on Its Origin* (Roma, 1989), Chapters 1–3.
- ⁵⁶ See G. Gnoli, *Zoroaster in History* (New York, 2000) for discussion and references.
- ⁵⁷ M. Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism*, Vol. II (Leiden, 1982), 41. Mazdaean and eastern Iranian etymologies have been proposed for other names, but many are of dubious or uncertain value (e.g., Cambyses). See the discussion of Vogelsang, *Rise and Organisation*, 306 for possible eastern connections of the Achaemenids in general and note J. Harmatta, “The Rise of the Old Persian Empire — Cyrus the Great”, *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 19 (1971), 1–15.
- ⁵⁸ Dandamaev, *Political History*, 36–37 contains summary and references for the location of Zoroaster’s homeland in Drangiana; compare G. Gnoli, *Zoroaster’s Time and Homeland. A Study on the Origins of Mazdeism and Related Problems* (Naples, 1980). See also the remarks of T. Cuyler Young, “Early Iron Age Iran Revisited: Preliminary Suggestions for the Re-analysis of Old Constructs”, in J.L. Huot *et al.* (eds), *De l’Indus aux Balkans: Recueil à la Mémoire de Jean Deshayes* (Paris, 1985), 369 and Gnoli, *Zoroaster in History*, 50 and 84 n. 42.