The Empire with a Thousand Faces

State & Subject at the End of the Achaemenid Empire

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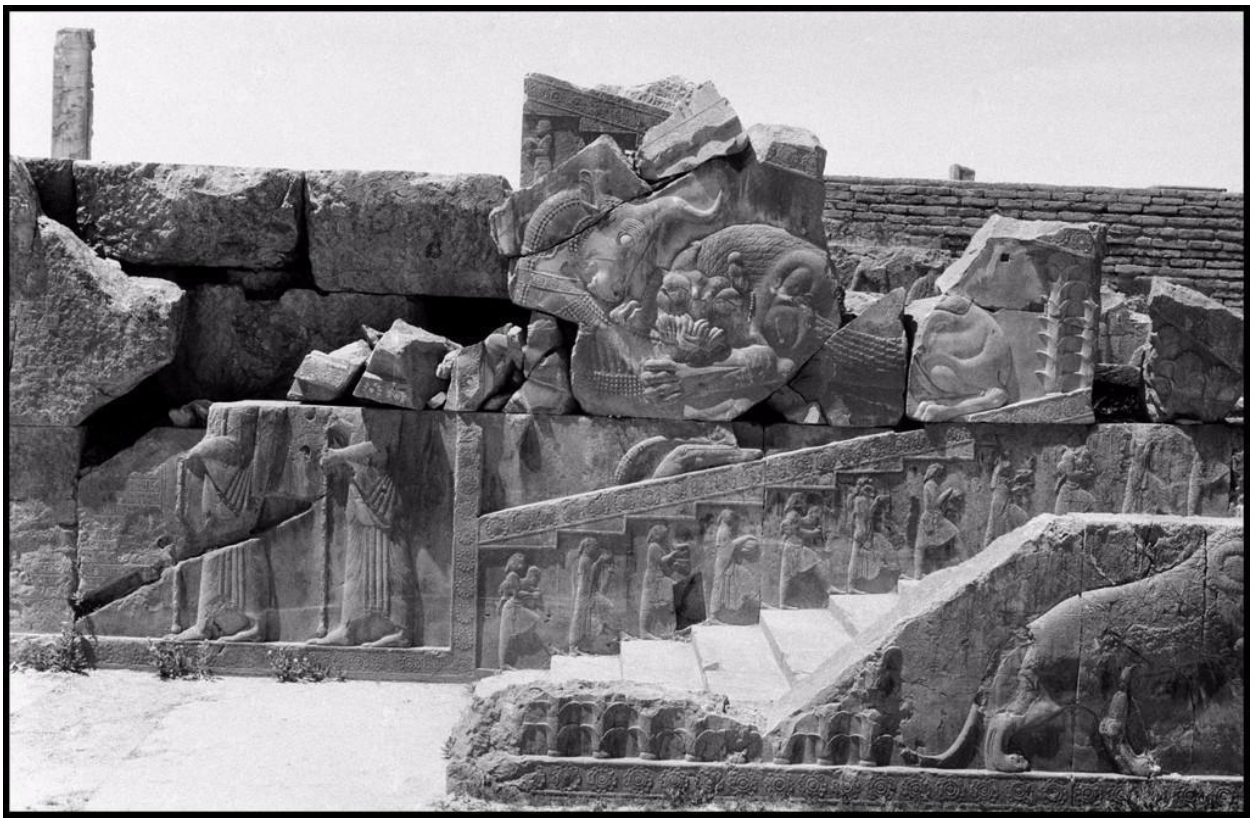
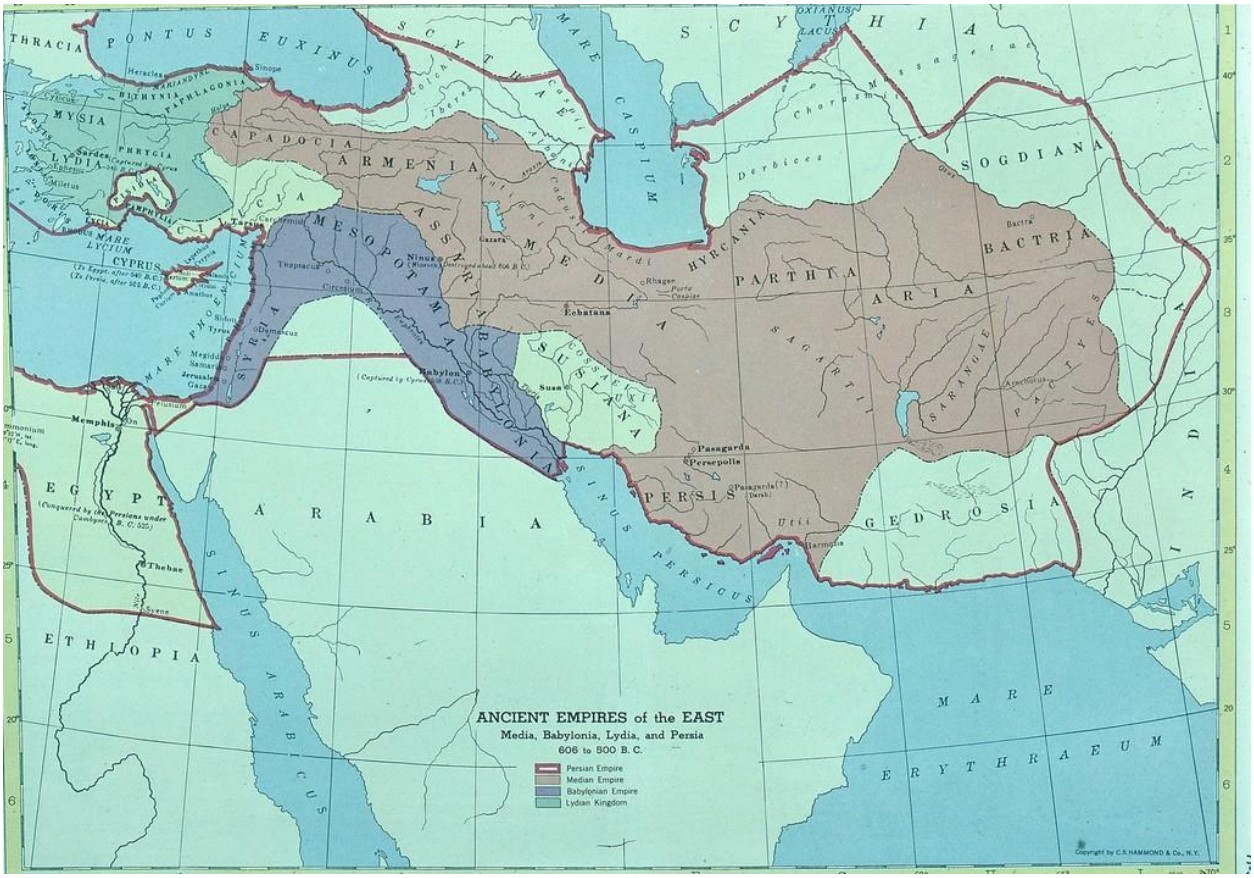


Persepolis, the capital of the Achaemenid Empire, burned in 330 BCE. The man who gave the order to raze Persepolis was a petty king named Alexander of Macedon, more commonly known as Alexander the Great. When prompted to explain why he wanted to burn the storied Achaemenid capital, one of his many ancient chroniclers reports that "he wanted to pay back the Persians, who, when they invaded Greece, had razed Athens and burned the temples, and to exact retribution for all the other wrongs they had committed against the Greeks." However, this historian, a man named Arrian of Nicomedia, though otherwise laudatory of Alexander, takes issue with this explanation, saying "it seems to me, however, that in doing this Alexander was not acting sensibly, nor do I think there could be any punishment for Persians of a bygone era."[1]

[1] "ἀλλ᾽ οὐδ᾽ ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ σὺν νῷ δρᾶσαι τοῦτό γε Ἀλέξανδρος οὐδὲ εἶναί τις αὕτη Περσῶν τῶν πάλαι τιμωρία." Arr. *Anab.* 3.18.12

Who were these Persians of a bygone era who merited such severe punishment? Persepolis had served as the capital of the Achaemenid Persian Empire for almost two-hundred years since the city's founding in 515 BCE. The Achaemenid Empire was the largest empire the world had ever seen up to that point and held that distinction by orders of magnitude. Being twice as large as its immediate predecessor, the Median Empire, and four times the size of the prior Neo-Assyrian Empire, the Achaemenid Empire changed the scale of human civilization. Where before a state could be considered large if it stretched from Iraq to Egypt, the Empire of the Achaemenids dominated an entire section of the globe. The Achaemenid monarchs ruled a territory which extended from Bulgaria to Pakistan, from Libya to Uzbekistan. Not only that, but they ruled this state for over two centuries from 550 – 330 BCE. There have been many large empires throughout history. There have been many long-lived empires. Very few have been both.



Yet, despite its size and longevity, a state that encompassed the entire middle east for two hundred years was wiped off the face of the Earth in a mere five. The empire had been brought to its knees by a monarch of an ascendant but still minor power. Alexander "the Great" had inherited the Macedonian kingdom his father, Philip II, had built into the dominant state in Greece and, executing the plans that his father had originally laid, led one of the most successful and famous campaigns in all human history. When Persepolis burned to the ground in 330 BCE, the Achaemenid Empire was near the end of its erasure. The last undisputed Achaemenid monarch, Darius III, after being defeated in two successive battles at Issus and Gaugamela, was in full flight. The imperial capital at Persepolis was left mostly defenseless in the wake of the man who had made it his mission to destroy the Achaemenid Empire and conquer the rest of Asia besides. In the span of a mere five years, from 334 – 329 BCE Alexander had crossed the Hellespont on the European side of modern Turkey and marched his army as far as Egypt in the south and Afghanistan in the east. After his defeat at Gaugamela, Darius III would be killed during his flight, and by the time Alexander entered the city of Marakanda, modern Samarkand, in 329 BCE, the Achaemenid Empire was all but gone. The largest and most powerful empire the world had ever seen was utterly wiped off the map.

However, if you were to read an older history, they would argue that the Achaemenid State had been in decline for much longer than that. After the initial conquests of the dynasty's founder, Cyrus the Great, and his son Cambyses, as well as the further additions and consolidations of Darius the Great who founded Persepolis to serve as the empire's formal capital, the dynasty gave way to decadence and unrestrained despotism beginning with Darius' son Xerxes I. These older historians would attribute this decline, in part, to the defeat of the Persians in their wars with the *poleis* of Greece between 499 – 449 BCE, led especially by

Athens and Sparta. The stunning upsets levied against the Persians at the battles of Salamis, Marathon, Plataea, and Thermopylae, shook the Achaemenid state to its core. The history of the remaining 120 years of Achaemenid history is of a slow stagnation and decay, finally brought to an end with the empire's conquest by Alexander, who cleared the empire's rotting foundation to make way for the Hellenistic Period. This is what an older historian might argue.

This is an interpretation that can only be believed if you take the Greeks themselves at their word and make no attempt to corroborate their claims. In the last fifty years, modern historians have reappraised the Hellenic narrative, and found a much more internally robust Achaemenid state than was formerly believed. Despite what the Greeks themselves may have thought, like the Athenian playwright Aeschylus who portrayed the Persian's defeat at the battle of Salamis as a national tragedy with the whole of Persia lamenting the defeat, the Greco-Persian wars did not deliver a mortal blow to the Achaemenid state. On the contrary, while the Achaemenids may have lost the war, they outlasted the victorious Athens and Sparta. The democracy of Athens which had led the Greek states through the conflict would be forcibly dissolved in 404 BCE by a coalition of those same poleis after the Athenians had leveraged their superior position to become despots in their own right. At the head of this anti-Athenian alliance was Sparta, although they would follow the same path as Athens, creating a harsh hegemony of their own, even openly allying with the Achaemenids to that effect. However, Sparta too would fall from grace, after being defeated by the city of Thebes at the battle of Leuctra in 371 BCE. All the while the Achaemenid state persevered. Though they would lose control of Egypt in 404 BCE, by the time of Alexander's arrival they had reconquered the rebel kingdom. Likewise, the King's Peace, drafted by the Achaemenid king Artaxerxes III and signed by Athens, Sparta, and

many other notable Greek poleis, reasserted Persian control over Aegean territories lost some hundred years prior and made the Achaemenids the effective arbiters of Greek politics.

Not only was the Achaemenid Empire far more resilient, it was also not quite the despotate that had been presented by ancient historians. While Herodotus in his *Histories* defined a simplified and idealized Persian administration, with its possessions broken up into a series of regular provinces, each under the governance of a satrap—the realities were far more complex. Vincent Gabrielsen, in his 2008 article, *Provincial Challenges to the Imperial Centre in Achaemenid and Seleucid Asia Minor,* notably contrasted the uniform despotism of the Achaemenids, "driven forth by a grand vision of universal rule personified by a valiant, just, caring and godlike monarch," with the imperialism of Athens which had "no provinces, as we know them, to be defended, pleased or punished; only a large number of subject polities."[2] However such a statement is more useful for the assumptions displayed than any proposed insights, demonstrating how the Hellenic narrative still continues to inform our understanding of the Achaemenids or their rule. Counter to Herodotus and Gabrielsen, Achaemenid rule was epitomized by cooperation with native power-structures where possible. The satraps did not necessarily rule territories with fixed borders but peoples. The *dahyava* which appear in the language of internal Achaemenid administration were not regions but nations, and unlike later empires, like the Roman Empire with which they are erroneously equated by Gabrielsen, the Achaemenids made little effort to alter indigenous customs or modes of power. Gabrielsen does acknowledge the Achaemenids' internal variation and complexity, however nonetheless makes the fatal mistake of assuming these local structures to be somehow less formal than the satrapal

[2] Vincent Gabrielsen, "Provincial Challenges to the Imperial Centre in Achaemenid and Seleucid Asia Minor," in *The Province Strikes Back: Imperial Dynamics in the Eastern Mediterranean*, ed. Björn Forsén and Giovanni Salmeri (Helsinki: Suomen Ateenan-instituutin säätiö, 2008), 18.

framework, continuing to accept as a baseline the regularity of the system presented by Herodotus.[3] However, these local relationships were neither unusual nor informal. The Achaemenid state was far more porous than its Herodotean incarnation, riddled with semi-independent tribes and vassal states. The status of native nobles or oligarchs was no less official than that of the satraps that oversaw them. Native powerbrokers and Achaemenid officials together formed a vast administration in a state of unprecedented size. Perhaps out of necessity, rather than attempt to create a uniform imperial culture, Achaemenid imperial propaganda was based on a rhetoric of multiculturalism. The Achaemenid monarchs were Kings of Kings, a title specially intended to aggrandize the size of their realm and the many nations it included.

This thesis will look at three such regions—Ionia, Egypt and Bactria—examining their responses to the arrival of Alexander and the collapse of Achaemenid power in the context of each's particular history. Rather than expressing uniform gratitude toward Alexander for delivering them from subjugation by a tyrannical regime, the varied and often hostile reactions to Alexander's invasion provide insight into the existing attitudes toward the Achaemenids from amongst their own subjects. Beginning first with Ionia on the western coast of Anatolia we will examine how the Asiatic Greeks subject to the Achaemenid Empire viewed their overlords in light of their parallel affiliations with their theoretical kinsmen on the Greek mainland, often with both sets of relationships being equally fraught, and how this created an inconsistent and divided reception to Alexander. Moving on to Egypt, though Alexander's time in the province was brief he set off a centuries' long period of Hellenic rule in Egypt, and viewing the region through the much wider chronological lens afforded by the relative abundance of extant records, we will see how the limits of the Greco-Roman perspective has unfairly maligned the Persian

[3] Gabrielsen, 20.

period in favor of its Ptolemaic successor, while Achaemenid rule in Egypt was both more stable and respectful of native customs than the latter period. Finally, the Bactrian rebellion of 329 – 327 BCE, which broke out at the end of Alexander's Achaemenid conquest constitutes the most significant popular resistance to Alexander's conquest, and an analysis of the local Bactrian nobility both before and during the revolt reveals how the Achaemenid system incentivized their active collaboration with the imperial administration, both in matters domestic and abroad. The consistent theme between all of them, though their reactions manifested differently from region to region, is that the Achaemenid system does not prove to be one not of outright repression but cooperation, or alternatively collusion, with existing local power structures in whatever form they may take.

Historiography

The scholarly study of Achaemenid Persia is a relatively recent phenomenon. While new interest has been taken in the previously neglected empire in the last half-century, the focus of this scholarship has been primarily centered on the imperial core in Fars. A handful of scholars loom large. The field has been and continues to be dominated by the work of Pierre Briant as well as Amelie-Kuhrt. Briant's writings in particular have informed much of the discussion around Achaemenid history for the past half century.[1] In terms of the study of Alexander, A. B. Bosworth has a similar status to that of Briant. Given that much of the study of the Achaemenid Empire still comes from a Greco-Roman background, there has been significant cross pollination between the study of Alexander's campaigns and the Achaemenid Empire as a whole, as one might expect.

Alexander's conquest of the Achaemenid Empire is perhaps the most well attested moment in classical history. The events of Alexander's campaign are so thoroughly recorded that the study of his life is practically a field unto itself. More crucially for this paper, the campaign resulted in a brief explosion in the written sources available through which one can view the totality of the Achaemenid Empire. That said, the record is still far from perfect. The great distances, both in terms of space and time, between the events and their recording create significant confusion and contradiction within the corpus of texts. There were several histories written during Alexander's lifetime or shortly thereafter, though none survive to the present day.[2]

[1] Unfortunately a key limiting factor in my study of this topic so far is a lack of language facility in French, in which Briant wrote a great deal of his scholarship, such as *L'Asie Centrale*. I have been able to engage with its ideas through intermediaries.

[2] The most prominent among these were Kallisthenes' *Deeds of Alexander*, Kallisthenes being Alexander's court historian, the account of Aristoboulus, as well as the histories of Nearchus and Onesicritus, see Heckel & Yardley, 2004.

Instead, five later historians form the basis for most of the study of Alexander: Arrian, Quintus Curtius Rufus, Diodorus Siculus, Plutarch, and Justin. The earliest, Diodorus Siculus' *Bibliotheca Historia*, which attempts to record the entirety of human history, was written only in the latter first century BCE. Unfortunately, while Book 17, the book which records the life of Alexander, is rather extensive, the portion from 330 to 326 BCE is lost. This includes the entirety of the Bactrian rebellion (329-327 BCE). Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* is a biographical work and not a history first and foremost, limiting its use as a source. Justin's work, though written in the late-second/early-third century CE, is an epitome of Pompeius Trogus' *Historicae Phillipicae* written at around the same time as Diodorus' *Bibliotheca* (1st century BCE). However, the epitome itself is riddled with errors which makes it a source best used sparingly.[3] Curtius' *Historiae Alexandri Magni* is the only full-length Latin history of Alexander, although some portions are lost, particularly its first two books, covering Alexander's campaign in Ionia. These four sources all seem to rely, to varying degrees, on a history written shortly after Alexander's death by Cleitarchus, whose father Deinon of Colophon had himself written a Persian history that survives in some fragments. Though Cleitarchus is not likely to have witnessed Alexander's campaign himself, he probably consulted the histories of Nearchus and Onesicritus who were present, as well as veterans of the campaigns settled in Alexandria.[4] Cleitarchus' history tended toward the sensational and perhaps for that reason became the most popular account of the conquest. This sensationalism harms the factual certainty of the histories that use him, which is why these histories (Curtius, Diodorus, Justin, Plutarch) are referred to as the *vulgate* histories.

[3] Waldemar Heckel and J. C. Yardley, introduction to *Alexander the Great: Historical Sources in Translation* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), xxii.
[4] Heckel and Yardley, xxiii.

The darling of modern Alexander historians has for the longest time been Arrian's *Anabasis of Alexander*. Though Arrian has seen some reappraisal more recently, his choice of sources has led many scholars to prefer his account. Rather than basing his history on Cleitarchus, Arrian relied mostly on the account of Ptolemy (founder of the Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt) who was a member of Alexander's staff during his campaign.[5] Though Ptolemy likely wrote his account well after the death of Alexander, it is nonetheless one of the best (and only) eye-witness accounts. That said, Arrian's reliance on Ptolemy has led to some historians overstepping how much we can regard one as the other. Often times Arrian's history is referred to as Arrian/Ptolemy, both depriving Arrian of authorial agency and ignoring some of the errors present in Arrian, as well as in Ptolemy's account itself.[6] To these Alexander focused historians we can add Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, and Ctesias, all of whom, to varying degrees, give some insight into the history of the Achaemenid Empire prior to Alexander's invasion. However, all these historians have their own deficiencies. Herodotus and Ctesias are both victim to similar charges of sensationalism which limits how much one can trust their accounts word for word. Ctesias' *Persica* is also mostly lost, preserved only in summaries and quotations by other authors, the most significant for this thesis being the Byzantine Patriarch Photius' epitome of Ctesias' work found in his *Bibliotheca* (820-893 CE). Thucydides is factually more rigorous, though his *History of the Peloponnesian War* is primarily concerned with events in the Hellenic sphere, making him less helpful for analysis of the inner workings of the empire. Xenophon contributes two works to the study of the Achaemenid Empire. The first is his *Anabasis*, a sort of memoir from his time in the service of the Achaemenid usurper Cyrus the Younger. Though

[5] A. B. Bosworth, preface to *A Historical Commentary on Arrian's History of Alexander*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), v.
[6] Bosworth, x.

limited by its somewhat biographical focus, it offers a critical glimpse into the center of the Achaemenid state at the end of the fifth century BCE. The second is his *Hellenika,* following Greek history from where Thucydides' history concludes, it is similarly Hellenocentric, although Xenophon's personal experience with the Achaemenid Empire gives him somewhat more authority to speak on the internal machinations of Achaemenid officials.

Archeologically speaking, each region presents its own unique opportunities and challenges which will be addressed in the pertinent sections. However, Achaemenid archeology in general is far from the most well studied. The early part of the empire has been given a great deal of attention. This is thanks in large part to the artifacts recovered from Persepolis, such as the Fortification Tablets, which detail aspects of central administration in the early Empire; as well as the great mountainside inscriptions, such as the famous inscription at Bisitun, a practice which ceases during the later empire. The archeology of the Achaemenid frontiers is particularly problematic. Due to the Achaemenid imperial philosophy, which did not require the kind of cultural conversion in more standardized empires such as the later Roman Empire, the Achaemenid nature of an object is not always obvious unless it has some clearly Persian feature of its design. This makes the Achaemenid presence difficult to track from an archeological perspective as objects created under Achaemenid rule rarely bear the marks of their dominion. However, this lack has at times been taken too far, with archeologists tending not to date objects to the Achaemenid period unless presented with those rare verifiably Persian qualities. This in turn leads to a dearth of material, exaggerated by modern misdating.

Much of the interest in Alexander's campaigns still focuses on the following Hellenistic period, leaving its ramifications in relation to the Achaemenid period comparatively understudied. While the advent of the Macedonian Empire, and collapse of the Achaemenid, in

the Near East fundamentally frames the discussion in this thesis, it is nonetheless with the intent to look back and not ahead. Rather than anticipating a Hellenistic world soon to come, the coming of Alexander will be used to see what he ended, not what he began. The reaction to Alexander can speak a great deal about what his coming meant: what opportunities he created and what systems he threatened.

Ionia: Hegemonic Hypocrisy

Ionia was a two-fold frontier. Being in one respect Greek, in another eastern, Ionia was positioned at the confluence of these two cultural spheres. It was the Hellenic world's main access point to Anatolia and the Near East in general, however, the reverse was also true. While the Greeks may have traded with Egypt and Phoenicia, Ionia was where the Greek community was made the most accessible to the non-Greek peoples of the Near East. One need look no further than the Persian term for the Greeks—*Yauna,* a likely derivative of the Greek *Ἴωνες*—to see the influence.[1] For that reason, it was just as often the main battleground between the Greeks and the hegemonic Achaemenid Persian Empire. While the narrative of cultural warfare between the Greeks and Persians is in most respects outmoded, it cannot be denied that it was a narrative which held weight among the Greeks of the time, and Ionia was where the driving impetus of that call to arms was most vigorously and destructively manifested.

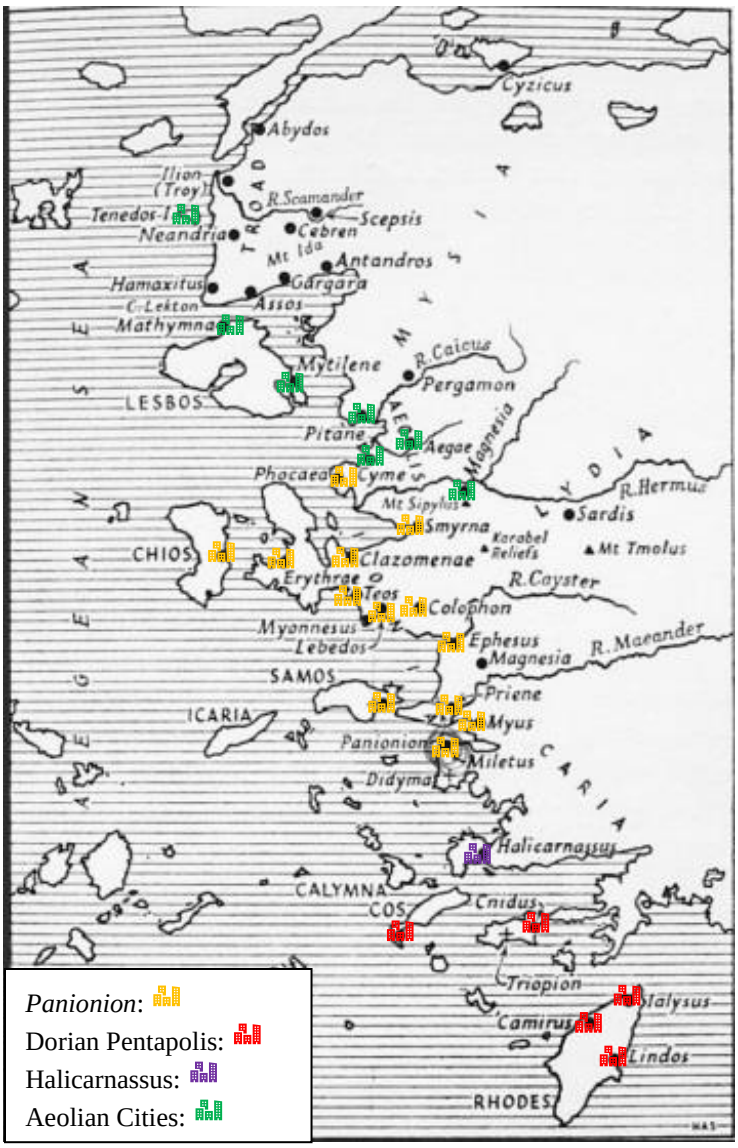
Ionia's position as a cultural conjunction was tempered by how often it served as a battleground instead. Because of Ionia's placement, it was often under the domination of other groups. Even before the arrival of the Persians, the Lydian kingdom had for generations attempted to subordinate the Ionian cities with some success. During the classical period the Ionians were often subject to the Achaemenid state, beginning with the cities' conquest by Cyrus in the 540's BCE. However, the Ionians were just as often dominated by other Greeks. First the Athenians, then the Spartans, brought the Ionians under their yoke, all the while professing a desire to "liberate" the oppressed Asiatic Greeks. When Alexander crossed the Hellespont in 334 BCE, offering similar promises of liberation, the Ionians had learned to suspect such altruism.

[1] Silvia Balatti, "Yaⱡnā and Sakā: Identity Constructions at the Margins of the Achaemenid Empire," *Studia Orientalia Electronica* 9, no. 2 (December 30, 2021): 143, https://doi.org/10.23993/store.89975.

Rather than acting like grateful Greeks delivered from the despotism of the Persian state, the Ionians' ambivalence to Alexander reflects a far more complicated relationship, both with the Achaemenids and the Greeks themselves.

There were other Greek colonies in Asia, especially along the Black Sea coast. What made Ionia different was that it was considered a core part of Hellas as it was envisioned in the Classical Period, co-equal in most respects to the poleis of the mainland. Ionia was a key part of the migration myth that developed during the Classical Period, wherein the three main Greek ethnic groups—the Dorians, Aeolians, and Ionians—were descended from three branches of a single family.[2] The distinction between Ionian, Dorian, and Aeolian poleis was primarily a linguistic one, referring to the primary dialect spoken, connoting aspects of ethnic heritage corresponding to mainland antecedents. In the case of Ionia, the cities shared bonds of kinship with Athens and its region of Attica, at least in principle. This supposed consanguinity would be called upon by the Athenians in particular to justify their imperial enterprise in Ionia, and more generally, the central positioning of Ionia within the Hellenic cultural geography made its subjugation a perennial justification for aspiring mainland politicians to make a name for themselves campaigning in Anatolia. However, counter to mainland Hellenic sentiments, Ionia was just as indelibly tied to its notably non-Greek hinterland. The Lydians, Lycians, Phrygians, and Carians that bordered Ionia played into the region's politics, culture, even language. According to tradition the city of Ephesus was originally founded by Amazons, not Greeks. Likewise, the citizens of Miletus stole Carian women to be their brides. Ionia was a place where the notions of Hellenism were challenged, changed, and muddied—but never truly abandoned.

[2] Naoíse Mac Sweeney, *Foundation Myths and Politics in Ancient Ionia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 157.



In terms of geography, Ionia was a largely coastal phenomenon: a constellation of cities along the Aegean coast of modern Turkey. The term Ionia had a very specific meaning in the Hellenic world. The *Panionion,* the league which defined the bounds of Ionia proper, consisted of only twelve cities. Following Herodotus' description, from south to north, they were: Miletus, Myus, Priene, Ephesus, Colophon, Lebedos, Teos, Clazomenae, Phocaea, Erythrae, the islands of Chios and Samos, as well as the city of Smyrna (admitted later).[3] For the sake of this thesis, we will be more generous with what constituted "Ionia" than the Ionians themselves would have been, including other Greek settlements on the Asiatic Aegean. In particular, the

[3] "οἱ δὲ Ἴωνες οὗτοι, τῶν καὶ τὸ Πανιώνιον ἐστί, τοῦ μὲν οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῶν ὡρέων ἐν τῷ καλλίστῳ ἐτύγχανον ἱδρυσάμενοι πόλιας πάντων ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν: οὔτε γὰρ τὰ ἄνω αὐτῆς χωρία τὠυτὸ ποιέει τῇ Ἰωνίῃ οὔτε τὰ κάτω οὔτε τὰ πρὸς τὴν ἠῶ οὔτε τὰ πρὸς τὴν ἑσπέρην, τὰ μὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ ψυχροῦ τε καὶ ὑγροῦ πιεζόμενα, τὰ δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ θερμοῦ τε καὶ αὐχμώδεος. γλῶσσαν δὲ οὐ τὴν αὐτὴν οὗτοι νενομίκασι, ἀλλὰ τρόπους τέσσερας παραγωγέων. Μίλητος μὲν αὐτέων πρώτη κέεται πόλις πρὸς μεσαμβρίην, μετὰ δὲ Μυοῦς τε καὶ Πριήνη. αὗται μὲν ἐν τῇ Καρίῃ κατοίκηνται κατὰ ταὐτὰ διαλεγόμεναι σφίσι, αἵδε δὲ ἐν τῇ Λυδίῃ, Ἔφεσος Κολοφὼν Λέβεδος Τέως Κλαζομεναὶ Φώκαια: αὗται δὲ αἱ πόλιες τῇσι πρότερον λεχθείσῃσι ὁμολογέουσι κατὰ γλῶσσαν οὐδέν, σφισι δὲ ὁμοφωνέουσι. ἔτι δὲ τρεῖς ὑπόλοιποι Ἰάδες πόλιες, τῶν αἱ δύο μὲν νήσους οἰκέαται, Σάμον τε καὶ Χίον, ἡ δὲ μία ἐν τῇ ἠπείρῳ ἵδρυται, Ἐρυθραί. Χῖοι μέν νυν καὶ Ἐρυθραῖοι κατὰ τὠυτὸ διαλέγονται, Σάμιοι δὲ ἐπ᾽ ἑωυτῶν μοῦνοι. οὗτοι χαρακτῆρες γλώσσης τέσσερες γίνονται." Hdt. 1.142.3-4; Smyrna: "οὐδ᾽ ἐδεήθησαν δὲ οὐδαμοὶ μετασχεῖν ὅτι μὴ Σμυρναῖοι" Hdt. 1.143.3

Dorian pentapolis of Lindus, Ialysus, Camirus, Cos, and Cnidus as well as the city of Halicarnassus to the south, and the Aeolian cities of Mysia, and the Troad to the north.

The Anatolian highlands to the east were occupied by the Lydians, Carians, Lycians and others. Though often engaging with the Greek world, these groups were not necessarily considered Greek in the same way the Ionians themselves were, as they lay on the outside of the largely linguistic border between Greeks and "Barbarians" (*βάρβαροι*). That said, the Greeks of Ionia intermixed substantially with Anatolian populations. Herodotus claimed that there were linguistic variations between the Ionian cities, with Miletus being influenced by local Carians, Ephesus by the Lydians, and so on. While Herodotus' claims have yet to be corroborated by epigraphic evidence, the historian's own city of Halicarnassus was substantially cosmopolitan with a mixed Greco-Carian population that, despite its roots as a Dorian colony, had Ionian as its primary spoken dialect.[4] The highlands themselves serve as the source for a series of rivers flowing out into the Aegean—namely the Hermus, Cayster, and Maeander—creating striations of alternating mountains and river-valleys running east to west.[5] This makes the Aegean a critical avenue of north-south movement. The rivers as well were a critical means to move inland goods to other markets, making the Ionian cities uniquely positioned to regulate the commercial activities of their Anatolian neighbors.

Historiography

Though nominally a part of the Persian Empire during the centuries preceding Alexander, its position within the Greek world means that there is comparatively a great deal written on Ionia within the Greco-Roman corpus of histories. However, Ionia rarely takes center stage

[4] David Asheri, Alan Lloyd, and Aldo Corcella, *A Commentary on Herodotus: Books I-IV*, ed. Oswyn Murray and Alfonso Moreno, trans. Barbara Graziosi et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 173–75.
[5] These rivers are the modern Gediz Çayı, Küçük Menderes, and Büyük Menderes respectively.

within any of these narratives, appearing usually as just one theatre of a larger Hellenic story. During the Persian period a series of histories discuss Ionia: Herodotus' *Histories,* Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War,* as well as Xenophon's *Hellenika* and *Anabasis*. Herodotus is of particular interest as he hailed from the aforementioned Halicarnassus and, more than being a simple commentator, was an active member of this Asiatic Greek community.[6] He is especially emblematic of the broad approach towards ethnic identity taken in Ionia. His father and grandfather bore Carian names. Whether they were "Carian" by birth is somewhat less important than the openness shown to a non-Greek culture.[7] Xenophon, while a native of Athens, also spent some time in Anatolia, as seen in the *Anabasis* where he served Cyrus the Younger, the *Karanos* of Lydia, Phrygia, and Cappadocia. There is also great deal of archeological and epigraphic evidence in Ionia dating from a range of periods, from the Archaic through to the Hellenistic and Roman (though the latter is less important for our discussion). While, most of what survives is Greek in nature and there is comparatively little Persian archeological material, what is present raises important questions about the nature of Perso-Ionian interaction.

The corpus of Alexander historians remains mostly unchanged with the notable absence of Curtius whose first two books are lost, including his comments on Alexander's activities in Ionia. More notable though than an absence of sources is the state of the extant narrative surrounding Alexander's conquest. The propagandistic elements of Alexander's campaigns are at their most pronounced here in Ionia. Since Alexander framed his campaign as one of liberation (or at the very least revenge), the Greco-Roman historians chronicling Alexander's campaign are especially invested in portraying this conquest of Ionia as a positive emancipation, rather than a mere exchange of masters. Ionia's conquest is painted in a pseudo-nationalistic light, and in

[6] Hugh Lloyd-Jones, "The Pride of Halicarnassus," *Zeitschrift Für Papyrologie Und Epigraphik* 124 (1999): 1–14.
[7] Victor J. Matthews, *Panyassis of Halikarnassos: Text and Commentary* (Leiden: Brilll, n.d.), 19–20.

general the texts are more interested in portraying Alexander's deeds as positive. As a result the prose of these historians, especially Arrian, must be examined in particularly close detail to tease out the realities of the situation from the official story.

Modern scholarship is unfortunately lacking when it comes to Ionia during the period of Alexander's conquest. Though there is decent interest in classical Ionia, the body of scholarship written about the region drops off precipitously in the period shortly before Alexander. Though the area and period have seen some recent scholarship, focusing mainly on the early Hellenistic period. This may be in part due to historical attitudes towards Greece as a whole during the late 400's and early 300's BCE as a region in a state of stagnation and decay. However, in Ionia this trend is particularly pronounced. Also, given its position the study of Ionia is often split between Hellenic and Anatolian specialists, creating a somewhat bifurcated scholarly corpus as each group approaches the region from their own background.

Persian, Spartan, and Athenian Empires

Placed as it was on the cusp of Asia, Ionia was the first major area of Greek settlement to fall under Achaemenid control. Following Cyrus the Great's conquest of the Lydian Kingdom which had dominated western Anatolia—Ionia included—from the seventh to sixth centuries BCE under the Mermnad dynasty, one of Cyrus' generals, Harpagus, quickly conquered the Ionian cities. The Ionians had previously attempted to surrender to Cyrus on terms, according to Herodotus, however Cyrus refused on the grounds that they had not come to his aid initially when fighting the Lydians.[8] Following this declaration Cyrus' subordinate Harpagus besieged

[8] Hdt. 1.141 cf. Diod. 9.35; Initially the Persian commander was Mazares, however he died unexpectedly.

and captured all the major Ionian cities, with one exception. Miletus was brought into the empire peacefully due to previous agreements with Cyrus and the Achaemenids.[9]

The initial conquest does seem to have been rather traumatic. Herodotus reports that both Teos and Phocaea were abandoned, with their populations scattering elsewhere.[10] According to Herodotus, the entirety of Phocaea fled the city in a single day before the Persians could take the city. He tells a similar story regarding Teos, arguing that they could not bear slavery. It is hard to believe these stories, and one wonders to what degree Herodotus is playing to his audience of mainland Greeks, committed to the idea of a despotic Persia. As David Asheri notes in his commentary, "a mass evacuation of a city cannot be completed in one day nor under the eyes of the enemy."[11] In the episode itself the Persians seem rather lenient, Harpagus only demands Phocaea demolish part of their wall and dedicate a building to the king.[12] This wall demolition was mostly symbolic, as it applied only to a section of the *προμαχεῶνα*, the wall connecting two towers, leaving the turrets and other battlements in place.[13] Likewise, half of those fleeing change their minds and return to Phocaea.[14] The archeological record does seem to confirm the general thrust of Herodotus: that the Persian conquest saw a flight of people from Ionia, or at the very least from the urban centers. One center in particular, Clazomenae, was seemingly abandoned for a period of twenty years after the Persian conquest.[15] We also have evidence of

[9] "πλὴν Μιλησίων: πρὸς μούνους γὰρ τούτους ὅρκιον Κῦρος ἐποιήσατο ἐπ᾽ οἵσί περ ὁ Λυδός." Hdt. 1.141.4
[10] Phocaea: Hdt. 1.164.3; Teos: Hdt. 1.168
[11] Asheri, Lloyd, and Corcella, *A Commentary on Herodotus*, 185.
[12] "προισχόμενος ἔπεα ὡς οἱ καταχρᾷ εἰ βούλονται Φωκαιέες προμαχεῶνα ἕνα μοῦνον τοῦ τείχεος ἐρεῖψαι καὶ οἴκημα ἓν κατιρῶσαι." Hdt. 1.164.1-2
[13] Asheri, Lloyd, and Corcella, *A Commentary on Herodotus*, 185.
[14] "δὲ αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὴν Κύρνον, ὑπερημίσεας τῶν ἀστῶν ἔλαβε πόθος τε καὶ οἶκτος τῆς πόλιος καὶ τῶν ἠθέων τῆς χώρης, ψευδόρκιοι δὲ γενόμενοι ἀπέπλεον ὀπίσω ἐς τὴν Φωκαίην." Hdt. 1.65.3
[15] Yasar Ersoy, "Klazomenai: 900-500 BC. History and Settlement Evidence" in *Klazomenai, Teos and Abdera: Metropoleis and Colony. Proceedings of the Symposium, Abdera 20-21 October 2001* (Thessaloniki, 2004), 60.

Ionian refugees settling as far away as Etruria in northern Italy.[16] This is in line with Herodotus' claim that the Phocaean refugees fled west to Alalia (modern Aleria) in Corsica.[17]

Following this conquest, Ionia seems to recover incredibly quickly. A few years into Persian domination, Herodotus says that "the affluence of Miletus…was at its peak."[18] Likewise, Clazomenae, though abandoned from 550-530 BCE, saw a flurry of archeological activity beginning around 530.[19] The Ionians seemed to have been fairly content with Achaemenid rule, and based off Herodotus' wording, such rule seems to have been relatively lax and non-invasive. The cities themselves seem to be ruled in traditional manners. Histiaios is named as the tyrant of Miletus, even while still being an Achaemenid subject.[20] Ionians command the fleet which assists Darius on his crossing of the Bosporus during his expedition against the Scythians and the bridge over the channel is designed by "Mandrocles of Samos" who is lauded by Darius.[21] The crossing also gives an instance of the Achaemenids' multi-lingual policy, as Darius places a dual inscription on the site of the crossing in Greek and "Assyrian," something that appears in other provinces.[22] Though, seemingly in contradiction to this cooperation, the Ionians would revolt against the Achaemenids in 499 BCE. It was this revolt which began the series of events leading to the Greco-Persian wars, as Athens and Eretria gave aid to the Ionians, resulting in

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[16] Nancy A. Winter, "Traders and Refugees: Contributions to Etruscan Architecture," *Etruscan Studies* 20, no. 2 (December 20, 2017): 123–51.

[17] "πρὸς ταῦτα οἱ Φωκαίες ἐστέλλοντο ἐς Κύρνον: ἐν γὰρ τῇ Κύρνῳ εἴκοσι ἔτεσι πρότερον τούτων ἐκ θεοπροπίου ἀνεστήσαντο πόλιν, τῇ οὔνομα ἦν Ἀλαλίη." Hdt. 1.165.1

[18] "ἡ Μίλητος αὐτή τε ἐωυτῆς μάλιστα δὴ τότε ἀκμάσασα καὶ δὴ καὶ τῆς Ἰωνίης ἦν πρόσχημα" Hdt. 5.28

[19] Yasar Ersoy, "Notes on History and Archaeology of Early Clazomenae", in J. Cobet, V. von Graeve, W.-D. Niemeier and K. Zimmermann (eds), Milesische Forschungen 5. Frühes Ionien: eine Bestandaufnahme. Akten des Internationalen Kolloquiums zum einhundertjährigen Jubilāum der Ausgrabungen in Milet, Panionion/Güzelçamlı, 26.09.-01.10.1999 (Frankfurt am Mainz, 2007), 161.

[20] "ὁ γὰρ Ἱστιαῖος τύραννος ἦν Μιλήτου καὶ ἐτύγχανε τοῦτον τὸν χρόνον ἐὼν ἐν Σούσοισι," Hdt. 5.30.2

[21] Ionians: " Δαρεῖος δὲ δωρησάμενος Μανδροκλέα διέβαινε ἐς τὴν Εὐρώπην, τοῖσι Ἴωσι παραγγείλας πλέειν ἐς τὸν Πόντον μέχρι Ἴστρου ποταμοῦ, ἐπεὰν δὲ ἀπίκωνται ἐς τὸν Ἴστρον, ἐνθαῦτα αὐτὸν περιμένειν ζευγνύντας τὸν ποταμόν. τὸ γὰρ δὴ ναυτικὸν ἦγον Ἴωνές τε καὶ Αἰολέες καὶ Ἑλλησπόντιοι." Hdt. 4.89.1; Mandrocles: "Δαρεῖος δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα ἡσθεὶς τῇ σχεδίῃ τὸν ἀρχιτέκτονα αὐτῆς Μανδροκλέα τὸν Σάμιον ἐδωρήσατο πᾶσι δέκα" Hdt. 4.88.1

[22] "θεησάμενος δὲ καὶ τὸν Βόσπορον στήλας ἔστησε δύο ἐπ᾽ αὐτοῦ λίθου λευκοῦ, ἐνταμὼν γράμματα ἐς μὲν τὴν Ἀσσύρια ἐς δὲ τὴν Ἑλληνικά" Hdt. 4.87.1 The "Assyrian" was probably Old Persian, see Asheri et al., 2007.

Achaemenid retaliation for supporting the rebels. As Herodotus explains, this revolt was not the result of Ionian oppression by the Persians, but the Ionians' own insolvency. Contrary to what one might expect, the future leader of the Ionian revolt, Aristagoras, takes pride in his acquaintance with the Achaemenid dynasty. When exiles from the island of Naxos approach him asking for aid, he claims to be friends with Artaphernes, the brother of Darius I and asks him for aid in conquering the island of Naxos.[23] It is this expedition which causes the revolt as Aristagoras fears punishment for not making good on the promise he had made to Artaphernes that he would conquer Naxos.[24]

This is reflected in how the Ionians do not seem to have been all that committed to the revolt. When the Ionians assemble a rebel navy at Lade under the command of Dionysus of Phocaea, the Ionians quickly protest the naval drills that Dionysus demands, arguing that "We would be better off suffering anything rather than these evils; even to endure future slavery, whatever that may be like, would be better than to continue as we are at present."[25] Following this mutiny the Samians, who had been allied with the rest of the Ionians, make secret terms with the Achaemenids, and as a result are unmolested in the subsequent Achaemenid crackdown. The Achaemenids defeat the Ionian fleet at Lade and subsequently recapture the rebellious Miletus. As punishment the Persians enslave the population, deporting many of them to Mesopotamia.[26] So in a span of fifty years Ionia had experienced both the boons and devastation of Achaemenid imperialism. It must be acknowledged that part of the reason the Achaemenid Empire has

[23] "Ἀρταφρένης μοι τυγχάνει ἐὼν φίλος: ὁ δὲ Ἀρταφρένης ὑμῖν Ὑστάσπεος μὲν ἐστὶ παῖς, Δαρείου δὲ τοῦ βασιλέος ἀδελφεός, τῶν δ᾽ ἐπιθαλασσίων τῶν ἐν τῇ Ἀσίῃ ἄρχει πάντων, ἔχων στρατιήν τε πολλὴν καὶ πολλὰς νέας." Hdt. 5.30.5

[24] Herodotus also reports that the true leader of Miletus, Histiaios, gave the command to revolt as an excuse to be allowed leave Susa, though in either case, the revolt was cause more by individual convenience than Persian oppression. Hdt. 5.35

[25] "ἡμῖν γε κρέσσον καὶ ὅ τι ὦν ἄλλο παθεῖν ἐστι καὶ τὴν μέλλουσαν δουληίην ὑπομεῖναι ἤτις ἔσται" Hdt. 6.12.3

[26] Hdt. 6.18-6.20 cf. Diod. 10.25.4 who gives a far more positive account of the rebellion's conclusion: "ὁ Ἀρταφέρνης ἀπέδωκε τοὺς νόμους ταῖς πόλεσι καὶ τακτοὺς φόρους κατὰ δύναμιν ἐπέταξεν."

featured so negatively in the Greek historical tradition is because the Achaemenids exerted so much force in suppressing these rebellions, even if their imperial policy on the whole was relatively lenient.

"Painting Both Walls"

Despite the failure of their original rebellion, the poleis of Ionia would become nominally independent from the Achaemenid Empire following retributive campaigns by the mainland Greek states against the Persians launched after Xerxes I's unsuccessful invasion in 479 BCE. However, this would not be the end but the beginning of the Ionians' troubles. While Achaemenid power in the Aegean was diminished for a time, the Ionians (and other Asiatic Greeks) would become pieces in the larger hegemonic games being played by the pre-eminent poleis of the mainland, being forced into this or that alliance by whomever had armies nearest and in the greatest numbers. The history of Ionia from the end of the Greco-Persian wars to the arrival of Alexander is best summarized by the 2nd Century CE geographer Pausanias who wrote:

> So plainly the Samians and the rest of the Ionians, as the Ionians themselves phrase it, painted both the walls. For when Alcibiades[27] had a strong fleet of Athenian triremes along the coast of Ionia, most of the Ionians paid court to him, and there is a bronze statue of Alcibiades dedicated by the Samians in the temple of Hera. But when the Attic ships were captured at Aegospotami, the Samians set up a statue of Lysander[28] at Olympia, and the Ephesians set up in the sanctuary of Artemis not only a statue of Lysander himself but also statues of Eteonicus, Pharax and other Spartans quite unknown to the Greek world generally. But when

[27] Alcibiades was a prominent Athenian politician during the latter half of the Peloponnesian War.
[28] Lysander was a spartan *navarch* during the final stages of the Peloponnesian War and commanded the Spartan fleet at the decisive battle of Aegospotami in 404 BCE.

> fortune changed again, and Conon[29] had won the naval action off Cnidus and the mountain called Dorium, the Ionians likewise changed their views, and there are to be seen statues in bronze of Conon and of Timotheus both in the sanctuary of Hera in Samos and also in the sanctuary of the Ephesian goddess at Ephesus. It is always the same; the Ionians merely follow the example of all the world in paying court to strength.[30]

The Ionians in the fifth century would be forced to switch allegiances constantly, courting new allies just as fast as they abandoned old ones, in a desperate to keep above the ever-shifting tides of Aegean politics, often being devastated by raiding and sacking when they failed to do so. However, due to the rhetorically charged nature of conflict in Ionia, it was not enough for poleis to merely acquiesce to foreign control. Each new hegemony required a new set of pledges, oaths, and declarations of friendship, which made the already chaotic nature of Aegean politics all the more treacherous. Failure to declare approval for the right hegemon, or failure to be convincing enough in their declaration, was met with disproportionate retaliation. Pausanias' apparent quoting of a native Ionian saying–"painting both walls"–suggests a tacit acknowledgement by the Ionians themselves of the measures taken to ensure their own survival. An Athenian or Spartan might have called such vacillation two-faced. One imagines an Ionian would have fired back that they were merely hedging their bets.

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[29] Conon was an Athenian admiral in Achaemenid employ who defeated the Spartan fleet at Cnidus in 394 BCE.

[30] "δῆλοι οὖν εἰσιν οἵ τε Σάμιοι καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι Ἴωνες, κατὰ τὸ λεγόμενον ὑπ᾽ αὐτῶν Ἰώνων, τοὺς τοίχους τοὺς δύο ἐπαλείφοντες. Ἀλκιβιάδου μέν γε τριήρεσιν Ἀθηναίων περὶ Ἰωνίαν ἰσχύοντος ἐθεράπευον αὐτὸν Ἰώνων οἱ πολλοί, καὶ εἰκὼν Ἀλκιβιάδου χαλκῆ παρὰ τῇ Ἥρᾳ τῇ Σαμίων ἐστὶν ἀνάθημα: ὡς δὲ ἐν Αἰγὸς ποταμοῖς ἑάλωσαν αἱ ναῦς αἱ Ἀττικαί, Σάμιοι μὲν ἐς Ὀλυμπίαν τὸν Λύσανδρον, Ἐφέσιοι δὲ ἐς τὸ ἱερὸν ἀνετίθεσαν τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος Λύσανδρόν τε αὐτὸν καὶ Ἐτεόνικον καὶ Φάρακα καὶ ἄλλους Σπαρτιατῶν ἥκιστα ἔς γε τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν γνωρίμους. μεταπεσόντων δὲ αὖθις τῶν πραγμάτων καὶ Κόνωνος κεκρατηκότος τῇ ναυμαχίᾳ περὶ Κνίδον καὶ ὄρος τὸ Δώριον ὀνομαζόμενον, οὕτω μετεβάλλοντο οἱ Ἴωνες, καὶ Κόνωνα ἀνακείμενον χαλκοῦν καὶ Τιμόθεον ἐν Σάμῳ τε ἔστιν ἰδεῖν παρὰ τῇ Ἥρᾳ καὶ ὡσαύτως ἐν Ἐφέσῳ παρὰ τῇ Ἐφεσίᾳ θεῷ. ταῦτα μέν ἐστιν ἔχοντα οὕτω τὸν ἀεὶ χρόνον, καὶ Ἴωσιν ὡσαύτως οἱ πάντες ἄνθρωποι θεραπεύουσι τὰ ὑπερέχοντα τῇ ἰσχύι." Paus. 6.3.15-16.

Following the Greco-Persian wars, much of Ionia initially joined Athens in a new, anti-Persian alliance called the Delian League in 477 BCE.[31] While the League was a co-equal federation of poleis in theory, in practice it soon became an organ of Athenian hegemony. The League was quickly proven to not be a strictly voluntary arrangement when Naxos, attempting to leave the alliance, was forcibly brought back into the fold after a siege in 466 BCE.[32] This was the first in a series of internal revolts against the Athenians which would continue throughout the *pentecontaetia*, the inter-war period between the defeat of Xerxes I in 479 BCE and the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta in 431 BCE. The revolt of the Ionian island of Samos appears to be a Persian defection. The city's native oligarchy, ousted in a dispute with Athens, retreated to Sardis to seek aid from Pissuthenes, the Persian Satrap in Lydia.[33] Although the aid provided by the Satrap was rather limited, owing to agreements reached with Athens in 449 BCE, providing only seven-hundred "volunteers."[34] The Athenian Thucydides blames this subjugation on the Ionians themselves, arguing that, in their desire to escape military service, they allowed Athens alone to accrue all the military power within the confederation, leaving the subject members impotent in their ability to break away.[35] So it seems that, rather than being liberated from despotism, the Ionians had simply traded an Achaemenid yoke for an Athenian one, a bitter irony in the sense that the body designed to deliver the Asiatic Greeks

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[31] Thuc. 1.96 cf. Diod. 11.41.4; the independent status of the Ionian cities would not be recognized by the Achaemenids until the peace of Callias in in 449 BCE, and in some instances there is reason to believe Achaemenid tribute was never fully halted even while giving tribute to Athens. For the peace of Callias, see Hyland, 2018, 15-18 cf. Badian 1993, 1-72. For the possible double tribute, see Cook, 1961.

[32] "Ναξίοις δὲ ἀποστᾶσι μετὰ ταῦτα ἐπολέμησαν καὶ πολιορκίᾳ παρεστήσαντο, πρώτη τε αὕτη πόλις ξυμμαχὶς παρὰ τὸ καθεστηκὸς ἐδουλώθη, ἔπειτα δὲ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὡς ἑκάστῃ ξυνέβη." Thuc. 1.98.4, for the dating of the siege see Milton, 1979.

[33] Thasos: Thuc. 1.100.2; Euboea and Megara: Thuc. 1.114; Samos and Byzantium: Thuc. 1.115.2 cf. Diod. 12.27.3

[34] Ernst Badian, *From Plataea to Potidaea: Studies in the History and Historiography of the Pentecontaetia* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 33. cf. Hyland, 2018, 35-36.

[35]" ὧν αὐτοὶ αἴτιοι ἐγένοντο οἱ ξύμμαχοι: διὰ γὰρ τὴν ἀπόκνησιν ταύτην τῶν στρατειῶν οἱ πλείους αὐτῶν, ἵνα μὴ ἀπ᾽ οἴκου ὦσι, χρήματα ἐτάξαντο ἀντὶ τῶν νεῶν τὸ ἱκνούμενον ἀνάλωμα φέρειν, καὶ τοῖς μὲν Ἀθηναίοις ηὔξετο τὸ ναυτικὸν ἀπὸ τῆς δαπάνης ἣν ἐκεῖνοι ξυμφέροιεν, αὐτοὶ δέ, ὁπότε ἀποσταῖεν, ἀπαράσκευοι καὶ ἄπειροι ἐς τὸν πόλεμον καθίσταντο." Thuc. 1.99.3

from the domination of the Achaemenids ended up leaving them just as subordinate to a new Athenian master.

As the war between Athens and Sparta dragged on, the Ionians became increasingly discontented with the Athenians, exacerbated by apparent Athenian weakness after most of the Athenian military was wiped out in a failed expedition to Sicily. Thucydides says that "above all, the subjects of the Athenians showed a readiness to revolt even beyond their ability, judging the circumstances with passion and refusing even to hear of the Athenians being able to last out the coming summer."[36] Perhaps seeing an opportunity, the Ionians began petitioning for Spartan aid in revolt. The Spartan king Agis received envoys from the island of Lesbos, north of Ionia, and sent assistance. Likewise, the Ionian island of Chios and the city of Erythrae appealed to Sparta itself to send aid for a revolt.[37] Due to the prominent role played by these revolting Ionian cities in the conflict, which is where most of the fighting would take place, the latter half of the Peloponnesian war is called the Ionian war.[38]

Notably, the Chian and Erythraean envoys came with an ambassador from the Persian official Tissaphernes seeking to coordinate with Sparta in support of the revolt.[39] A little while later the Persian satrap of Hellespontine Phrygia, Pharzabanes, would send an envoy to the Spartans with a similar request: to foment revolt against the Athenians to the north of Ionia. The

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[36] "μάλιστα δὲ οἱ τῶν Ἀθηναίων ὑπήκοοι ἑτοῖμοι ἦσαν καὶ παρὰ δύναμιν αὐτῶν ἀφίστασθαι διὰ τὸ ὀργῶντες κρίνειν τὰ πράγματα καὶ μηδ᾽ ὑπολείπειν λόγον αὐτοῖς ὡς τό γ᾽ ἐπιὸν θέρος οἷοί τ᾽ ἔσονται περιγενέσθαι." Thuc. 8.2.2

[37] "Χῖοι δὲ καὶ Ἐρυθραῖοι ἀποστῆναι καὶ αὐτοὶ ἑτοῖμοι ὄντες πρὸς μὲν Ἄγιν οὐκ ἐτράποντο, ἐς δὲ τὴν Λακεδαίμονα." Thuc. 8.5.4 cf. Diod. 4.36.5

[38] This is in contrast to the Archidamian War, the name given to the conflict until the signing of the peace of Nicias in 421 BCE, named after the Spartan king Archidamas.

[39] Thuc. 8.5.4-5. The language Thucydides uses is interesting in its implication. Tissaphernes, "the commander of King Darius son Artaxerxes, in the maritime districts" seeks to support the Ionian revolt in order to secure tribute from the Hellenic cities he owes Darius. The cities in question are not specified, but if we assume these to be the Ionian cities, then their independent status is called into question. Thucydides says that the Athenians have been sabotaging his ability to collect such tribute, but seemingly only recently. This makes one wonder how truly "independent" the Ionian cities were, not just from Athens, but the Achaemenid state as well. See Cook, 1961.

fact that the Ionians were seemingly turning away from their fellow Greeks and towards the Achaemenids for help suggests that by this point they considered Persian rule preferable to that of the Athenians. In due time the Peloponnesians (i.e. the Spartans) induced a revolt in Chios, which soon spread to Ionia as a whole. The Ionian cities of Erythrae, Clazomenae, Teos, and Miletus all revolted in succession.[40] Following the revolt of Miletus the Spartans formed an Alliance with the Achaemenid Empire. Among the stipulations of this alliance was the following clause:

> Whatever country or cities the King has, or the King's ancestors had, shall be the King's; and whatever came in to the Athenians from these cites, either money or any other thing, the King and the Spartans and their allies shall jointly hinder the Athenians from receiving either money or any other thing.[41]

With this treaty the Ionian cities were returned to the Achaemenid fold, at least in theory. Of course, only some of Ionia was in revolt (Ephesus for example had yet to join). Yet the statement of purpose is strong enough in itself: the Ionians would rather be subjects of the Persians than "allies" of Athens.[42]

While the Achaemenids in western Anatolia under Tissaphernes' stewardship eventually adopted a more hands-off approach to Aegean diplomacy, playing Sparta and Athens off each other, even without direct Spartan aid the Ionians seem to have been just as willing to lead their rebellion alone. Thucydides says that the Chians' "zeal continued as active as ever, and who

[40] Thuc. 8.14-8.17 cf. Diod. 13.34.2;13.36.5 It should be noted Tissaphernes does not appear in Diodorus' account.
[41] "ὁπόσην χώραν καὶ πόλεις βασιλεὺς ἔχει καὶ οἱ πατέρες οἱ βασιλέως εἶχον, βασιλέως ἔστω: καὶ ἐκ τούτων τῶν πόλεων ὁπόσα Ἀθηναίοις ἐφοίτα χρήματα ἢ ἄλλο τι, κωλυόντων κοινῇ βασιλεὺς καὶ Λακεδαιμόνιοι καὶ οἱ ξύμμαχοι ὅπως μήτε χρήματα λαμβάνωσιν Ἀθηναῖοι μήτε ἄλλο μηδέν." Thuc. 8.18.1. According to Diod. 12.41.1 the Spartans had been seeking an Achaemenid alliance since the beginning of the Peloponnesian War, however no alliance seems to have materialized before this treaty.
[42] Thuc. 8.37.2. While Sparta later re-negotiated the terms of their Achaemenid alliance, the Ionians were still considered a part of the "cities which belong to king Darius."

even without the Peloponnesians found themselves in sufficient force to bring about the revolt of the cities."[43] The Ionians continued to agitate for freedom from Athens, with much of the fighting centering around Ionia.[44] Though the Spartans, now at odds with the Achaemenids who had begun supporting Athens when Sparta seemed to be getting too powerful, uprooted Persian garrisons from Miletus and Cnidus; in indicating the presence of these garrisons at all, Thucydides, in the final moments of his history, shows that the Achaemenids had begun to rule Ionia in earnest once again.[45]

Xenophon, starting very consciously from where Thucydides left off, does not specify the exact circumstances in which the Ionian cities came under Achaemenid control following the Peloponnesian war. However, we know they came under Achaemenid control at some point due to an embassy sent to the Spartans for aid against Tissaphernes who had been newly appointed as the satrap of Ionia.[46] This would seem to indicate that the Ionians had grown weary of Persian rule yet again, however the nature of the correspondence with Sparta indicates that true independence is not necessarily what the Ionians desired. Instead, in their envoy with the Spartans they make it clear that what they desire from Tissaphernes is local autonomy, not necessarily full independence.[47] The Ionians seem to have been firmly in Achaemenid hands by the Peloponnesian war's conclusion in 404, as the victorious Spartans coordinated with the new main Achaemenid official in the west, Cyrus the Younger, second-in-line to the Achaemenid

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[43] "μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα τοῦ αὐτοῦ θέρους οἱ Χῖοι, ὥσπερ ἤρξαντο, οὐδὲν ἀπολείποντες προθυμίας, ἄνευ τε Πελοποννησίων πλήθει παρόντες ἀποστῆσαι τὰς πόλεις καὶ βουλόμενοι ἅμα ὡς πλείστους σφίσι ξυγκινδυνεύειν" Thuc. 8.22.1

[44] Thuc. 8.87 cf. Diod 14.38-42

[45] "ὁ δὲ Τισσαφέρνης αἰσθόμενος καὶ τοῦτο τῶν Πελοποννησίων τὸ ἔργον καὶ οὐ μόνον τὸ ἐν τῇ Μιλήτῳ καὶ Κνίδῳ (καὶ ἐνταῦθα γὰρ αὐτοῦ ἐξεπεπτώκεσαν οἱ φρουροί)" Thuc. 8.109.1

[46] "αἱ δὲ ἅμα μὲν ἐλεύθεραι βουλόμεναι εἶναι…εἰς μὲν τὰς πόλεις οὐκ ἐδέχοντο αὐτόν, εἰς Λακεδαίμονα δὲ ἔπεμπον πρέσβεις, καὶ ἠξίουν, ἐπεὶ πάσης τῆς Ἑλλάδος προστάται εἰσίν, ἐπιμεληθῆναι καὶ σφῶν τῶν ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ Ἑλλήνων, ὅπως ἥ τε χώρα μὴ δῃοῖτο αὐτῶν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐλεύθεροι εἶεν." Xen. *Hell.* 3.1.3

[47] "ἐπεὶ δὲ ἀφικνούμενοι πρέσβεις εἰς Λακεδαίμονα ἀπὸ τῶν Ἰωνίδων πόλεων ἐδίδασκον ὅτι εἴη ἐπὶ Τισσαφέρνει, εἰ βούλοιτο, ἀφιέναι αὐτονόμους τὰς Ἑλληνίδας πόλεις" Xen *Hell.* 3.2.12

throne.[48] However, upon Cyrus' recall on the death of the Achaemenid king, Darius II, Tissaphernes would be reappointed to command in Ionia. Spartan relations were far more hostile under Tissaphernes and the Spartan admiral Lysander responded to Cyrus' absence by establishing puppet *decarchies* in the Ionian cities, however their status in relation to the Achaemenid state is questionable.[49] Cyrus would return to his command in Anatolia c. 403 BCE, at which time the Ionian cities seemed to have flocked to him. Notably, Xenophon reports that in doing so the Ionians were spurning the authority of Tissaphernes in particular, highlighting the Ionian's pragmatism as they changed allegiances, not just from Persians to Greeks or vice versa, but even to individual rulers or administrators who seemed more amenable.[50] In Xenophon's report of the Ionian embassy to Sparta, he says the Ionians were motivated just as much by a fear of retaliation by Tissaphernes for choosing Cyrus as they were by a desire for autonomy.[51] The Spartans however do not seem to have been content to let the Ionians be Achaemenid subjects, as the spartan king Agesilaus launched an extensive campaign against the Achaemenids in Anatolia, reaching well into Phrygia, and dragging the region into yet another conflict in which they had little say.[52]

The Ionian Renaissance

Though Agesilaus eventually withdrew in 394 BCE following the devastation of the Spartan fleet at the battle of Cnidus at the hands of the Persians, by that point Ionians had been the central battleground for Aegean conflict for almost twenty years. Following Agesilaus'

[48] John O. Hyland, *Persian Interventions: The Achaemenid Empire, Athens, and Sparta, 450 - 386 BCE* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018), 107–21.
[49] A. Andrewes, "Two Notes on Lysander," *Phoenix* 25, no. 3 (1971): 206–26.
[50] "ἦσαν αἱ Ἰωνικαὶ πόλεις Τισσαφέρνους τὸ ἀρχαῖον ἐκ βασιλέως δεδομέναι, τότε δὲ ἀφειστήκεσαν πρὸς Κῦρον πᾶσαι πλὴν Μιλήτου:" Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.6; Cyrus' status as an official office holder is unclear, see Hyland, 2018.
[51] "ἅμα δὲ φοβούμεναι τὸν Τισσαφέρνην, ὅτι Κῦρον, ὅτ᾽ ἔζη, ἀντ᾽ ἐκείνου ἠρημέναι ἦσαν," Xen. *Hell.* 3.1.3
[52] "ὁ δ᾽ Ἀγησίλαος ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐπὶ Καρίαν ἰέναι εὐθὺς τἀναντία ἀποστρέψας ἐπὶ Φρυγίας ἐπορεύετο, καὶ τάς τ᾽ ἐν τῇ πορείᾳ πόλεις κατεστρέφετο καὶ ἐμβαλὼν ἀπροσδοκήτοις παμπλήθη χρήματα ἐλάμβανε." Xen. *Hell.* 3.4.12

expedition, the Greek world would again be embroiled in another Pan-Hellenic struggle. This time with Sparta as the hegemonic power and Athens as the first among equals in an anti-Spartan alliance, all the while both sides were supported intermittently by the Achaemenids. Perhaps in an effort to avoid involvement in the coming conflict, the Ionians (and a large number of the Asiatic Greeks besides) attempted to decouple from the politics of the mainland. Aside from the statue of Conon, the commander of the Persian fleet at Cnidus, erected by the Ephesians and mentioned by Pausanias, the city of Erythrae also passed a decree honoring Conon making him a *proxenos*, a special citizen ambassador, and granting other honors and privileges in the city.[53] The monument and the decree honoring a Persian commander (albeit one of Athenian extraction) indicates a desire to court allies away from the Greek mainland, furthering trends that had begun during the Peloponnesian War. While these Persian overtures could easily be yet another pragmatic gesture to secure the favor of the new main power in Ionia, in the context of other events it may indicate a broader push by the Ionians to reject the domination of the mainland.

Sometime, it is believed, shortly after the battle of Cnidus, a series of Asiatic poleis including Chios and Ephesus began minting coins bearing their local symbols on the obverse and the image of the infant Heracles strangling two serpents with the Greek word for alliance (*συμμαχία)* on the reverse side. This "Heracles Coinage Alliance" as it has been dubbed by modern historians is not attested in the narrative histories. However, these coins clearly show evidence for some type of union of poleis in the eastern Aegean.[54] The discussion of the Heracles Coinage Alliance has been preoccupied by an argument about whether it was a pro-Spartan or

[53] Robin Osborne and P. J. Rhodes, eds., *Greek Historical Inscriptions 404 - 323 BC* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 44–46.
[54] G. L. Cawkwell, "A NOTE ON THE HERACLES COINAGE ALLIANCE OF 394 B.C.," *The Numismatic Chronicle and Journal of the Royal Numismatic Society* 16 (1956): 69–75.

pro-Athenian organization.[55] However, this focus on its possible mainland connections robs the Asiatic Greeks cities of their own agency within Aegean politics, reducing them to little more than bases for the great game between Sparta, Athens, and, to a lesser extent, Thebes. Much of the discussion has centered on reconciling the often-conflicting prior allegiances of alliance members, some being pro-Sparta, others pro-Athens. However, while the Ionian cities often had to change stripes in the midst of mainland conflict, the accounts of the previous fifth century show an equal inclination on the Ionians' part to pursue their own interests, such as the embassies to Sparta against Athens or the defection away from Tissaphernes to Cyrus the Younger. In this light, it seems far simpler and far likelier that the alliance was in fact an Asiatic organization. The organization's central image of *Herakliskos Drakonopnigon,* a symbol usually employed by poleis resisting outside domination, was reflective of the Asiatic Greeks' goal of independence, not from this or that hegemony, but from the overweening ambitions of the mainland Greeks in general.[56]

The formation of this Asiatic alliance may have been done in anticipation of an imminent shift in the Aegean status quo as the conclusion of the Corinthian War drew near. Once the Athenians and Spartans had once again tired themselves out, the Persians intervened to finally secure control over Ionia. The terms of the subsequent peace in 386 BCE, either called the King's Peace or less commonly the Peace of Antalcidas, ceded the Ionian cities to the Achaemenid Empire. However, the Ionian cities did have some protections granted to them, mainly continuing the earlier grant of Tissaphernes that the cities themselves would be

[55] Stefan Karwiese, "Lysander as Herakliskos Drakonopnigon: ('Heracles the Snake-Strangler')," *The Numismatic Chronicle and Journal of the Royal Numismatic Society* 20 (1980): 1–27.
[56] While it is a possibility the despot being resisted is in fact the Achaemenids, the aforementioned actions taken by Ionian cities to memorialize the Persian victory at Cnidus makes this unlikely. Cawkley, 1976 discusses instances where the symbol was employed in an intra-hellenic context, such as the coins of Thurii which bear the image during their conflict with Syracuse.

autonomous, governing themselves in their own fashion.[57] In light of the alliance formed c. 394 the actual ramifications of the King's Peace in Ionia were likely not as profound as has often been believed. Since the battle of Cnidus the eastern Aegean had been operating separate from either Spartan or Athenian power, not to mention ingratiating themselves to the Persians and their allies through monuments and proclamations. An inscription from Miletus, dated 391-388 BCE, records a dispute between Miletus and its fellow Ionian city of Myus being settled with official arbitration by the Lydian satrap Struses.[58] The King's Peace likely formalized developments that had already taken place, as the Ionians, who were already associating themselves more closely with the Achaemenids, were brought completely into the Persian sphere.

From the signing of the King's Peace to the arrival of Alexander in 334 BCE, the situation in Ionia was comparatively stable. The cities acknowledged Achaemenid suzerainty, this time without rebellion or outside intervention. This may have been precisely what the Ionians desired. From their conquest by Cyrus the Great in the 540's BCE, the Ionian cities had constantly been changing hands, from Persians to Athenians to Spartans to Persians again. They had come to know the imperialism of the Great King in Persepolis, the demos in Athens, and the ephors in Sparta. Their own countrymen had mistreated them just as much, if not more so, than the Achaemenids, to such a degree that the Ionians finally found shelter not in alliance with other Greeks but as the subjects of a foreign power. If there was ever a place where the narrative of Greek liberation held little appeal, it was ironically in that same place which was supposed to be liberated.

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[57] "Ἀρταξέρξης βασιλεὺς νομίζει δίκαιον τὰς μὲν ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ πόλεις ἑαυτοῦ εἶναι καὶ τῶν νήσων Κλαζομενὰς καὶ Κύπρον, τὰς δὲ ἄλλας Ἑλληνίδας πόλεις καὶ μικρὰς καὶ μεγάλας αὐτονόμους ἀφεῖναι πλὴν Λήμνου καὶ Ἴμβρου καὶ Σκύρου: ταύτας δὲ ὥσπερ τὸ ἀρχαῖον εἶναι Ἀθηναίων. ὁπότεροι δὲ ταύτην τὴν εἰρήνην μὴ δέχονται, τούτοις ἐγὼ πολεμήσω μετὰ τῶν ταῦτα βουλομένων καὶ πεζῇ καὶ κατὰ θάλατταν καὶ ναυσὶ καὶ χρήμασιν."Xen. *Hell.* 5.1.31

[58] Osborne and Rhodes, *Greek Historical Inscriptions 404 - 323 BC*, 70–75.

Liberation

The irony of the situation does not seem to have been clear to Alexander. When the Macedonian king crossed the Hellespont in the spring of 334 BCE, he was riding a wave of anti-Persian rhetoric that had been building in mainland Greece since the signing of the King's Peace in 386 BCE. The Athenian rhetorician Isocrates in his *Panegyricus*, composed c. 380 BCE, advocated for a general Hellenic war against the Achaemenid Empire. A key component within his oration was the liberation of the Ionian cities from their present subjugation to the Persians under the King's Peace, punctuating his speech with this call to action:

> For verily it is shameful for us, who in our private life think the barbarians are fit only to be used as household slaves, to permit by our public policy so many of our allies to be enslaved by them; and it is disgraceful for us, when our fathers who engaged in the Trojan expedition because of the rape of one woman, all shared so deeply in the indignation of the wronged that they did not stop waging war until they had laid in ruins the city of him who had dared to commit the crime.[59]

While the *Panegyricus* was largely a rhetorical exercise, Isocrates' subsequent writings make clear that the sentiment was heartfelt. Though the *Panegyricus* advocated the formation of an *Athenian* led Greek hegemony to execute the campaign against Persia, Isocrates—likely in response to Athens' defeat in the Social War of 357 – 355 BCE and the subsequent dissolution of the Second Athenian League (formed 378 BCE)—soon changed the object of his exhortation to the ascendant kingdom of Macedon, advocating in a series of correspondences to Alexander's

[59] "καὶ γὰρ αἰσχρὸν ἰδίᾳ μὲν τοῖς βαρβάροις οἰκέταις ἀξιοῦν χρῆσθαι, δημοσίᾳ δὲ τοσούτους τῶν συμμάχων περιορᾶν αὐτοῖς δουλεύοντας, καὶ τοὺς μὲν περὶ τὰ Τρωικὰ γενομένους μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἁρπασθείσης οὕτως ἅπαντας συνοργισθῆναι τοῖς ἀδικηθεῖσιν, ὥστε μὴ πρότερον παύσασθαι πολεμοῦντας πρὶν τὴν πόλιν ἀνάστατον ἐποίησαν τοῦ τολμήσαντος ἐξαμαρτεῖν," Isoc. 4.181

father Philip II for Macedon to form a federative Greek hegemony and lead an invasion of Asia.[60]

Whether or not Philip II was swayed by Isocrates' rhetoric (or even read his letters), the ultimate result of Philip's campaigns in Greece looked strikingly similar to the system Isocrates envisioned. After a decisive victory over a combined Athenian-Boeotian force at Chaeronea, Philip II federated the whole of mainland Greece (save Sparta) into a hegemonic alliance. This union, called the League of Corinth by modern historians after its place of assembly, gave Philip the mandate he desired to invade Persia as one of its first acts.[61] This writ was no mere rubber stamp, it carried with it a call to arms the likes of which Greece had never yet seen. As part of the League's proclamation, not only did they empower Philip to wage a war on Persia, and obligate subordinate members to contribute troops, they also forbid any Greeks, even itinerant mercenaries not affiliated with any polis, from taking up arms against the Macedonians on the side of the Achaemenids.[62] While the League's decree did little in actuality to dissuade mercenaries from working with the Persians, it signaled that this war would be couched in idealistic terms. Much of Hellenic politics following 386 BCE was preoccupied with the maintenance of *ἡ κοινὴ εἰρήνη*: "the common peace" provided by the King's Peace and subsequent resolutions. Now Philip II would leverage that cultural-political unity for the sake of *ἡ κοινὴ μαχή*: a common war. It would not be a conflict justified purely for the sake of conquest; it would be a "national" war.

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[60] For the conclusion of the Social War, see Diod. 16.22; For Isocrates and Philip II, see Isocrates, *Ad Philippum.*
[61] "διόπερ ἐν Κορίνθῳ τοῦ κοινοῦ συνεδρίου συναχθέντος διαλεχθεὶς περὶ τοῦ πρὸς Πέρσας πολέμου καὶ μεγάλας ἐλπίδας ὑποθεὶς προετρέψατο τοὺς συνέδρους εἰς πόλεμον. τέλος δὲ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἑλομένων αὐτὸν στρατηγὸν αὐτοκράτορα τῆς Ἑλλάδος μεγάλας παρασκευὰς ἐποιεῖτο πρὸς τὴν ἐπὶ τοὺς Πέρσας στρατείαν. διατάξας δ᾽ ἑκάστη πόλει τὸ πλῆθος τῶν εἰς συμμαχίαν στρατιωτῶν ἐπανῆλθεν εἰς τὴν Μακεδονίαν." Diod. 16.89.3
[62] Osborne and Rhodes, *Greek Historical Inscriptions 404 - 323 BC*, 372–79.

Though Philip was assassinated before he could make good on that directive, Alexander would have the League reaffirm their previous decision, now with Alexander given the authority to execute the campaign. In keeping with the pseudo-patriotic nature of the campaign, Philip before he died had sent an advance force under the command of Parmenion and Attalus across the Propontis (the modern Sea of Marmara) with the objective of liberating the Greek cities in Asia Minor.[63] By the time Alexander arrived at the Hellespont, Parmenion had been skirmishing with Persian forces under the command of another Greek, Memnon of Rhodes, in order to secure the beachhead opposite the Thracian Chersonese (modern Gallipoli).

From the first moments of Alexander's invasion, his campaign was wrapped in pomp and symbolism, referencing Pan-Hellenic conflicts both old and new. Following the rhetorical precedent set in the *Panegyricus,* Alexander inaugurated his Asiatic invasion with an evocation of the Trojan War. Before the crossing, on the shores of the Thracian Chersonese, Alexander made a sacrifice to the hero Protesilaus, supposedly the first Achaian casualty in the mythical conflict. The site of Troy itself was one of the first locations visited by the army after it crossed the Hellespont. There, Alexander apparently took weapons preserved from the time of the war from the temple of Trojan Athena. He also made a sacrifice to the Trojan king Priam, hoping to lessen the King's anger at the descendants of Neoptolemus, son of Achilles, from whom Alexander considered himself descended. Finally, Alexander put a wreath on the tomb of his ancestor Achilles while Alexander's companion Hephaistion did the same for the tomb of Achilles' doomed comrade Patroclus.[64] However, there was only so much symbolic power that could be wrung from the ruins of Troy, and the army had to move on to the rest of Asia. This

[63] "ἐπὶ δὲ τούτων Φίλιππος ὁ βασιλεὺς ἡγεμὼν ὑπὸ τῶν Ἑλλήνων καθεσταμένος καὶ τὸν πρὸς Πέρσας πόλεμον ἐνστησάμενος Ἄτταλον μὲν καὶ Παρμενίωνα προαπέστειλεν εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν, μέρος τῆς δυνάμεως δοὺς καὶ προστάξας ἐλευθεροῦν τὰς Ἑλληνίδας πόλεις," Diod. 16.91.2

[64] Arr. *Anab.* Protesilaus: 1.11.5; Trojan Athena: 1.11.7; Priam: 1.11.8; Achilles and Patroclus: 1.12.1

would not be the end of such symbolic acts on the part of Alexander, though the objects of his interest would shift to more recent Hellenic enemies.

Despite this nationalistic posturing, the Greeks of Ionia did not accept Alexander with open arms. The best word to describe the Ionians' response to Alexander's coming was ambivalence. The Ionian cities, broadly left to their own devices due to the stipulations of the King's Peace, did not have a uniform reception of Alexander or his liberating army. The past two-hundred years of diplomacy, both with the Persians and their fellow Greeks, had left the Ionians wary of Greeks who came to Asia with promises of freedom. Though the Ionians may have had their gripes with the Achaemenids or their satraps, they likely harbored just as much concern towards the mainland Greeks who had time and time again subjugated the Ionians in much the same way as the Persians, but who had the further audacity to call their yoke freedom. In this respect Alexander and the Macedonians were just the latest in a long line of Greek powers who had engaged in the paternalistic imperialism of Greek hegemony.

Soon after crossing the Hellespont Alexander passed the Greek city of Lampsacus. Though Arrian merely says Alexander passed by the city with no further comment, Pausanias in his description of Greece details an episode relating to the city and Alexander. Pausanias says the city favored the Achaemenids, or at least was suspecting of doing so, and the city was saved from destruction only by the intervention of the historian Anaximenes.[65] So great apparently was the intervention of Anaximenes in saving the city that the Lampsacenes set up a statue in his

[65] "ἐνταῦθα καὶ Ἀναξιμένους οἶδα εἰκόνα ἀνευρών, ὃς τὰ ἐν Ἕλλησιν ἀρχαῖα, καὶ ὅσα Φίλιππος ὁ Ἀμύντου καὶ ὕστερον Ἀλέξανδρος εἰργάσατο, συνέγραψεν ὁμοίως ἅπαντα: ἡ δέ οἱ τιμὴ γέγονεν ἐν Ὀλυμπίᾳ παρὰ τῶν Λαμψακηνῶν τοῦ δήμου. ὑπελίπετο δὲ Ἀναξιμένης τοσάδε ἐς μνήμην: βασιλέα γὰρ οὐ τὰ πάντα ἥπιον ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ μάλιστα θυμῷ χρώμενον, Ἀλέξανδρον τὸν Φιλίππου, τέχνῃ περιῆλθε τοιᾷδε. Λαμψακηνῶν τὰ βασιλέως τοῦ Περσῶν φρονησάντων ἢ καὶ αἰτίαν φρονῆσαι λαβόντων, ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος ἅτε ὑπερζέων ἐς αὐτοὺς τῇ ὀργῇ κακῶν ἠπείλει τὰ μέγιστα ἐργάσασθαι: οἱ δὲ ἅτε θέοντες περὶ γυναικῶν τε καὶ παίδων καὶ αὐτῆς πατρίδος ἀποστέλλουσιν Ἀναξιμένην ἱκετεύειν, Ἀλεξάνδρῳ τε αὐτῷ καὶ ἔτι Φιλίππῳ πρότερον γεγονότα ἐν γνώσει. προσῄει τε ὁ Ἀναξιμένης, καὶ τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον, πεπυσμένον καθ᾽ ἥντινα αἰτίαν ἥκοι, κατομόσασθαί φασιν ἐπονομάζοντα θεοὺς τοὺς Ἑλλήνων ἦ μὴν αὐτοῦ ταῖς δεήσεσιν ὁπόσα ἐστὶν ἐναντία ἐργάσασθαι." Paus. 6.18.2-3

honor. Prior events do seem to indicate that the charges leveled against Lampsacus were true. Lampsacus had been a member of the Heracles Coinage Alliance at the beginning of the fourth century and before Alexander's crossing Memnon of Rhodes had operated out of the city during his skirmishes with Parmenion.[66] In that case Alexander was already encountering, if not organized resistance, then a general disposition among the Greek cities of Asia minor toward the Achaemenids, rather than any sense of shared Hellenism. This situation would repeat itself soon thereafter at the city of Zeleia, which served briefly as the base for Persian resistance to Alexander. Arrian says that the city was forgiven of similar charges of *medizing* by Alexander because it was coerced into harboring Persian forces rather than collaborating openly. The reluctance of Zeleia to house the Persians is seemingly supported by a decree dating from around that time which suggests that a popular uprising had taken place, however given the short time the Persians were present in any large number at Zeleia it seems unlikely that any revolution was orchestrated in direct response to the Persians.[67] It is just as possible the Zeleians supported the Persians, or more likely, were disaffected in either direction. Zeleia, like most of the Asiatic poleis, was probably experienced in the art of excusing past allegiances with the rhetoric of reluctance necessitated by the onerous demands of Greek hegemony, where obedience alone was not enough and active support was not appreciated but expected.

Between the incidents at Lampsacus and Zeleia, Alexander defeated a force of allied Persian satraps at the Granicus river. The defeat of the Persian army and most of its commanders, including satraps hailing from across Asia Minor, left most of Anatolia without its chief governors or anyone who might offer unified resistance. It also offered more fodder for

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[66] "Μέμνων Ῥόδιος κυριεύσας Λαμψάκου δεηθεὶς χρημάτων ἐπέγραψε τοῖς πλουσιωτάτοις αὐτῶν πλῆθός τι ἀργυρίου, τούτοις δὲ τὴν κομιδὴν ἔσεσθαι παρὰ τῶν ἄλλων πολιτῶν ἔφησεν: ἐπεὶ δὲ οἱ ἄλλοι πολῖται εἰσήνεγκαν, ἐκέλευσε καὶ ταῦτα αὐτῷ δανεῖσαι ἐν χρόνῳ διειπάμενος ἐν ᾧ πάλιν αὐτοῖς ἀποδώσει." [Arist.] Oec. 2.1351b.
[67] *SIG*^{3} 279.7: "ἡ ἀκρόπολ[ι]ς κατελάφθη ὑπο πολιτῶν"

Alexander's propaganda machine, as he sent back to Athens three hundred sets of enemy armor as a dedication to Athena. Likewise, while Alexander buried the Greek mercenaries who had been killed fighting on the Persian side, those he took captive were sent back to Macedon as slaves, as punishment for taking up arms against Greeks and thereby violating "the common resolutions of the Greeks."[68] However, Alexander seems to have given mixed signals when it came to the aim of this campaign. Alexander appears to be enforcing the mission given to him by the League of Corinth, including punishing Greeks for fighting on the Achaemenid side against the Macedonians. However, in almost the same breath Alexander appoints Kalas to fill the now vacant position of the Satrap of Hellespontine Phrygia. Arrian specifically uses the word "satrap" when referring to the appointment and inscriptions from the period use the same verbiage.[69] In this respect Alexander is conquering Asia but is changing very little. This is not to mention that while the enslavement of other Greeks was not strictly prohibited, it was generally looked down upon, especially so for one whose goal was to liberate subjugated Greeks. Admittedly Arrian claims all the Greeks in question are mercenaries, and not directly affiliated with any polis, and therefore not as likely to engender much sympathy amongst the Ionians. However Arrian makes no distinction between Greek mercenaries and Greeks levied from the cities themselves. It is impossible to say how many were truly mercenaries and how many were simply Ionians themselves. It is similarly difficult to say the Ionians viewed these acts in combination, but for a supposed liberator, Alexander had done little so far to earn the name.

Alexander is met on his way to Sardis by the local commander, the Persian Mithrenes, with many prominent citizens in tow, turning over the city and its citadel to Alexander. The

[68] "παρὰ τὰ κοινῇ δόξαντα τοῖς Ἕλλησιν Ἕλληνες ὄντες ἐναντία τῇ Ἑλλάδι ὑπὲρ τῶν βαρβάρων ἐμάχοντο." Arr. *Anab.* 1.16.6; the resolutions mentioned are presumably the decrees of the League of Corinth which forbade mercenaries from fighting on the Persian side.

[69] Arr. *Anab.* 1.16.7, technically Arrian uses the verb *σατραπεύειν*, "to be a satrap"; for contemporaneous Macedonian inscriptions from the area featuring the use of "satrap": *SIG*^{3} 302, 311.

surrender of Sardis, the capital of the combined Lydian-Ionian satrapy, following the battle of Granicus is often seen as an emphatic endorsement of Alexander's invasion and the liberation, not just of the Greeks, but of Achaemenid subjects writ large. However, contrary to Briant's claim that "Mithrenes' decision cannot fail to suprise," given the devastation of Persian higher command, including the death of the Lydian satrap Spithridates, it is questionable to what degree the city could have resisted even if it wanted to do so.[70] Arrian gives multiple instances of local garrisons deserting their posts following the disaster at Granicus, including the city of Daskyleion captured by Parmenion, and later down the line the garrison of Ephesus similarly abandoned its post following the battle.[71] It is entirely possible that a similar situation had taken place at Sardis. Mithrenes' reception of Sardis is not all that surprising in the context of Achaemenid protocol. His actions are perfectly in line with traditional procedure about how to receive a monarch and show obedience, they are not exceptional in their substance.[72]

The makeup of this group of envoys also puts the nature of Persian rule there into doubt. Arrian's wording makes it clear that although Mithrenes may be at the head of this party, his authority is far from absolute or uncontested. In fact, in the episode in question, Mithrenes is credited only with the surrender of the citadel and the treasury, it is the local elites who hand over the city itself.[73] The presence of local nobility, distinct from the Achaemenid bureaucracy, indicates that the region was likely not administered all that proactively by the Persian administration. Even though Lydia did not have the protections that had been afforded to Ionia in the King's Peace that the cities would be autonomous, it appears that local elites were given

[70] Pierre Briant, "Alexander in Sardis," trans. Amélie Kuhrt, *Oriens et Occidens* 26 (2017): 502.
[71] Daskyleion: Arr. *Anab.* 1.17.2; Ephesus: Arr. *Anab.* 1.17.9
[72] Briant, "Alexander in Sardis," 503.
[73] "καὶ ἀπέχοντος αὐτοῦ ὅσον ἑβδομήκοντα σταδίους Σάρδεων ἦκον παρ᾽ αὐτὸν Μιθρήνης τε ὁ φρούραρχος τῆς ἀκροπόλεως τῆς ἐν Σάρδεσι καὶ Σαρδιανῶν οἱ δυνατώτατοι, ἐνδιδόντες οἱ μὲν τὴν πόλιν, ὁ δὲ Μιθρήνης τὴν ἄκραν καὶ τὰ χρήματα." Arr. *Anab.* 1.17.3

considerable latitude nonetheless. Furthermore, just as Alexander did after the battle of Granicus, rather than dissolving the Persian system, Alexander merely replaced Persian officials with Greek ones. Mithrenes was superseded in his command of the citadel by a Macedonian, Pausanias, and likewise Philotas took up the position left vacant by the death of the satrap Spithridates.[74] Even as Alexander allows the Lydians to keep their "ancient customs" one wonders how this was any different than it had been under the Achaemenids, given the presence of a seemingly independent Lydian elite.[75] Alexander also gives the Lydians *ἐλευθέρους*, "freedom", however this is likely born out of the Greek belief that all Persian subjects were slaves of the Great King, and had little practical bearing on the administration.[76] Despite this apparent "freedom" Alexander still appoints a certain Nicias to set and collect tribute.[77]

Upon entering the city of Ephesus in Ionia proper, Alexander's reception was notably mixed. With the garrison having fled after news of the Granicus reached the city, it was largely helpless to resist Alexander, much like Sardis may have been. However, incidents immediately following Alexander's occupation seem to indicate that sentiments were deeply split among the population. Alexander dissolved its existing oligarchy leading to the murder of a former oligarch, Syrphax, as well as his son and brothers who were killed by a mob seemingly intent on taking vengeance against those who wanted to call for reinforcements from Memnon of Rhodes. The incident is displayed by Arrian, and taken by some modern historians, as a spontaneous upswell of anti-Persian sentiment in the city. Arrian cites the mob's anger, saying:

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[74] The division between satrap and citadel commander dates at least to the late 400's as a Persian Orontas is mentioned as commander of the citadel of Sardis in Xen. *Anab.* 1.6.6

[75] Nicholas Cahill, "Sardis in the Achaemenid and Lysimachean Periods," in *Spear-Won Land: Sardis from the King's Peacce to the Peace of Apamea* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2019), 11–36.

[76] It should be noted that the period following Alexander's conquest saw a return of habitation to areas of Sardis left vacant under Achaemenid rule, see Kosmin and Berlin,

[77] Bosworth, *Commentary on Arrian*, vol. 1, 129.

> The Ephesian populace, relieved from fear of the oligarchs, rushed to kill those who had been for calling in Memnon, those who had plundered the temple of Artemis, and those who threw down the statue of Philip in the temple and dug up the tomb of Heropythes, the liberator of the city, in the marketplace.[78]

Certainly if there was an Ionian city that was disposed against the Persians it would be Ephesus. Plutarch mentions Delius the Ephesian who had been sent to Alexander sometime before the invasion and "who more than any other kindled his ardour and spurred him on to take up the war against the barbarians."[79] It certainly seems that the operations of Parmenion in the region inspired some kind of uprising in the city, hence the references to the statue of Philip, although that had been put down following Parmenion's defeat by Memnon at Magnesia.[80] The subsequent murder of Syrphax and his relatives is taken as the fallout of the Persian-backed oligarchy losing its military support.[81] However, if that was the case, then why had Alexander not arrived at a city already in the midst of revolution? If the oligarchy was solely an Achaemenid-backed organization, then after the flight of the Persian garrison there would have been little keeping the oligarchs in power even before Alexander arrived. On the contrary, the severe reaction occurs *only after* the arrival of the Macedonians and would indicate that opinions in Ephesus were more complex than a simple split between a restive public and medizing nobility. The actions of the mob reflect, less a popular revolt, and more the actions of a particular faction, empowered by the arrival of Alexander to take vengeance on its former opponents.

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[78] "ὁ δὲ δῆμος ὁ τῶν Ἐφεσίων, ὡς ἀφῃρέθη αὐτοῖς ὁ ἀπὸ τῶν ὀλίγων φόβος, τούς τε Μέμνονα ἐπαγομένους καὶ τοὺς τὸ ἱερὸν συλήσαντας τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος καὶ τοὺς ἠν εἰκόνα τὴν Φιλίππου τὴν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ καταβαλόντας καὶ τὸν τάφον ἐκ τῆς ἀγορᾶς ἀνορύξαντας τὸν Ἡροπύθου τοῦ ἐλευθερώσαντος τὴν πόλιν ὥρμησαν ἀποκτεῖναι." Arr. *Anab.* 1.17.11

[79] "ὁ δὲ πεμφθεὶς πρὸς Ἀλέξανδρον ὑπὸ τῶν ἐν Ἀσίᾳ κατοικούντων Ἑλλήνων καὶ μάλιστα διακαύσας καὶ παροξύνας ἅψασθαι τοῦ πρὸς τοὺς βαρβάρους πολέμου Δήλιος ἦν Ἐφέσιος" Plut. *Adv. Col.* §33

[80] Bosworth, *Commentary on Arrian,* vol. I, 131.

[81] "καὶ Σύρφακα μὲν καὶ τὸν παῖδα αὐτοῦ Πελάγοντα καὶ τοὺς τῶν ἀδελφῶν τοῦ Σύρφακος παῖδας ἐκ τοῦ ἱροῦ ἐξαγαγόντες κατέλευσαν" Arr. *Anab.* 1.17.2

Arrian says that one of the grievances held by the mob was anger at those who wished to call in the aid of Memnon and the Persians, indicating that such a Pro-Persian faction existed. This shows, then, that there was a significant sentiment, if only among the elites at least, to actively call in Persian support to defend the city from Alexander. While it is impossible to say to what extent one position was more popular than the other, what is more important is that both positions existed, and that even within a Greek city such as Ephesus, the reaction to Alexander's "liberation" was far from uniform jubilation.

While still residing in Ephesus, Arrian reports that Alexander was approached by representatives from Magnesia and Tralles, who surrendered their cities.[82] While Arrian is economical in his description of these events, the general statements he makes helps show that the character of Persian administration was similar in these cities to that of Ephesus. Firstly, the envoys themselves, with no particular persons named, Persian or otherwise, were likely similar to that which met Alexander outside Sardis, i.e. a general body of prominent indigenous aristocrats, rather than messengers of a single Persian administrator. Further, Alexander orders that the local oligarchies be abolished and democracies established in the surrounding cities as was done in Ephesus, which helps confirm that rule by local elites was not a phenomenon unique to Ephesus but was a guiding principle in Persian rule of the region.

In this sense it seems the Achaemenids had kept up their part of the King's Peace, ensuring that the Ionian cities would be autonomous. However, this is in conflict with Arrian's statement that Alexander "restored its own laws to each city." This restoration becomes more suspect when we look at Alexander's actions within the broader context of Aegean politics since the Greco-Persian wars. Though Arrian frames the dissolution of the oligarchies and establishing

[82] "ἐν τούτῳ δὲ ἐκ Μαγνησίας τε καὶ Τράλλεων παρ᾽ αὐτὸν ἦκον ἐνδιδόντες τὰς πόλεις" Arr., 1.18.1

of democracies as "liberation", Alexander is following standard Hellenic practice when it comes to enforcing his hegemony over the region. Due to the idiosyncrasies of Hellenic politics, the Spartans and Athenians before Alexander tended to impose puppet governments in subject poleis rather than rule them outright. In this respect Alexander is once again more iterative than innovative, and the Ionians may have looked with disdain on what appeared to be yet another hegemony, given how ill-treated the Ionians had been previously. Alexander had already begun this policy in Chios in 334, which had earlier joined the league of Corinth, where he established a democracy. While framed as freedom from the "oligarchy earlier established among you by the barbarians," Alexander still places a garrison of troops in Chios to keep the peace as part of this proclamation.[83]

If there was a new feature introduced by Alexander it was more despotic than democratic. Despite in essence returning rights that had, in theory at least, only recently been violated, Alexander's framing is such that allowing the cities to use their own laws was a gift and not a restoration. As Bosworth notes: "now Macedonian dynasts often claimed to 'give' even when they merely confirmed or restored what had been enacted by a predecessor."[84] Along with this grant came a suspension of the tribute previously paid to the Achaemenids, however this would be a grant applied inconsistently to the Asiatic Greeks and is best seen as a means to win over support. This support may have been lacking in Ionia as Alexander still thought it necessary to send two 5,000 men strong detachments to enforce the surrender of the remaining cities he had not visited personally.[85] While some force would likely have been necessary to confirm

[83] Osborne and Rhodes, *Greek Historical Inscriptions 404 - 323 BC*, 418–25. This was part of a general vacillation of the Aegean islands between 336-334 between Memon of Rhodes and the Macedonians.
[84] Bosworth, *Commentary on Arrian*, vol. I, 135.
[85] "ὃς πέμπει Παρμενίωνα, [p. 34] δοὺς αὐτῷ δισχιλίους καὶ πεντακοσίους πεζοὺς τῶν ξένων καὶ Μακεδόνας παραπλησίους, ἱππέας δὲ τῶν ἑταίρων ἐς διακοσίους. Ἀλκίμαχον δὲ τὸν Ἀγαθοκλέους ἐπὶ τὰς Αἰολίδας τε πόλεις ξὺν δυνάμει οὐκ ἐλάττονι ἐξέπεμψε καὶ ὅσαι Ἰωνικαὶ ὑπὸ τοῖς βαρβάροις ἔτι ἦσαν: Arr. *Anab.* 1.18.1

Macedonian rule in these and other cities, a combined force of 10,000 seems excessive to occupy cities that had, in theory, already surrendered. If there was no formal resistance, then it may very well have been the case that similar split sympathies existed in these cities as in Ephesus, which would necessitate a more robust Macedonian presence to ensure loyalty and keep the peace.

A city that certainly did resist was Miletus, south of Ephesus along the coast. Miletus had always been the most sympathetic to Achaemenid rule among the cities of Ionia, dating back to the initial Persian invasion in 499 BCE when Miletus alone joined the Persians willingly. So it is perhaps unsurprising that they would offer the most resistance to Alexander within Ionia. That said, the Milesians were still caught in the midst of a general strategic collapse in Anatolia following the Granicus, so their resistance was hardly what it could have been otherwise. Unlike most other cities however the Milesians did not surrender their city pre-emptively, although Arrian says that Alexander took the outer city on the first attempt nonetheless, again citing an understaffed-garrison.[86] Said garrison, under the command of Hegesistratos, an appointment of the Achaemenid king Darius III, did continue to occupy the acropolis and await possible Achaemenid reinforcements. Arrian characterizes those resisting as agents of foreign Persian rule, the implicit assumption being that the local Milesians did not resist Alexander. However, when those within the citadel sent an emissary to discuss terms, they sent Glaukippos, whom Arrian describes as "one of the notables of Miletus" and says that he was sent by both the garrison and the local population.[87] This certainly contradicts Arrian's portrayal of those within the citadel, as it seems that it was not just the garrison that sought to resist Alexander. Given what we have seen from the other cities, it is likely that the local elites feared their loss of status

[86] Diodorus paints a much different scene, with an organized Persian defense under Memnon, although this is likely a repetition of the later siege of Hallicarnassus, Diod. 17.22.
[87] Arr., *Anab.* 1.19.1: Glaukippos: "Γλαύκιππος, ἀνὴρ τῶν δοκίμων ἐν Μιλήτῳ"; those in the citadel: "ἐκπεμφθεὶς παρὰ Ἀλέξανδρον παρὰ τοῦ δήμου τε καὶ τῶν ξένων τῶν μισθοφόρων"

should Alexander seize the city and dissolve the existing oligarchic institutions, assuming Miletus was organized similarly to the other Ionian cities.

Arrian claims that Hegesistratos originally sent a message to Alexander surrendering the city but decided to resist anyway since the Persian navy was on its way.[88] This change of face may shed light on the surrender of the other cities as well, since it seems that the initial surrender of Miletus was more a pragmatic decision made due to the inability to organize a proper resistance. With this in mind, it seems likely that the decision to surrender in other cities was made from a similar calculation. This would also mesh nicely with the disagreements within Ephesus, whether to surrender or wait for Persian reinforcements. In Ephesus the option to surrender won out, but by the time Alexander reached Miletus the situation had changed and an organized resistance seemed more feasible. The message sent by Glaukippos also supports this pragmatic approach, with a proposal of neutrality giving preference to neither Persian nor Macedonian but instead "the citizens were prepared to open their walls and harbours to Alexander and the Persians in common."[89] It seems then that the people of Miletus, and perhaps those of the other Ionian cities, harbored no particular allegiance in either direction, but simply wished to maintain the autonomy that they currently enjoyed under the King's Peace.

While Miletus was eventually captured, with the Persian navy unable to provide assistance, the circumstance that prompted Miletus to hold out would continue to shift in the Persians' favor, with a much more robust defense mounted in the protection of Halicarnassus. Arrian and Diodorus offer subtly different accounts of the march from Miletus. Arrian merely

[88] "Ἡγησίστρατος γάρ, ὅτῳ ἡ φρουρὰ ἡ Μιλησίων ἐκ βασιλέως ἐπετέτραπτο, πρόσθεν γράμματα παρ᾽ Ἀλέξανδρον ἔπεμπεν ἐνδιδοὺς τὴν Μίλητον: τότε δὲ ἀναθαρρήσας ἐπὶ τῷ Περσῶν στρατῷ οὐ μακρὰν ὄντι διασώζειν τοῖς πέρσαις ἐπενόει τὴν πόλιν. Νικάνωρ δὲ τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν ναυτικὸν ἄγων ὑποφθάνει τοὺς Πέρσας τρισὶν ἡμέραις πρότερος καταπλεύσας ἢ τοὺς Πέρσας Μιλήτῳ προσχεῖν, καὶ ὁρμίζεται ναυσὶν ἑξήκοντα καὶ ἑκατὸν ἐν τῇ νήσῳ τῇ Λάδῃ: κεῖται δὲ αὕτη ἐπὶ τῇ Μιλήτῳ." Arr., 1.18.4

[89] "τά τε τείχη ἔφη ἐθέλειν τοὺς Μιλησίους καὶ τοὺς λιμένας παρέχειν κοινοὺς Ἀλεξάνδρῳ καὶ Πέρσαις" Arr., 1.19.1

says that Alexander "captured on the march the cities between Miletus and Halicarnassus." Diodorus on the other hand says that Alexander brought the cities to his side peaceably, through promises of independence and exemption from tribute. While both historians are fairly brief, they may in fact indicate the other cities of the region were beginning to favor resistance to acquiescence. In Arrian's account the mere fact that these cities seem to have been taken by force, and not surrendered like previous Ionian cities, would indicate that sentiments were trending toward resisting the Macedonians. Likewise in Diodorus' version, these privileges were given not out of Alexander's great magnanimity but out of a need to bolster his apparently weak strategic position, as in the case of Tralles and Magnesia earlier.

The long resistance of Halicarnassus then seems the result of superior resources rather than superior conviction. Arrian says that the city was bolstered by the Persian navy as well as a large force of Persian and mercenary forces.[90] This attributes the resistance of the city solely to the interests and intervention of the Persian state, leaving out entirely any notion of local resistance. However, when Alexander attempted to gain control of the gate at Myndos, which had promised to come over to him but seemed to renege on the deal, Arrian says that "the citizens resisted stubbornly" and, a little while later, Arrian also describes a night attack by the native Halicarnassians.[91] Therefore, despite what Arrian initially claims, the resistance to Alexander was supported at least in part by the local population. There are certainly questions about how much this resistance may have been motivated by the situation itself, to defend their home city that was already under siege, rather than a specific objection to Alexander. However,

[90] " ἤδη ἀποδεδειγμένος πρὸς Δαρείου τῆς τε κάτω Ἀσίας καὶ τοῦ ναυτικοῦ παντὸς ἡγεμών, ἐκ πολλοῦ παρεσκευάκει, καὶ στρατιῶται πολλοὶ μὲν ξένοι μισθοφόροι ἐν τῇ πόλει ἐγκατελείφθησαν, πολλοὶ δὲ καὶ Περσῶν αὐτῶν" Arr., Anab., 1.20.2

[91] Myndos gate: "καὶ οἱ ἐκ τῆς πόλεως ἅμα εὐρώστως ἀμυνόμενοι" Arr., *Anab.,* 1.20.7; night attack: " οἱ δὲ ἐκ τῆς Ἁλικαρνασσοῦ νυκτὸς ἐκδραμόντες" Arr. *Anab.* 1.20.9

this pragmatism in and of itself runs against the grain of Alexander's narrative of a Hellenic liberator.

Alexander certainly seems to punish the city as he would any other enemy. while Alexander commands upon taking the city that Halicarnassians in their homes be spared, he nevertheless decides to raze the city to the ground, perhaps as an example to others.[92] This would seem to suggest two things. The first is that the resistance of Halicarnassians, and not just of the foreign Persian forces, was so significant it necessitated a severe response; and second, that there was enough lingering animosity in the rest of Ionia to necessitate this kind of warning for other cities not to rebel or resist. Reaching the end of the Asiatic Aegean Seaboard, Alexander may have thought such a display of force necessary if he considered sentiments in the region still undecided. Following the capture of Halicarnassus Alexander would begin to march east in earnest, making his ability to respond to any uprising more limited. Unfortunately for Alexander, the Achaemenid presence in Ionia would return in earnest soon after his departure.

An Aegean Counteroffensive

Whatever auspices Alexander may have conquered Ionia under, it seems that his brief time there did little to engender any long-standing loyalty amongst the Ionians once he left. Following his march east across Anatolia and into Syria, Arrian reports a Persian naval counter offensive that took place in the Aegean to recapture Ionia. Alexander had disbanded his fleet after some naval skirmishes around Miletus, judging that he could not hope to match Persian naval strength.[93] The Persian fleet, led by Memnon of Rhodes, quickly secured the surrender of

[92] „ὅσοι δὲ ἐν ταῖς οἰκίαις καταλαμβάνοιντο τῶν Ἁλικαρνασσέων, τούτους δὲ σώζειν παρήγγειλεν“ Arr. *Anab.* 1.23.4; „αὐτὸς δὲ τὴν πόλιν ἐς ἔδαφος κατασκάψας αὐτῆς“ Arr. *Anab.* 1.23.6

[93] Ἀλέξανδρος δὲ καταλῦσαι ἔγνω τὸ ναυτικὸν χρημάτων τε ἐν τῷ τότε ἀπορίᾳ καὶ ἅμα οὐκ ἀξιόμαχον ὁρῶν τὸ αὐτοῦ ναυτικὸν τῷ Περσικῷ, οὔκουν ἐθέλων οὐδὲ μέρει τινὶ τῆς στρατιᾶς κινδυνεύειν. ἄλλως τε ἐπενόει, κατέχων ἤδη τῷ πεζῷ τὴν Ἀσίαν, ὅτι οὔτε ναυτικοῦ ἔτι δέοιτο, τάς τε παραλίους πόλεις λαβὼν καταλύσει τὸ Περσῶν

the island of Chios.[94] Chios had been more involved than most of the Ionians in the politics of the Greek mainland, having clashed with Philip II in defense of their ally Byzantium, before joining the Corinthian league sometime after its foundation.[95] While the surrender of the Chians was likely a means of self-preservation, much like the surrender of the Ionian cities of the mainland in the wake of Alexander, it was in keeping with the pragmatism that had for centuries defined Ionian politics.

A similar episode played out on the island of Lesbos. Upon reaching the island, Arrian describes most of the island going over to the Persian side. Arrian chooses to focus on the resistance of the city of Mytilene as proof of their continued loyalty to Alexander, but given that Mytilene appears to have been the only Aegean city to have done so, it seems to suggest that such devotion was the exception and not the rule.[96] With supplies cut off the Mytilenians quickly negotiate terms of surrender, agreeing to rejoin the Achaemenids under the terms of the King's Peace. However, Arrian goes on to show how the new Persian commanders appointed on the sudden death of Memnon, Pharnabazus and Autophradates, broke their agreement and installed a tyrant in the city.[97] While this incident shows a breach of trust on the part of the Persians, it is the exception that proves the rule. During the siege the Mytilenians seem to have trusted the Achaemenids and their agents to agree to such terms, and since the terms in question were

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ναυτικόν, οὔτε ὀπόθεν τὰς ὑπηρεσίας συμπληρώσουσιν οὔτε ὅποι τῆς Ἀσίας προσέξουσιν ἔχοντας. καὶ τὸν ἀετὸν ταύτῃ: συνέβαλλεν, ὅτι ἐσήμηνεν αὐτῷ ἐκ τῆς γῆς κρατήσειν τῶν νεῶν. Arr. *Anab.* 1.20.1

[94] Arr. *Anab.* 2.1.1; Arrian uses the word προδοσίᾳ which often means treachery/treason, however I have taken it as the more neutral surrender in keeping with its usage by other authors, see Strabo's description of the rocks of Sogdiana in 11.11

[95] "ἐπὶ δὲ τούτων Φιλίππου Βυζάντιον πολιορκοῦντος Ἀθηναῖοι μὲν ἔκριναν τὸν Φίλιππον λελυκέναι τὴν πρὸς αὐτοὺς συντεθεῖσαν εἰρήνην: εὐθὺς δὲ καὶ δύναμιν ναυτικὴν ἀξιόλογον ἐξέπεμψαν βοηθήσουσαν τοῖς Βυζαντίοις. ὁμοίως δὲ τούτοις Χῖοι καὶ Κῷοι καὶ Ῥόδιοι καί τινες ἕτεροι τῶν Ἑλλήνων συμμαχίαν ἐξέπεμψαν τοῖς Βυζαντίοις." Diod. 16.77.2 cf. Front. *Strat.* 1.4.13

[96] "ἔνθεν δὲ ἐπὶ Λέσβου πλεύσας, ὡς οὐ προσεῖχον αὐτῷ οἱ Μιτυληναῖοι, τὰς ἄλλας πόλεις τῆς Λέσβου προσηγάγετο." Arr. *Anab.* 2.1.1

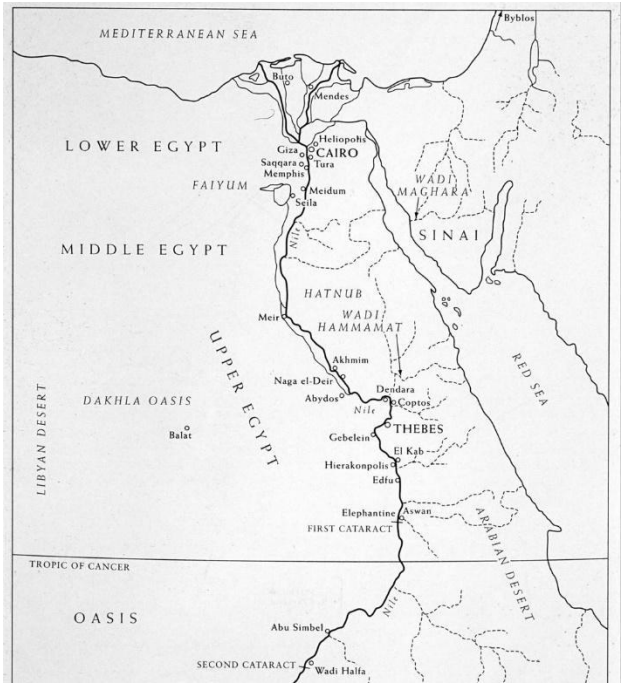
[97] "ἐπὶ τούτοις μὲν δὴ ἡ ξύμβασις τοῖς Μιτυληναίοις πρὸς τοὺς Πέρσας ξυνέβη. Φαρνάβαζος δὲ καὶ Αὐτοφραδάτης, ὡς παρῆλθον ἅπαξ εἴσω τῆς πόλεως, φρουράν τε ἐς αὐτὴν εἰσήγαγον καὶ φρούραρχον ἐπ᾽ αὐτῇ Λυκομήδην Ῥόδιον, καὶ τύραννον ἐγκατέστησαν τῇ πόλει Διογένην, ἕνα τῶν φυγάδων, χρήματά τε εἰσέπραξαν τοὺς Μιτυληναίους τὰ μὲν βίᾳ ἀφελόμενοι τοὺς ἔχοντας, τὰ δὲ ἐς τὸ κοινὸν ἐπιβαλόντες." Arr. *Anab.* 2.1.5

mostly a reset of prior Achaemenid agreements, they give us some indication that the Achaemenids had in times past respected the rights of Mytilene under the King's Peace.

When the Mytilenians agreed to take down the stelae commemorating their treaties with Alexander, one wonders if the whole process felt terribly familiar. It may have been the same spot where they had once placed monuments to their treaties with Sparta when they had crossed the Aegean, or with the Athenians when they had Mytilene as one of their subjects, interspersed at regular intervals with the almost cyclical renewal of Achaemenid power. The spot would later be taken up with commemorations of treaties with Alexander's various successors, the Ptolemies, Antigonids, and Seleucids, all of whom quarreled over the region just as the Greeks and Persians had before. Caught in all of this were the Mytilenians themselves, and their experience was likely not unique. The whole of Ionia bore the same marks from the tenures of a hundred different hegemonies. Alexander was not the first, nor the last, who would come to Ionia in the pursuit of some larger goal, and use the liberation of the region as an excuse to take what he pleased. The Ionians may not have had any particular affection for the Achaemenids, but it is equally unlikely that they loathed them any more than they already did their own supposed kinsmen. Alexander's reception in Ionia reflects how the region felt about Hellas and Persia: indifference and exhaustion.

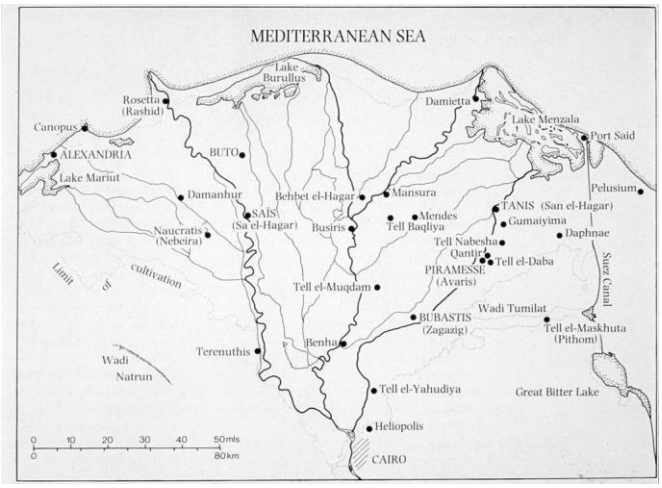
Egypt: A Tale of Two Kingdoms

Even by the standards of the 300s BCE, Egypt was ancient. With a tradition of Pharaonic rule stretching back to hazy time of myths and legend, the period of Achaemenid rule in Egypt was short by comparison. Alexander's rule was even shorter. Yet despite the fleeting nature of Alexander's presence in Egypt, it has been discussed in great detail. The same can be said for the Greek successor dynasty in Egypt, the Ptolemies, who ruled the region for around 300 years from 305-30 BCE. The Achaemenids, though present in Egypt for a similar amount of time, are often summarily dismissed as nothing more than foreign occupiers. However, this consensus stands in direct opposition to the extant material, both written and archeological. When one looks at the wide arch of the Egyptian Late Period, beginning with the death of Ramses XI in 1077 BCE, it becomes clear that the Achaemenids ruled Egypt in a manner that was more respectful of local customs, and more broadly tolerated by their subjects than has generally been acknowledged.



Egypt is defined by the Nile. Between the Mediterranean Sea in the north and the city of Elephantine in the south, its greatest width in ancient times was around the floodplain of the northern delta between Pelusium in the east and Mareia in the west. Lower Egypt was the most northern portion, from the Mediterranean down to Memphis. Middle Egypt was between Memphis and the Thebaid. Upper Egypt was

composed primarily of the Thebaid, the name given to the area around Thebes down to the first cataract of the Nile at Elephantine. Then as now, the desert prevented major incursions from the west and south, save the narrow avenue along the upper courses of the Nile. The Mediterranean and Erythraean (Red) Seas blocked movement from the north and east. The Sinai to the east was passable, though the harsh desert climate made it no easy journey. The Nile's waterways ensured that travel within Egypt itself was relatively easy, with no major geographic barriers separating any one part of Egypt from another. The opposite was true of the delta, where the channels of the Nile formed a thousand tiny islands. The extreme seasonal inundation of the delta made military maneuvers by land difficult even in normal months, and impossible during the annual flood. The relative security of the delta inlets would serve as fertile soil for the formation of a patchwork of principalities who would exercise quasi-independence for much of the discussed period and would often agitate for more independence if they found it lacking. Within the Delta the most significant sites were Tanis and Saïs, which served as the capitals of the 21-22nd and 26th (Saïte) Dynasties respectively.



restoration of old values. The result was a rebellious delta that chafed without its former freedoms, while the rest of the river valley was comparatively obedient. A comparison with Alexander and the Ptolemaic dynasty, shows that, although Alexander and the Ptolemies are often portrayed as being more amenable to native Egyptian norms, the tenure of the Greeks in Egypt was in fact a return, not to pharaonic custom, but to the pseudo-Egypt of the Delta princes.

Historiography

Egypt with its literal millennia of written documents—not to mention its climate conducive to the survival of otherwise perishable artifacts—has comparatively far more sources to work with than areas, such as Bactria, which were far from the Mediterranean centers of narrative histories and with a far more corrosive environment. However, this acts more as a mirage than anything and belies how much truly remains unknown, or at least unexamined, about Egypt in the late period. Dealing first with the narrative histories, beyond broad ethnographical interests, most Greek sources for this period make mention of Egypt only in those times its trajectory intercepts that of the Hellenic sphere. A major fault of this is the skewed view of Egypt in the narrative histories, reflecting mainly movements in the Delta and either ignoring or being ignorant of events in Upper Egypt. Herodotus makes up the bulk of a discussion of Egypt in the Persian period, with scant mentions by Thucydides. Furthermore, those times that ancient histories do delve into Egyptian history of this time for its own sake, their accounts are often at odds with the surviving archeological material and each other. Herodotus' account of Cambyses conquest, as well as his description of Egypt's warrior caste, the *machimoi,* is of particular note for its problematic nature. On the positive side, the corpus of Alexander historians is perhaps at its most complete here. Quintus Curtius Rufus, Diodorus Siculus, and Arrian are all present for this episode in Alexander's campaign. However they are constrained by how short that episode is

in itself. In light of the brevity of Alexander's time in Egypt, while time will be spent discussing his time there, the long recorded history of Egypt affords an opportunity to look at the long durée of the Persian and Hellenic periods, with Alexander used principally as a fulcrum to explain changes between the two regimes and native responses to one or the other.

Discussing the archeological evidence, there is far less reliable material from the Persian period than there is for either the earlier Egyptian periods or the later Ptolemaic one. The reason for this relative scarcity is up for debate, and arguments have been made that this bottlenecking is more the result of bias in the dating of artifacts than a genuine lack of archeological material.[1] Nonetheless, as it stands currently the corpus of material dated reliably to the Persian period (or the 27th Dynasty using Manetho's formula), while larger than other areas in the Persian Empire, is more modest than one might expect given Egypt's reputation. This is especially important for this period being one of foreign rule. This scarcity has led to assumptions about Persian rule as being little more than a foreign occupation, with little cultural interaction or activity between Egyptians and Persians. However, this argument from absence, when viewed in the context of what we *do* have, is unconvincing and fails to adequately address questions about the character of Persian rule in Egypt. Again this is contrasted with the Ptolemaic period, which has a far larger body of artifacts reliably dated to the period, although, as I will argue, that is not as positive a sign for the Ptolemaic period as one might expect.

Foreign Pharaohs

A discussion of Egypt in the Persian Period (the 27th and 31st Dynasties) covers a timespan much maligned within the broader history of the region. Almost 500 years after the end

[1] Henry P. Colburn, *Archaeology of Empire in Achaemenid Egypt* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 1–26.

of the New Kingdom in the 11th century BCE, the Egypt that the second Achaemenid ruler Cambyses invaded in 525 BCE was not the Egypt of Ramses or Tutankhamen. Persian Egypt forms the latter portion of Egypt's "late period" covering the 26th -31st dynasties of Egypt, after the imperialistic heights of the New Kingdom but before the similarly dynamic Ptolemaic Dynasty. However, despite not falling within these much more popular periods of Ancient Egyptian history, the people were no less "Egyptian."

The same cannot be said for their rulers, however. Egypt in the Persian period is often characterized as a province in a state of constant resistance. The assumed violation of Egypt's tradition of independence given as cause for a series of rebellions during the history of the province. However, the Achaemenids were hardly the first foreign rulers of Egypt, preceded in that capacity by the Assyrians and Kushites. Even most of the "native" dynasties of the period traced their lineage not to indigenous pharaonic lines, but to foreigners settled within the bounds of Egypt in the recent past. Contrary to how it has been viewed within the historical canon, Egypt under the Achaemenids was a return to pharaonic form. The Achaemenids may not have been Egyptians, but they emulated ruling practice more deftly than many of these supposedly indigenous dynasties. The appearance of rebellion was more a symptom of geography than it was of deeply held anti-Persian sentiment amongst the whole of Egypt. Instead, this appearance of strife was the product of constant agitation by a small subset of actors who are overrepresented in extant records.

Following the death of the Ramses XI, and the subsequent end of the 20th dynasty, Egypt fell under the sway of a succession of Libyan dynasties drawn from tribespeople settled in the Delta in the time of Ramses III.[2] Even before the ascent of these Libyan monarchs, The Egyptian

[2] Kitchen, *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt (1100-650 BC)* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips Ltd, 1986), 245.

state had begun to split between power bases in the Delta and the Thebaid (the region around Thebes in Upper Egypt). This split would only grow more pronounced over time, leading to frequent internal clashes by the time of the 22nd Dynasty. These Libyan dynasts kept their main power bases in the Delta, with a capital at Tanis on the eastern coast of the floodplain, moving the capital away from its more traditional, and central, locations of Memphis or Thebes, possibly only heightening the divisions between the Upper and Lower portions of Egypt.[3] Meanwhile recurrent challenges to dynastic authority came from the high priests of Thebes, who had enjoyed unified administrative and military power since the time of Ramses XI.[4] While these monarchs often adopted the symbols and dress of the Pharaohs of old, such departures in administrative practice undoubtedly upset age old balances of power.

Herodotus lays out the significance of Upper Egypt as the primary nexus of Egyptian culture, arguing that Egypt first began around Thebes before spreading north into the delta.[5] Yet despite this the upper courses of the Egyptian Nile were being ignored in favor of foreign expeditions into the Levant. The movement of the capital to the Mediterranean coast suggests that the attentions of these Libyan pharaohs were occupied by events to the north and not the south. Herodotus also goes on also to suggest some cultural differences between the delta and the rest of Egypt.[6] While he is vague in his commentary and concedes that some practices are shared between the two, Herodotus is speaking from personal experience in an Egypt that has been governed uniformly as one satrapy for several generations. The Egyptians of Herodotus' time are

[3] The capital had been moved north prior to the ascent of the Libyan monarchs, to the city of Pi-Ramesses, likely as a response to incursions by the Sea-Peoples.
[4] K. A. Kitchen, *The Third Intermediate Period*, 248.
[5] "ἀλλ᾽ οὔτε Αἰγυπτίους δοκέω ἅμα τῷ Δέλτα τῷ ὑπὸ Ἰώνων καλεομένῳ γενέσθαι αἰεί τε εἶναι ἐξ οὗ ἀνθρώπων γένος ἐγένετο, προϊούσης δὲ τῆς χώρης πολλοὺς μὲν τοὺς ὑπολειπομένους αὐτῶν γενέσθαι πολλοὺς δὲ τοὺς ὑποκαταβαίνοντας. τὸ δ᾽ ὦν πάλαι αἱ Θῆβαι Αἴγυπτος ἐκαλέετο, τῆς τὸ περίμετρον στάδιοι εἰσὶ εἴκοσι καὶ ἑκατὸν καὶ ἑξακισχίλιοι." Hdt. 2.15.3
[6] Hdt. 2.92; Herodotus' statements here are somewhat vague and confused, see Asheri et al., 2007, 304.

likely to be more homogeneous than in centuries past. An old story Herodotus relates suggests the prior depth of divisions between the delta and upper Egypt. He claims two different delta-adjacent communities had to seek arbitration from the oracle of Ammon as to whether they were even Egyptian, with the plaintiffs in question thinking of themselves, not as Egyptian, but as Libyan.[7] Asheri notes in his commentary, "in antiquity the western Delta had a strongly Libyan character…even in the 4th cent. AD a Greek papyrus clearly distinguishes between *Μαρεωταί* and *Αἰγύπτιοι*."[8]

This growing separation between the upper and lower portions of Egypt would be temporarily undone by the rise of the Kushite 25th dynasty. The Kushites took control of Egypt from their base in Nubia/Kush, moving the capital back to its more traditional location of Memphis. However, this was not to last as the Neo-Assyrian Empire invaded Egypt within a couple generations, driving the Kushites out.[9] Rather than rule Egypt directly, the Assyrians left control in the hands of a series of minor potentates. These principalities are often associated with the *machimoi* named by Herodotus as one of the seven classes of Egypt, characterized by Ruzicka as a "permanent, hereditary class of peasant-soldiers…which ultimately numbered in the hundreds of thousands," who have in many ways shaped the discussion surrounding late period Egypt.[10]

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[7] "οἱ γὰρ δὴ ἐκ Μαρέης τε πόλιος καὶ Ἄπιος, οἰκέοντες Αἰγύπτου τὰ πρόσουρα Λιβύῃ, αὐτοί τε δοκέοντες εἶναι Λίβυες καὶ οὐκ Αἰγύπτιοι καὶ ἀχθόμενοι τῇ περὶ τὰ ἱρὰ θρησκηίῃ, βουλόμενοι θηλέων βοῶν μὴ ἔργεσθαι, ἔπεμψαν ἐς Ἄμμωνα φάμενοι οὐδὲν σφίσι τε καὶ Αἰγυπτίοισι κοινὸν εἶναι: οἰκέειν τε γὰρ ἔξω τοῦ Δέλτα καὶ οὐδὲν ὁμολογέειν αὐτοῖσι, βούλεσθαί τε πάντων σφίσι ἐξεῖναι γεύεσθαι." Hdt. 2.18.2

[8] Asheri, Lloyd, and Corcella, *A Commentary on Herodotus*, 254.

[9] Stephen Ruzicka, *Trouble in the West, Egypt and the Persian Empire, 525-332 BC* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 7.

[10] "ἔστι δὲ Αἰγυπτίων ἑπτὰ γένεα, καὶ τούτων οἳ μὲν ἱρέες οἳ δὲ μάχιμοι κεκλέαται, οἳ δὲ βουκόλοι οἳ δὲ συβῶται, οἳ δὲ κάπηλοι, οἳ δὲ ἑρμηνέες, οἳ δὲ κυβερνῆται. γένεα μὲν Αἰγυπτίων τοσαῦτα ἐστί, οὐνόματα δέ σφι κέεται ἀπὸ τῶν τεχνέων. [2] οἱ δὲ μάχιμοι αὐτῶν καλέονται μὲν Καλασίριές τε καὶ Ἑρμοτύβιες, ἐκ νομῶν δὲ τῶνδε εἰσί: κατὰ γὰρ δὴ νομοὺς Αἴγυπτος ἅπασα διαραίρηται." Hdt. 2.164; for a treatment of the *machimoi*, see Fischer-Bovet, 2013.

Herodotus curiously makes no mention of the Assyrians in the withdrawal of the Kushites, instead crediting their expulsion to fear of a prophecy, and further saying that the Assyrians were expelled by a native Egyptian king.[11] While not consistent with archeological remains, Herodotus' account may reflect Assyrian difficulties in securing Egypt. The Halicarnassian's later account that Egypt was divided into twelve co-equal kingdoms is likely referencing in an oblique way the power given to these Assyrian vassal kingdoms. One such Libyan principality, based around the city of Saïs in the western delta, would gain control of the whole of Egypt as the 26th, or Saïte, dynasty. it would be a pharaoh of this 26th dynasty, Psammenitos, who was ruling when the Achaemenids invaded in 525 BCE.[12]

The Pharaohs of Saïs

Putting aside questions of the 26th dynasty's ethnic origin, the Saïte pharaohs began as agents of a foreign power. The first pharaoh of the 26th dynasty began as a leader of one of the many Libyan vassals of the Assyrian Empire. However, beginning a trend that would continue well into the Persian period, while these dynasts were subjects in theory, that was not the case in practice, with the principalities quickly revolting against the Assyrians, seemingly in alliance with Kush. In response the Assyrians sought to eliminate the delta's capacity for such fractious rebellion, elevating the Saïte dynasts to be wardens of the whole of Assyrian Egypt.[13] The Assyrians had already worsened the division of north and south, as Assyrian dominion did not extend all the way south to Elephantine but stopped south of Memphis, leaving much of Upper

[11] "τέλος δὲ τῆς ἀπαλλαγῆς τοῦ Αἰθίοπος ὧδε ἔλεγον γενέσθαι: ὄψιν ἐν τῷ ὕπνῳ τοιήνδε ἰδόντα αὐτὸν οἴχεσθαι φεύγοντα: ἐδόκέε οἱ ἄνδρα ἐπιστάντα συμβουλεύειν τοὺς ἱρέας τοὺς ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ συλλέξαντα πάντας μέσους διαταμεῖν. [2] ἰδόντα δὲ τὴν ὄψιν ταύτην λέγειν αὐτὸν ὡς πρόφασίν οἱ δοκέοι ταύτην τοὺς θεοὺς προδεικνύναι, ἵνα ἀσεβήσας περὶ τὰ ἱρὰ κακόν τι πρὸς θεῶν ἢ πρὸς ἀνθρώπων λάβοι: οὔκων ποιήσειν ταῦτα, ἀλλὰ γάρ οἱ ἐξεληλυθέναι τὸν χρόνον, ὁκόσον κεχρῆσθαι ἄρξαντα Αἰγύπτου ἐκχωρήσειν. [3] ἐν γὰρ τῇ Αἰθιοπίῃ ἐόντι αὐτῷ τὰ μαντήια, τοῖσι χρέωνται Αἰθίοπες, ἀνεῖλε ὡς δέοι αὐτὸν Αἰγύπτου βασιλεῦσαι ἔτεα πεντήκοντα. ὡς ὦν ὁ χρόνος οὗτος ἐξήιε καὶ αὐτὸν ἡ ὄψις τοῦ ἐνυπνίου ἐπετάρασσε, ἑκὼν ἀπαλλάσσετο ἐκ τῆς Αἰγύπτου ὁ Σαβακῶς." Hdt. 2.139

[12] "Ἄμασιν γὰρ οὐ κατέλαβε ζῶντα Καμβύσης ἐλάσας ἐπ᾽ Αἴγυπτον" Hdt. 3.10

[13] Ruzicka, *Trouble in the West,* i.

Egypt still in the hands of the Kushites. It is unlikely that such an appointment was well received by the greater part of Egypt outside the delta. The Saïtes quickly began to rule with functional independence and would slip out of the Assyrian sphere entirely in due time. However, their roots as Assyrian stooges may not have been forgotten.

Psammetichus, the first Saïte pharaoh, does not seem to have trusted his native soldiery, seemingly relying on Ionian mercenaries as the core of his military support.[14] Psammetichos appears to have incorporated the Ionians in much the same way as the pharaohs of the 20th dynasty had with his own Libyan ancestors: settling them in within their own communities on the northeastern quadrant of the delta, near the prior capital of Tanis. This dependence on foreigners, particularly Ionians and Carians, to form the core of the Saïte army would continue to the end of the dynasty, indicating that the Saïtes never reached a point of security in their dominance of Egypt where they could rely on only their native forces. These Ionians also serve to corroborate the divergent natures of the Delta and upper Egypt. Herodotus says it is through the Ionians settled in the delta that the events of the Saïte dynasty are so well recorded.[15] However, earlier Herodotus goes out of his own way to challenge a definition of Egypt endemic to Ionia, which defines Egypt as being only the area within the delta.[16] If this Ionian definition is in anyway informed by the experience of these Ionians within Egypt, then it speaks to the separation between upper and lower Egypt that the Ionians did not even consider the upper and

[14] "ὁ δὲ μαθὼν τὸ χρηστήριον ἐπιτελεύμενον φίλα τε τοῖσι Ἴωσι καὶ Καρσὶ ποιέεται καί σφεας μεγάλα ὑπισχνεύμενος πείθει μετ᾽ ἑωυτοῦ γενέσθαι. ὡς δὲ ἔπεισε, οὕτω ἅμα τοῖσι τὰ ἑωυτοῦ βουλομένοισι Αἰγυπτίοισι καὶ τοῖσι ἐπικούροισι καταιρέει τοὺς βασιλέας." Hdt. 2.152.5

[15] "τούτων δὲ οἰκισθέντων ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ, οἱ Ἕλληνες οὕτω ἐπιμισγόμενοι τούτοισι τὰ περὶ Αἴγυπτον γινόμενα ἀπὸ Ψαμμητίχου βασιλέος ἀρξάμενοι πάντα καὶ τὰ ὕστερον ἐπιστάμεθα ἀτρεκέως: πρῶτοι γὰρ οὗτοι ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ ἀλλόγλωσσοι κατοικίσθησαν." Hdt. 2.154.4

[16] "εἰ ὧν βουλόμεθα γνώμῃσι τῇσι Ἰώνων χρᾶσθαι τὰ περὶ Αἴγυπτον, οἳ φασὶ τὸ Δέλτα μοῦνον εἶναι Αἴγυπτον, ἀπὸ Περσέος καλεομένης σκοπιῆς λέγοντες τὸ παρὰ θάλασσαν εἶναι αὐτῆς μέχρι Ταριχηίων τῶν Πηλουσιακῶν, τῇ δὴ τεσσεράκοντα εἰσὶ σχοῖνοι, τὸ δὲ ἀπὸ θαλάσσης λεγόντων ἐς μεσόγαιαν τείνειν αὐτὴν μέχρι Κερκασώρου πόλιος, κατ᾽ ἣν σχίζεται ὁ Νεῖλος ἔς τε Πηλούσιον ῥέων καὶ ἐς Κάνωβον, τὰ δὲ ἄλλα λεγόντων τῆς Αἰγύπτου τὰ μὲν Λιβύης τὰ δὲ Ἀραβίης εἶναι" Hdt. 2.15.1

middle kingdoms as part of Egypt, with the delta forming a distinct cultural entity separate from the broader region.

The Ionians may have come to this conclusion from the actions and movements of Psammetichos. Though he does seem to have offered some attention to the traditional center of Memphis, his movements, like the prior Libyan dynasties, seem mainly concerned with the rest of the Mediterranean, with Herodotus mentioning the Pharaoh's siege of Azotos, a city in Syria.[17] Psatemmichos' immediate successor, Nechos II, continued this trend, waging a campaign in the Levant himself.[18] The outcome of the campaign once again hints at the close relationship between the Saïtes and Ionia, with Nechos II donating the clothes from his victorious siege of Gaza to the oracular sanctuary at Didyma, south of Miletus. A later Saïte monarch, Apries, similarly launched a campaign into Phoenicia to the north and against the Greek colony of Cyrene to the west. However, unlike his predecessors, Apries was notably rebuffed in Cyrene, with the Cyrenaican campaign quickly becoming a military disaster.

In response to the calamity, a revolt broke out against Apries. This revolt has been taken as a response by angry *machimoi* in the delta, who held Apries responsible for their failure and ousted him as a result. However, this episode is the first of many examples where the presence of *machimoi* is interpolated in events that make no mention of them. Herodotus does not use the term *machimoi,* but merely *Αἰγύπτιοι*—Egyptians.[19] Furthermore, when Apries, commanding Ionian and Carian mercenaries, met the rebel "Egyptians", he departed from his palace in Saïs in

[17] " Ψαμμήτιχος δὲ ἐβασίλευσε Αἰγύπτου τέσσερα καὶ πεντήκοντα ἔτεα, τῶν τὰ ἑνὸς δέοντα τριήκοντα Ἄζωτον τῆς Συρίης μεγάλην πόλιν προσκατήμενος ἐπολιόρκεε, ἐς ὃ ἐξεῖλε. αὕτη δὲ ἡ Ἄζωτος ἀπασέων πολίων ἐπὶ πλεῖστον χρόνον πολιορκεομένη ἀντέσχε τῶν ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν." Hdt. 2.157

[18] "ἐν τῇ δὲ ἐσθῆτι ἔτυχε ταῦτα κατεργασάμενος, ἀνέθηκε τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι πέμψας ἐς Βραγχίδας τὰς Μιλησίων. μετὰ δέ, ἑκκαίδεκα ἔτεα τὰ πάντα ἄρξας, τελευτᾷ, τῷ παιδὶ Ψάμμι παραδοὺς τὴν ἀρχήν." Hdt. 2.159.3

[19] " ἀποπέμψας γὰρ στράτευμα ὁ Ἀπρίης ἐπὶ Κυρηναίους μεγαλωστὶ προσέπταισε, Αἰγύπτιοι δὲ ταῦτα ἐπιμεμφόμενοι ἀπέστησαν ἀπ᾽ αὐτοῦ, δοκέοντες τὸν Ἀπρίην ἐκ προνοίης αὐτοὺς ἀποπέμψαι ἐς φαινόμενον κακόν, ἵνα δὴ σφέων φθορὴ γένηται, αὐτὸς δὲ τῶν λοιπῶν Αἰγυπτίων ἀσφαλέστερον ἄρχοι. ταῦτα δὲ δεινὰ ποιεύμενοι οὗτοί τε οἱ ἀπονοστήσαντες καὶ οἱ τῶν ἀπολομένων φίλοι ἀπέστησαν ἐκ τῆς ἰθέης." Hdt. 2.161.4

the delta.[20] It seems highly unlikely that if Apries was truly facing rebellion from the *machimoi* in the delta that he would continue to be based well within it. Then, it would appear that Apries was facing revolt, not from the delta, but from Upper Egypt. Herodotus is fairly explicit in saying "So the foreign troops of Apries were going to do battle against Egyptians, and the Egyptian soldiers of Amasis were going to fight against foreigners."[21]

The Amasis mentioned by Herodotus as leader of the rebels had previously been sent to quell the revolt before becoming its leader, and would succeed Apries as the penultimate Saïte monarch, ruling until the eve of the Persian invasion. Amasis' reign is mostly unremarkable in relation to prior pharaohs of the 26th dynasty. He continued prior Saïte trends, such as the heavy reliance on foreign mercenaries, as can be seen in the largely foreign makeup of the army later arrayed against Cambyses, which, although commanded by Amasis' son Psammenitos, was assembled by Amasis.[22] Likewise, Amasis seems to have kept his activities confined to the Delta. Herodotus describes the monumental architecture constructed by Amasis, but these monuments seem limited mainly to Saïs and Memphis, and no mention is made of any building projects in Upper Egypt.[23] As an aside, the attestation by Herodotus of a significant palace complex at Saïs in the reign of the prior ruler Apries shows that, despite the intermittent attention paid to Memphis, the Saïte pharaohs were still primarily based in the Delta, continuing the tradition of Libyan rule of Egypt from northern capitals.

The one major exception to Amasis' dynastic consistency was his inability to take effective steps against the advancement of the Achaemenids. This has once again been pinned on

[20] "πυθόμενος δὲ καὶ ταῦτα ὁ Ἀπρίης ὥπλιζε τοὺς ἐπικούρους καὶ ἤλαυνε ἐπὶ τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους: εἶχε δὲ περὶ ἑωυτὸν Κᾶράς τε καὶ Ἴωνας ἄνδρας ἐπικούρους τρισμυρίους: ἦν δέ οἱ τὰ βασιλήια ἐν Σάι πόλι, μεγάλα ἐόντα καὶ ἀξιοθέητα." Hdt. 2.163.1

[21] "καὶ οἵ τε περὶ τὸν Ἀπρίην ἐπὶ τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους ἦισαν καὶ οἱ περὶ τὸν Ἄμασιν ἐπὶ τοὺς ξείνους." Hdt. 2.163.2

[22] " Ἄμασιν γὰρ οὐ κατέλαβε ζῶντα Καμβύσης ἐλάσας ἐπ᾽ Αἴγυπτον"Hdt. 3.11

[23] Palace at Sais: Hdt. 2.175; temples at Memphis: Hdt. 2.176

the *machimoi*, the boogeymen of late Egyptian history. Ruzicka credits the *machimoi* for hampering Amasis' ability to respond to Cambyses' invasion, arguing that Amasis was forced to remain with his troops in Memphis for fear of revolt by the *machimoi* in the delta, allowing Cambyses to make the journey into Egypt uncontested.[24] However, this is taken from Herodotus' description of events, which makes no specific mention of the *machimoi* nor even the movement of a specific standing force of troops, saying instead that Amasis moved the Greek soldiers settled earlier by Psammetichos in the delta to Memphis in order to "be his guard against the Egyptians."[25] Ruzicka takes the "Egyptians" in this context to mean the *machimoi*, since they were "the only military force in Egypt that could have threatened Amasis." However, the *machimoi*, in the capacity they existed, were far from the elite military that Ruzicka makes them out to be, nor were they so regionally specific as to necessitate the movement of troops to Memphis.[26] Ruzicka seems to dismiss the far simpler and far more sensible notion that it was in fact the Egyptians themselves.

Persian Egypt

Then there is of course the conquest of Egypt by the Persians. Although the Achaemenids may at first seem like a much more "foreign" ruling dynasty, given the divergences mentioned between the delta and Upper Egypt, it is not too outlandish to speculate that the Upper Egyptians felt just as much under foreign occupation during the reign of the Saïtes as under the earlier Kushite 25th dynasty and the later Persian 27th dynasty. The delta was for all intents and purposes a separate entity from the rest of Egypt. There are reports, in both Herodotus and Ctesias' accounts of the conquest, of mutiny and acts of traitorousness against Saïte rule in favor of the

[24] Ruzicka, *Trouble in the West*, pg. 16
[25] "φυλακὴν ἑωυτοῦ ποιεύμενος πρὸς Αἰγυπτίων" Hdt., 2.154
[26] Christelle Fischer-Bovet, "The '*Machimoi*' of Herodotus and the Ptolemaic Army" The Classical Quarterly 63, No. 1 (2013).

Persians. While Herodotus' traitor is a Halicarnassian,[27] Ctesias' version has a prominent eunuch, Comphabis, defect and turn over control of the bridges on the Nile.[28]

However the most famous account of this conquest, Herodotus' version—apparently constructed from interviews and conversations with actual Egyptians[29]—gives the impression of the Persians, and Cambyses in particular, as tyrants. The account of the conquest, and Cambyses' various atrocities, such as the killing of the Apis Bull,[30] has colored the whole of Persian rule in Egypt in a similar tyrannical light. However, not only does the archeological evidence actively contradict this, with a stela showing that Cambyses interned the Apis Bull with all due rites and respected Egyptian custom;[31] but aspects of Herodotus' account suggest we may be getting this picture of Cambyses from one very particular source, that is from the delta. While Herodotus says he travelled well into Upper Egypt, as far as Elephantine,[32] it is also important to note that Herodotus makes it clear that the version of Cambyses' invasion he tells is not the only version he heard. Though he speaks about it only briefly, the Egyptian version of the story is far more favorable to Cambyses; Herodotus says they "claim that Cambyses was one of their own kinsmen."[33] The Greek verb used, *οἰκηιοῦνται,* is especially significant since it actively nativizes Cambyses and implies an active affection on the part of the Egyptians. Furthermore, the atrocities Cambyses is accused of committing are located entirely within the delta and nearby in Memphis. In addition to the Apis bull, Cambyses is also accused of defiling the body of Amasis,

[27] "συνήνεικε δὲ καὶ ἄλλο τι τοιόνδε πρῆγμα γενέσθαι ἐς τὴν ἐπιστράτευσιν ταύτην. ἦν τῶν ἐπικούρων Ἀμάσιος ἀνὴρ γένος μὲν Ἁλικαρνησσεύς, οὔνομα δέ οἱ Φάνης, καὶ γνώμην ἱκανὸς καὶ τὰ πολεμικὰ ἄλκιμος. οὗτος ὁ Φάνης μεμφόμενός κού τι Ἀμάσι ἐκδιδρήσκει πλοίῳ ἐξ Αἰγύπτου, βουλόμενος Καμβύσῃ ἐλθεῖν ἐς λόγους. Hdt. 3.4.1-2

[28] "Οὗτος στρατεύει ἐπ΄ Αἴγυπτον καὶ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων τὸν βασιλέα Ἀμυρταῖον καὶ νικᾷ Ἀμυρταῖον, Κομβάφεως τοῦ εὐνούχου, ὃς ἦν μέγα δυνάμενος παρὰ τῷ Αἰγυπτίων βασιλεῖ, καταπροδόντος τάς τε γεφύρας καὶ τἄλλα τῶν Αἰγυπτίων πράγματα, ἐφ΄ ᾧ γενέσθαι ὕπαρχος Αἰγύπτου." Phot. 72.10

[29] "ὡς λέγουσι Αἰγύπτιοι" Hdt., 3.30

[30] "ὡς δὲ ἤγαγον τὸν Ἆπιν οἱ ἱρέες, ὁ Καμβύσης, οἷα ἐὼν ὑπομαργότερος, σπασάμενος τὸ ἐγχειρίδιον, θέλων τύψαι τὴν γαστέρα τοῦ Ἄπιος παίει τὸν μηρόν." Hdt. 3.29.1

[31] Colburn, *Archeology of Empire,* 8.

[32] Hdt., 2.29; Herodotus also claims to have visited Thebes and Heliopolis (2.3)

[33] "Αἰγύπτιοι δὲ οἰκηιοῦνται Καμβύσεα" Hdt. 3.2.1

notably buried at Saïs in the delta,[34] and of committing the injustices on the old Saïte king Psammenitos in Memphis.[35] There are few if any such injustices said to have been perpetrated in Upper Egypt.

Despite Herodotus' negative account, the archeological record shows Persian rule in the region as being one of respect for local customs. The inscription of Udjahorresnet, a prominent Egyptian advisor to Cambyses, certainly shows Cambyses to be a ruler deeply concerned with presenting himself in a way that would be favorable to his new subjects, taking on the old pharaonic status as a son of Re and performing many of the priestly functions expected of a Pharaoh while in Memphis.[36] The presence of the Egyptian Udjahorresnet himself in the court of Cambyses speaks to the king's efforts to win over the local population. This continued under Cambyses' successor Darius, who instituted building programs, most notably in Upper Egypt, in places such as Saqqara, as well as a number of inscriptions depicting Darius in the standard Egyptian fashion.[37]

Also, it should not be ignored that the newly formed Egyptian satrapy was ruled from the traditional capital of Memphis, not Saïs or Tanis. Though Memphis does have its fair share of Saïte building projects, given equal if not more attention is their old capital of Saïs. This can be seen in Amasis' building projects which see temples built in both Saïs and Memphis, Herodotus even going so far as to say "in Saïs there is another statue of stone just as big and in the same

[34] "Καμβύσης δὲ ἐκ Μέμφιος ἀπίκετο ἐς Σάιν πόλιν, βουλόμενος ποιῆσαι τὰ δὴ καὶ ἐποίησε. ἐπείτε γὰρ ἐσῆλθε ἐς τὰ τοῦ Ἀμάσιος οἰκία, αὐτίκα ἐκέλευε ἐκ τῆς ταφῆς τὸν Ἀμάσιος νέκυν ἐκφέρειν ἔξω: ὡς δὲ ταῦτα ἐπιτελέα ἐγένετο, μαστιγοῦν ἐκέλευε καὶ τὰς τρίχας ἀποτίλλειν καὶ κεντοῦν τε καὶ τἆλλα πάντα λυμαίνεσθαι." Hdt. 3.16
[35] "ἡμέρῃ δὲ δεκάτῃ ἀπ᾽ ἧς παρέλαβε τὸ τεῖχος τὸ ἐν Μέμφι Καμβύσης, κατίσας ἐς τὸ προάστειον ἐπὶ λύμῃ τὸν βασιλέα τῶν Αἰγυπτίων Ψαμμήνιτον, βασιλεύσαντα μῆνας ἕξ, τοῦτον κατίσας σὺν ἄλλοισι Αἰγυπτίοισι διεπειρᾶτο αὐτοῦ τῆς ψυχῆς ποιέων τοιάδε." Hdt. 3.14
[36] Ruzicka, *Trouble in the West*, 19-20.
[37] Ruzicka, 23.

position as the one in Memphis,"[38] clearly linking the two cities. While this in itself is not damning, the movements of Saïte kings, such as Apries—whose base of operations during Amasis' rebellion was in Saïs and not in Memphis—suggest that, though Memphis might have retained a modicum of symbolic and strategic importance, it was not the center of Saïte power. Likewise, Amasis' burial in Saïs further attests to the significance of the site for the 26th dynasty. There is also the Petition of Petiese, a demotic document apparently complaining about how the writer of the document was ill-treated by other priests.[39] Though written in the time of Darius it refers to events that occurred during the Saïte period. It was written in el-Hiba, south of Memphis, and would seem to indicate a general level of disfunction with the Saïte state. So, if the Persians were to move the governance of Egypt back to its traditional place in Memphis—not only a place of symbolic importance but one also located closer to Upper Egypt geographically—and return to a more traditional mode of administration both in secular and religious terms, that might ingratiate a discontented Upper Egypt towards the Persian Empire.

The many revolts following the Persian Empire's occupation, not to mention Egypt's successful independence from the empire for a period of sixty-one years from 404 – 343 BCE, are often taken as a sign of constant unrest, however the natures of these revolts, as well as their relative ineffectiveness, suggest that rather than Egypt being in a chronic state of mutiny, outside of one problem area, most of Egypt was largely stable. In most of these uprisings the formula is clear: there is a revolt, in the delta specifically, the revolt besieges Memphis, they are unable to take Memphis while the rest of Egypt south of Memphis remains loyal, a relief force arrives from the imperial core, and the revolt is crushed. This pattern is first seen in a rebellion that broke out shortly following the death of Cambyses. The delta revolted, similarly to how it rose

[38] "ἔστι δὲ λίθινος ἕτερος τοσοῦτος καὶ ἐν Σάι, κείμενος κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον τῷ ἐν Μέμφι. τῇ Ἴσι τε τὸ ἐν Μέμφι ἱρὸν Ἄμασις ἐστὶ ὁ ἐξοικοδομήσας, ἐὸν μέγα τε καὶ ἀξιοθεητότατον." Hdt. 2.176.2
[39] Colburn, *Archeology of Empire*, pg. 10

up following the withdrawal of Assyrian troops after their initial invasion, however they were unable to take control of Memphis, which remained in Persian hands, and were soundly defeated by Darius.[40] This is a pattern repeated often as the history of the delta during this time shows the Libyan princes have the willingness to revolt but rarely the ability to succeed in revolution. Such is the case with an uprising mentioned by Thucydides, led by Inaros, a king of the Libyans on the Egyptian border.[41] From that description we can assume that Inaros is one of the Libyan princes in the delta, or at the very least is associated with them given his operations within the delta and his own base at Mareia on the delta's western edge.[42] Like before, although Inaros initially proves effective while the Persians are not present (and aided by the Athenian navy), once the Persians respond in force Inaros' rebellion is swiftly crushed.[43] While Thucydides does describe the revolt as consisting of most of Egypt, this could easily be attributed to his limited vantage point in the Mediterranean which would not allow him to know if Upper Egypt remained loyal.[44] Thucydides' description of an earlier siege of Memphis during Inaros' revolt specifically describes how not only Persians but also loyal Egyptians continued to hold the White Walls, the citadel of Memphis.[45] While this does not necessarily confirm that Upper Egypt was more loyal—it could simply be a case of more effective policing in the south on the part of the Persians—the most important aspect of the account is that a group of Egyptians, large enough to be noteworthy, remained with the Persian side. It is also unlikely that the Athenians moved past Memphis to become "masters of Egypt" as Thucydides claims, considering that after their defeat

[40] Ruzicka, *Trouble in the West*, pg. 23
[41] "βασιλεὺς Λιβύων τῶν πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ" Thuc., 1.104
[42] This is the same Mareia which had earlier queried the oracle at Ammonium about their own status as Egyptians according to Herodotus
[43] "Ἰνάρως δὲ ὁ Λιβύων βασιλεύς, ὃς τὰ πάντα ἔπραξε περὶ τῆς Αἰγύπτου, προδοσίᾳ ληφθεὶς ἀνεσταυρώθη." Thuc. 1.110
[44]"Αἰγύπτου τὰ πλείω" Thuc. 1.109
[45] "ὃ καλεῖται Λευκὸν τεῖχος ἐπολέμουν: ἐνῆσαν δὲ αὐτόθι Περσῶν καὶ Μήδων οἱ καταφυγόντες καὶ Αἰγυπτίων οἱ μὴ ξυναποστάντες." Thuc. 1.104

at the hands of the Persians they are driven into the delta.[46] This means the Athenians likely met the Persians in battle near Memphis, since if they had fought near the entrance to Egypt from the Sinai—as they likely would have if they truly controlled the whole of Egypt—they would have been able to retreat into open sea and would not have been entrapped within the Delta. Their inability to take Memphis and advance south suggests once again that Upper Egypt likely remained loyal.

Despite the repeated uprisings in the delta, the inability to extend that revolution much farther beyond the immediate confines of the delta itself suggest that despite the inordinate attention paid to these many revolts, it was by and large a local issue. On the contrary, the continued loyalty of Upper Egypt as well as the active efforts of Persian monarchs to appeal to Egyptian sensibilities towards governance suggests a territory that was mostly stable. When Egypt did actually break free from Persia it seems to not have been through the overwhelming force of a popular uprising, but through Persia's own internal weakness, as the civil war between Cyrus the Younger and Artaxerxes II halted the planned response to the revolt, allowing the rebellion time to capture Memphis and secure its hold over the whole of Egypt.[47] While narrative histories are generally light about information on Egypt south of Memphis, surviving documents show that, even after the 28th dynasty was proclaimed in the north, the south continued to mark documents as from the 27th dynasty. It was not until the fall of Memphis that the documents changed over.

[46] "ὃς ἀφικόμενος κατὰ γῆν τούς τε Αἰγυπτίους καὶ τοὺς ξυμμάχους μάχῃ ἐκράτησε καὶ ἐκ τῆς Μέμφιδος ἐξήλασε τοὺς Ἕλληνας καὶ τέλος ἐς Προσωπίτιδα τὴν νῆσον κατέκλῃσε καὶ ἐπολιόρκει ἐν αὐτῇ ἐνιαυτὸν καὶ ἓξ μῆνας, μέχρι οὗ ξηράνας τὴν διώρυχα καὶ παρατρέψας ἄλλῃ τὸ ὕδωρ τάς τε ναῦς ἐπὶ τοῦ ξηροῦ ἐποίησε καὶ τῆς νήσου τὰ πολλὰ ἤπειρον, καὶ διαβὰς εἶλε τὴν νῆσον πεζῇ." Thuc. 1.109

[47] Ruzicka, *Trouble in the West*, 39.

Son of Ammon

By the time Alexander reached Egypt in 332 BCE, the territory had once again been brought back into the Achaemenid fold after an extended period of independence, though only just. The region had been reconquered only eleven years prior in 343 BCE. The Satrapy had also just lost its satrap at the battle of Issus, leaving the province with no official governor. The march itself was unremarkable, following the standard route from Gaza across the Sinai desert, which Cambyses had taken some two-hundred years before.

The vulgate tradition portrays Alexander's arrival as a great occasion for the Egyptians. Curtius claims:

> the Egyptians, hostile of old to the power of the Persians—for they believed that they had been governed avariciously and arrogantly—had taken courage at the prospect of Alexander's coming, since they had welcomed even Amyntas although a deserter coming with authority depending on favour. Therefore a vast multitude of them had assembled at Pelusium, where they thought that Alexander would enter the country.[48]

Arrian, in contrast, states merely that the commander of Memphis, Mazaces, who had been left in de facto control of Egypt following the death of the satrap, Sauaces, at Issus, met Alexander at Pelusium and surrendered the province to him.[49] This reception has been taken as a sign of the Egyptians' endorsement of Alexander and contempt for the Persians. Mazaces' action, however, parallels that of Mithrenes, the garrison commander at Sardis who turned over control of Lydia

[48] "Aegyptii olim Persarum opibus infensi—quippe avare et superbe imperitatum sibi esse credebant—ad spem adventus eius erexerant animos, utpote qui Amyntam quoque transfugam et cum precario imperio venientem laeti recepissent. Igitur ingens multitudo Pelusium, qua intraturus videbatur, convenerat." Curt. 4.7.1

[49] "Μαζάκης δὲ ὁ Πέρσης, ὃς ἦν σατράπης Αἰγύπτου ἐκ Δαρείου καθεστηκώς, τήν τε ἐν Ἰσσῷ μάχην ὅπως συνέβη πεπυσμένος καὶ Δαρεῖον ὅτι αἰσχρᾷ φυγῇ ἔφυγεν, καὶ Φοινίκην τε καὶ Συρίαν καὶ τῆς Ἀραβίας τὰς πολλὰ ὑπὸ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἐχόμενα, αὐτῷ τε οὐκ οὔσης δυνάμεως Περσικῆς, ἐδέχετο ταῖς τε πόλεσι φιλίως καὶ τῇ χώρᾳ Ἀλέξανδρον." Arr. *Anab.* 3.1.2

to Alexander. Just as Mazaces' superior Sauaces was killed at Issus, Mithrenes' superior, Spithridates the satrap of Lydia, had been killed at the Granicus. Furthermore, it is likely that Sauaces was accompanied by forces from Egypt,and these troops may have suffered heavy casualties at Issus, leaving the satrapy with few remaining troops to call upon. In this light neither Mazaces' actions nor the surrender of the province, are in any way remarkable. Precedent indicates that Achaemenid officials favored surrender to resistance when there was no hope of mounting an effective defense.[50]

It is possible to reconcile the rapturous reception of the vulgate tradition with Arrian's more pragmatic depiction if we consider who it may be that is welcoming Alexander. Any crowd gathered to greet Alexander at Pelusium on the eastern edge of the delta would most likely have come from nearby, meaning from the notoriously restive delta region. If we take this episode as an extract from Cleitarchus' lost history of Alexander, which Arrian does not use but which Curtius may have consulted, it makes the delta-specific nature of Alexander's warm welcome even more probable. Cleitarchus was based in Alexandria and likely wrote his history based in part on interviews with Macedonian veterans. Writing not long after the death of Alexander, Cleitarchus would likely have also spoken to natives of the delta who remembered the arrival of Alexander in Egypt, and who also remembered the enmity for the Achaemenids within the delta.[51]

After receiving the surrender of Mazaces at Pelusium, Alexander marched along the delta to Heliopolis and ultimately to Memphis. There he performed customary rites, such as those

[50] Briant, "Alexander in Sardis," 503.
[51] Waldemar Heckel and J. C. Yardley, *Alexander the Great: Historical Sources in Translation* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), xxi.

associated with the Apis Bull.[52] Once again these overtures are often taken as an extraordinary effort on the part of Alexander to court the Egyptian people. This interpretation, howeverdepends on an assessment of prior Persian conduct in Egypt that rests solely on Herodotus. As we have already seen, Evidence beyond Herodotus shows that Cambyses and Darius performed many of the same Egyptian rites as their Saïte predecessors. Curtius claims that, while in Memphis, Alexander arranged "matters in such a way as to make no change in the native customs of the Egyptians."[53] Yet Alexander only made official appointments after his excursion to the oracle at Ammonium, calling into question the degree to which Alexander guaranteed the old customs. It seems more likely that Alexander merely retained the old Persian system, which itself had governed Egypt along pharaonic lines, specifically through the *nomarchs* which oversaw the many *nome* into which the country was traditionally divided.[54]

Alexander traveled from Memphis directly up the western-most branch of the Nile Delta, the Canopic branch. He does not seem to have at any point ventured south of Memphis, at least according to Arrian. Curtius at one point does seem to suggest a quick expedition south, but our knowledge of the chronology of Alexander's campaign onward into Mesopotamia, leaves little time for such an expedition. Curtius himself later goes out of his way to say Alexander did not have time for a southerly expedition.[55] In any case, Alexander seems to have been mainly concerned with the delta. If he went south of Memphis he did not stay there for long. While this is not any indication of favor for the delta region by Alexander—he seems to have been mainly concerned with consulting the oracle of Ammon at the Siwa Oasis in the western desert—the fact

[52] "ἐκεῖθεν δὲ διαβὰς τὸν πόρον ἦκεν ἐς Μέμφιν: καὶ θύει ἐκεῖ τοῖς τε ἄλλοις θεοῖς καὶ τῷ Ἄπιδι καὶ ἀγῶνα ἐποίησε γυμνικόν τε καὶ μουσικόν: ἦκον δὲ αὐτῷ οἱ ἀμφὶ ταῦτα τεχνῖται ἐκ τῆς Ἑλλάδος οἱ δοκιμώτατοι." Arr. *Anab.* 3.1.4
[53] "compositisque rebus ita ut nihil ex patrio Aegyptiorum more mutaret" Curt. 4.7.5
[54] "Εὐαίσης Σύρος Αἰγύπτου σατραπεύων, ἀφίστασθαι μελλόντων τῶν νομαρχῶν ἀπ᾽ αὐτοῦ αἰσθόμενος, καλέσας αὐτοὺς εἰς τὰ βασίλεια ἐκρέμα ἅπαντας." Arist. *Oec.* 2.1352a
[55] Bosworth, *Commentary on Arrian*, vol. I, 262-3.

that he never left the delta means he likely did not encounter the inhabitants of Upper Egypt, who may not have been so welcoming.

After his trip to the oracle of Ammon, which according to the vulgate tradition saw Alexander proclaimed as a son of Zeus/Ammon, Alexander returned to Memphis.[56] The subsequent administrative appointments attested by Arrian are not perfectly consistent with Curtius or the vulgate, but both sets of appointments offer certain insights. In Arrian's version Alexander appoints two native Egyptian *nomarchs*, Doloaspis and Petisis, to govern the province. While Arrian's use of the title *nomarch* in this context is inconsistent both with the established duties of the office and with Arrian himself, who uses the term correctly on other occasions, the division of Egypt in this fashion into two distinct territories is perhaps a reflection of north-south political divides.[57] It is particularly striking given that this is one of the few times Alexander goes out of his way to alter the existing Achaemenid administration. It is possible this decision was an attempted solution to the strife caused by having these two opposed factions within the same province. If so, it did not work: after Petisis declined the appointment Doloaspis was given sole command of the province. Alexander also appointed Macedonian officials to most offices, many of which seem to monopolize duties which one would expect to be handled by the *nomarch*, so the appointment of these two native officials could have been a mostly symbolic gesture.

The Macedonian appointments, however, continue a pattern of divided authority. Pantaleon and Polemon are chosen to head two different provincial garrisons in Memphis and Pelusium respectively, again perhaps reflecting a desire to formalize the Upper-Lower Egypt

[56] "Ac tum quidem regem propius adeuntem maximus natu e sacerdotibus filium appellat, hoc nomen illi parentem Iovem reddere adfirmans. Ille se vero et accipere ait et adgnoscere humanae sortis oblitus." Curt. 4.7.25

[57] "ἐνταῦθα θύει τῷ Διὶ τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ πομπεύει ξὺν τῇ στρατιᾷ ἐν τοῖς ὅπλοις καὶ ἀγῶνα ποιεῖ γυμνικὸν καὶ μουσικόν. καὶ τὰ κατὰ τὴν Αἴγυπτον ἐνταῦθα ἐκόσμησε: δύο μὲν νομάρχας Αἰγύπτου κατέστησεν Αἰγυπτίους, Δολόασπιν καὶ Πέτισιν, καὶ τούτοις διένειμε τὴν χώραν τὴν Αἰγυπτίαν: Πετίσιος δὲ ἀπειπαμένου τὴν ἀρχὴν Δολόασπις ἐκδέχεται πᾶσαν." Arr. *Anab.* 3.5.2

split.[58] Curtius, who does not mention the appointment of the *nomarchs* Doloaspis and Petisis, does corroborate the appointment of two different Macedonian commanders to safeguard the province, though he gives different names: Aeschylus and Peucestes.[59] Arrian addresses this division of power directly, reporting: "It is said that Alexander, marveling at how strongly defended Egypt was by its natural position, distributed rule over the country among several persons, since he did not think it safe to trust sovereignty of the whole land to a single man."[60] Such an explanation can be applied both to forces within and without. A unified Egypt could easily secede from central authority. However a unified Egypt could also easily lead to intra-provincial conflict between its existing factions.

The Ptolemaic Mirage

Following these appointments, Alexander hastened back to Syria to continue his conquest of the Achaemenid state, never to return to Egypt. Yet, despite his short time in Egypt, the episode has long stood out as a highlight in the narrative of his life. A good reason for this is probably the trip to the oracle at Ammonium, which in any recorded version of Alexander's life is fraught with difficulties and divine omens. However, another explanation is that Alexander serves as the prelude to three-hundred years of Greek rule in Egypt under the Ptolemaic dynasty, a lineage of rulers that has entranced modern historians as a time of prosperity and cultural syncretism. However, despite the apparent Egyptianizing nature of the Ptolemies, their syncretism stands out as profoundly un-Egyptian. While the Ptolemaic dynasty embraced or

[58] "φρουράρχους δὲ τῶν ἑταίρων ἐν Μέμφει μὲν Πανταλέοντα κατέστησε τὸν Πυδναῖον, ἐν Πηλουσίῳ δὲ Πολέμωνα τὸν Μεγακλέους Πελλαῖον: τῶν ξένων δὲ ἄρχειν Λυκίδαν Αἰτωλόν, γραμματέα δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν ξένων Εὔγνωστον τὸν Ξενοφάντου τῶν ἑταίρων: ἐπισκόπους δὲ αὐτῶν Αἰσχύλον τε καὶ Ἔφιππον τὸν Χαλκιδέως." Arr. *Anab.* 3.5.3

[59] "Itaque Aegypto praefecit Aeschylum Rhodium et Peucesten Macedonem quattuor milibus militum in praesidium regionis eius datis," Curt. 4.8.4

[60] "κατανεῖμαι δὲ λέγεται ἐς πολλοὺς τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς Αἰγύπτου τήν τε φύσιν τῆς χώρας θαυμάσας καὶ τὴν ὀχυρότητα, ὅτι οὐκ ἀσφαλές οἱ ἐφαίνετο ἑνὶ ἐπιτρέψαι ἄρχειν Αἰγύπτου πάσης. καὶ Ῥωμαῖοί μοι δοκοῦσι παρ᾽ Ἀλεξάνδρου μαθόντες ἐν φυλακῇ ἔχειν Αἴγυπτον καὶ μηδένα τῶν ἀπὸ βουλῆς ἐπὶ τῷδε ἐκπέμπειν ὕπαρχον Αἰγύπτου, ἀλλὰ τῶν εἰς τοὺς ἱππέας σφίσι ξυντελούντων." Arr. *Anab.* 3.5.7

adopted certain aspects of Egyptian culture, they never allowed their Greek heritage to be totally subsumed into that culture. In this light the Ptolemies resemble far more the Libyan dynasts of the third intermediate period than they do any native dynasty. The Achaemenids were far more effective at camouflaging their imperial presence in Egypt as native governance. The Ptolemies were yet another aberration of pharaonic norms.

Part of this modern scholarly favor undoubtedly comes from the comparative abundance of Ptolemaic archaeological remains. A common justification for the interpretation of Persian Egypt as a mere occupation is due to how few artifacts can be comfortably dated to the Persian period. However, this is mostly a mischaracterization caused by archeological practice. Achaemenid administration was rarely acculturating. Unlike subsequent states such as the Roman Empire, the Achaemenids never attempted to actively convert local populations to Persian customs or aesthetics. As a result, finds that resemble indigenous styles more than Achaemenid ones are not viewed as Achaemenid but as belonging to that local culture. This, however, distorts the view of the Achaemenid presence, especially in Egypt. Archeologists, when finding an artifact of unknown date, are inclined to date it to the Achaemenid period only if it exhibits explicitly Persianate features. Otherwise, it is often dated to the 26th Dynasty or to the period of independence from 404-343 BCE (28th-30th Dynasties). This creates an artificial scarcity in the archaeological record where the Persian period is viewed as not only not producing Persian-influenced objects, but not producing material of any cultural worth whatsoever.[61]

Meanwhile, Ptolemaic documents and remains are easily dated to their period, due to the heavy Greek influence. This gives the false impression of an exceptional cultural flowering

[61] Colburn, *Archeology of Empire,* 134.

during the period. This is not to say that the Ptolemaic period was not a great period of cultural dynamism, but rather that the interplay of cultures was in some senses precisely un-Egyptian and an alteration of the norms which the Achaemenids themselves respected. Egypt was a society built in large part off conformity and regularity, the Egyptians were incredibly protective of their customs and practices, evidenced by the need for every prospective monarch, foreign or otherwise, to adopt wholesale the images and performance of Egyptian kingship. The Ptolemies did not abandon many Egyptian customs, but they warped them in ways more striking than any prior age. While they continued to perform the rites associated with the Apis Bull, starting in 270 BCE, under Ptolemy II Philadelphos, the dynasty enforced the cult of his deified sister-wife Arsinoë, including a decree that a statue of her deified persona be displayed alongside the cult statues of local deities throughout Egypt.[62] This preceded a broader push to introduce a Hellenistic-style imperial cult.

While the Ptolemies often performed the basic rites expected of a ruler of Egypt, they still nonetheless styled themselves as Hellenistic monarchs first and foremost. Somewhat notoriously, it was only Cleopatra VII, the last monarch of the dynasty, who bothered to learn the native tongue. Unless important business called them upriver the Ptolemaic monarchs preferred to play polis in Alexandria. Notably, while Egypt had been ruled from Memphis under the Achaemenid administration, the decision was made by Ptolemy I Soter to move the capital to the new city of Alexandria on the coast on the Mediterranean. Alexandria, founded by its namesake on his brief tour of Egypt, was a thoroughly Greek settlement, much like the older Naucratis which it eclipsed, established in the time of the Saïtes as a colony for the Greeks settled from Ionia. Set apart from the rest of the Egyptians as a settlement modeled on Hellenic lines, Alexandria was

[62] Dorothy J. Crawford, "Ptolemy, Ptah, and Apis in Hellenistic Memphis" in *Studies on Ptolemaic Memphis*, ed. W. Peremans et. al., *Studia Hellenistica,* 24. 1980.

not interested in playing to Egyptian sensibilities beyond those practices that appealed to foreign audiences. This is attested in the necropolises of Alexandria, where, although broadly modeled around notions of Egyptian afterlife, the dead were interned in tombs based off distinctly Hellenic aesthetics, eschewing most things Egyptian aside from the novelty of a life after death.[63] The syncretism of the Ptolemies was, in the eye of old Egyptian norms, a profound failing. As Herodotus said, when the delegations of Apis and Mareia sought exemption from practicing Egyptian custom, arguing they were Libyans: "but the god forbade them: all the land, he said, watered by the Nile in its course was Egypt, and all who lived lower down than the city Elephantine and drank the river's water were Egyptians. Such was the oracle given to them." The implication being that all Egyptians are honor-bound to follow Egyptian custom. It was not impossible for Greeks to assimilate themselves into Egyptian culture, the populations settled by Amasis in Memphis assimilated in due time, as did individual Greeks elsewhere in Egypt.[64] However for the Ptolemies it seemed a particular challenge to become wholly Egyptian monarchs, perhaps spurred by their rivalries with the other Hellenistic kingdoms to always maintain a certain sense of Greekness, lest they be maligned as barbarians.

It should not go unmentioned that Memphis was once again second in Egypt. After being restored to a place of administrative prominence under the Achaemenids, the Ptolemies, in their residence in the mostly Hellenic Alexandria, seem to have reverted the policy of the older "Libyan" dynasties of the Late Period. Memphis retained its symbolic status as a center of important rites, but the Mediterranean pre-occupations of the Ptolemaic monarchs meant that Alexandria was undoubtedly the primary capital. Like the Saïtes before, the Ptolemies were

[63] Marjorie Susan Venit, *Monumental Tombs of Ancient Alexandria: Theater of the Dead* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 2.
[64] "ὁ δὲ θεός σφεας οὐκ ἔα ποιέειν ταῦτα, φὰς Αἴγυπτον εἶναι ταύτην τὴν ὁ Νεῖλος ἐπιὼν ἄρδει, καὶ Αἰγυπτίους εἶναι τούτους οἳ ἔνερθε Ἐλεφαντίνης πόλιος οἰκέοντες ἀπὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ τούτου πίνουσι. οὕτω σφι ταῦτα ἐχρήσθη." Hdt. 3.18.3

concerned, less by usurpation from Egypt, than by threats from abroad. Intermittent wars with the Seleucid Empire in Syria pulled the Ptolemies routinely into Levantine campaigns. The Ptolemies and Seleucids fought a series of Syrian Wars over the lifespan of both empires, totaling nine conflicts in all, which ensured that Ptolemaic attentions never strayed too far from the Mediterranean. This in addition to the Ptolemies' naval empire, securing control over extensive portions of coastal Anatolia extending into the Aegean and its islands. The thalassocracy of the early Ptolemaic period was principally concerned with its place in the Mediterranean ecosystem of empires.[65]

Placed in the context of Saïte predecessors this preoccupation with foreign contacts belies a larger dependence on foreign elements to ensure their domestic control of Egypt. The Cleruchic system formed the backbone of the early Ptolemaic military. The *cleruchs*—named after the allotment of land given, a *kleros*—were Greek settlers, given an allotment of land in exchange for military service.[66] Again here the Ptolemies are in some sense reverting to a Saïte state. Psammetichus had settled Ionians in the Delta and these foreign Ionians served as the core of the Saïte army through to the Achaemenid invasion. The Saïtes themselves had come from Libyans settled in the Delta for much the same reason. It was these military settlements which had turned the delta into a more multi-ethnic society than in the south of Egypt. However, the Ptolemaic system seems to have been far more extensive than prior settlements. *Cleruchs* were settled outside the Delta in Middle Egypt. The early Ptolemaic kingdom was a colonial state. Though the Ptolemies made overtures to the native Egyptian population, the core of their power rested in a Greek immigrant military class.

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[65] John D. Grainger, *Great Power Diplomacy in the Hellenistic World* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 87.
[66] Mary Stefanou, "Waterborne Recruits: the Military Settlers of Ptolemaic Egypt." In *The Ptolemies, the Sea and the Nile: Studies in Waterborne Power*, ed. Kostas Buraselis, Mary Stefanou, and Dorothy J. Thompson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013)108–31.

Second Century Crisis

Given the narrative put forward throughout this chapter, that a neglected Upper Egypt was responsible for the unrest of the Saïte period, and it was this Upper Egyptian community that was favored in the Persian Period to the outrage of the delta potentates, one would expect that the Ptolemies' neglect of Upper Egypt would result greater unrest in that area. That is exactly what seems to have happened as a series of revolts in the Thebaid, led primarily by indigenous Egyptians, put the Ptolemaic state into a period of crisis for the better part of the 2nd century BCE. The spark of this revolt is credited by Polybius, who gives mention of the revolt, to the haughtiness of indigenous Egyptian troops after a decisive Ptolemaic victory over the Seleucids at the battle of Raphia.[67] While that exact explanation is suspect, it does seem to indicate that by the time of Raphia (217 BCE), the *cleruchs* were insufficient in sustaining Ptolemaic military might, and natives had been given more prominence in the military. This would culminate in the so called "Great Revolt" lasting twenty years from 206 – 186 BCE, which saw native Egyptian Pharaohs rule from Thebes.[68]

Though the Ptolemies would eventually recover from this extended period of inter-Egyptian strife, the kingdom which emerged at the end of the 2nd century BCE looked very different from the Hellenic colonial regime of the 200s BCE. The temple infrastructure played a much larger role in the administration of the territories, recouping some semblance of their former prominence.[69] The temples had, under the early Ptolemies, been reduced from their previous status as wardens of vast swaths of Pharaonic land to little more than the objects of imperial benefactions, relying on direct donations by the Ptolemaic monarchs and making

[67] Polyb. 5.107
[68] Paul Johstono, "Insurgency in Ptolemaic Egypt" in *Brill's Companion to Insurgency and Terrorism in the Ancient Mediterranean*, ed. Timothy Howe and Lee L. Brice (Leiden: Brill, 2015).
[69] Hans Hauben, Review of *Army and Society in Ptolemaic Egypt: From Invasion to Integration*, by Christelle Fischer-Bovet. *The Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 53, 2016. 403.

frequent petitions to that effect.[70] Likewise, the Ptolemaic military saw an increasingly prominent role of native forces instead of a primary dependence on foreign immigrants. Though the *cleruchs* remained, their ethnic affiliations were lessened, with native Egyptians becoming *cleruchs*.[71] The Ptolemies never set aside their Hellenic origins, and the region would become increasingly Hellenized over almost a millennium of Greco-Roman rule lasting until the Arab conquest in 639 CE. However, it seems they were taught a hard lesson about what kingship in Egypt meant.

In light of the native strife which threatened to cripple the Ptolemaic regime, the relative silence of the Achaemenid period is revealed for the stability it was. That seems to be an odd thing to say at first, given the frequent uprisings against Achaemenid rule in the region, even resulting in independence for a period of sixty years. However, one must ask, who was revolting? And moreover, how successful were these revolts. That period of independence, though significant, was the result of a single successful revolt out of a myriad of failed ones. These were revolts driven not from the southerly regions of Egypt, where the population seems to have been quite content with Achaemenid rule and their broad respect for Egyptian norms, but led by the princes of the delta, who despite their constant agitation, had little to show for their efforts over a century.

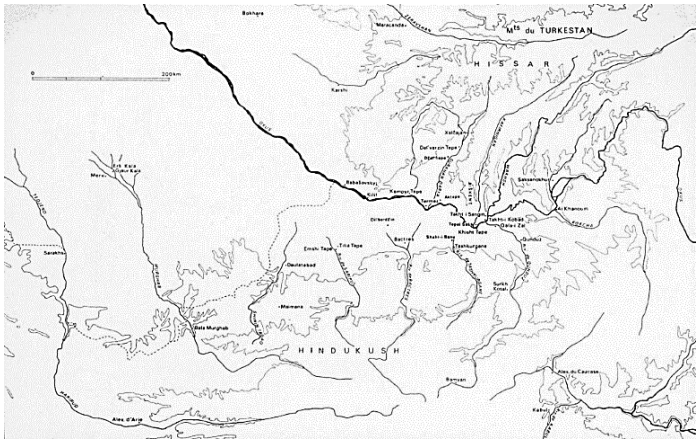
The unrest of Persian Egypt is often represented in nationalistic terms. It was the yearning for independence of a people who were more accustomed to rule themselves than to be ruled by someone else. However, the revolts of the delta reflect little of this national character. They were the opportunistic risings of petty despots, propelled by no motive other than the desire for imperial power. Contrast this to the Ptolemaic risings in the Thebaid, which saw widespread

[70] Crawford, "Ptolemy et al. in Hellenistic Memphis," 15-18.
[71] Hauben, Review of *Army and Society in Ptolemaic Egypt*, 404.

guerilla warfare, and the crowning of native Pharaohs in Thebes. If any Egyptian revolt is to be characterized in a “national” context, the latter seems a far more fitting candidate. The narratives of Persian Egypt have chosen to privilege the discontent of a few and have drowned out the assent of the many.

Bactria: Heartlands & Borderlands

From a Hellenic perspective, Bactria existed at the edge of the world, at such a distance that boundaries and geographies seemed to collapse in on themselves. The Azov and Syr Darya were confused as the same long river, stretching from the Black Sea to the Hindu Kush. Along this course was traced that fundamental border between Europe and Asia, until that borderline dissolved into confusion amidst the hills of Sogdiana. It was a land of Amazons and Iliadic tribes: distant, mysterious, and mostly mythical—from a Hellenic perspective.



For the Persians Bactria was a heartland. Centered primarily around the Oxus River (Amu Darya) and the many tributaries that fed into it from the Hindu Kush, Bactria lay at the northeastern edge of the empire, on the verge of two vast frontiers: the Central Asian Steppe to the northeast and India to the southeast, beyond the mountains. To its immediate north lay Sogdiana, itself wedged between the Oxus to the south and the Jaxartes (Syr Darya) to the north, in a transitional zone between the hills and mountains of Afghanistan and the flat plains of the steppe. Within the Achaemenid administration the two territories were governed as a single province, ruled from the satrapal capital of Bactra (also known as Zariaspa).[1]

Babylon may have been physically closer to the imperial center at Persepolis, but Bactria was far more culturally proximate. This was true for most of empire east of the Zagros

[1] Manel García, "The Second After the King and Achaemenid Bactria on Classical Sources," in *Central Asia in Antiquity: Interdisciplinary Approaches*, ed. Borja Antela-Bernárdez and Jordi Vidal (Oxford: B. A. R., 2014), 53.

Mountains, which was dominated by different Iranian groups and was therefore relatively more homogenous than the ethnically diverse west, but especially so for Bactria. More than merely being culturally similar, Bactria was a cultural fulcrum within the wider Iranian sphere. It was the birthplace of the prophet Zarathustra and thus held a special religious significance. While there is debate about the extent to which Zoroastrianism was a fully formed and codified religion by the time of the Achaemenids, the heavy association between Zarathustra and Bactria in later traditions, with Zarathustra even being called a "king of the Bactrians," suggests the importance of Bactria even at this early stage. [2] The satrapy of Bactria-Sogdiana certainly held a special place within the constellation of Achaemenid territories and tributary relationships. The satrap of Bactria was considered "the second after the king," with the position often occupied by Achaemenid siblings disqualified from the line of succession.[3]

By the time Alexander and his Macedonians reached Bactria in the spring of 329 BCE the Achaemenid Empire was almost over. Regardless of any apparent affinity between Bactria and its Achaemenid overlords, the Bactrians now had new masters. The rebellion that broke out in the autumn of 329 BCE, soon after Alexander's arrival in the region, and persisted until the spring of 327 BCE seems to suggest that the Bactrians were not amenable to this change in management. While the exact flashpoint is debated, this insurrection—which began with the revolt of seven cities in Sogdiana before spreading southward into Bactria—was made possible by the power of local Bactrian elites, many of whom held significant influence both within the local politics of the region and in the formal administration of the Achaemenid Empire outside of Bactria. Such a response by the native Bactrians shows their vested interest in the Achaemenid status quo, at lease among the elites, and further suggests that the Macedonians stood to threaten

[2] "Rex Bactrianorum": Justin, *Epitome of Pompeius Trogus*, 1.1.19.
[3] García, "The Second After the King and Achaemenid Bactria on Classical Sources," 1.

their influence. While the severe policies of Alexander in quelling this revolt cannot be ignored, what was ultimately more significant in the pacification of the province were the deliberate overtures made by Alexander to ensure that prior norms would be respected.

Historiography

The focus of most Achaemenid scholarship in its recent renaissance has been primarily centered on the imperial core in Fars (southern Iran) and other areas where local records are extant such as Babylon or Egypt. Unlike Egypt or Babylon, the climate of Bactria is not conducive to the survival of perishable materials such as papyrus or leather, the latter of which seems to have been the preferred writing material in the region.[4] This leaves native records few and far between. While there are some documents that miraculously survive in Aramaic in the Khalili collection, the corpus is miniscule when compared with other regions of the empire—amounting to only forty-eight texts, thirty written on leather and eighteen on wood. There has been promising archeological work done in the region, such as the excavation of Ai Khanoum, as well as the subsequent archeological survey of eastern Bactria undertaken from 1974-1978 and more recently the excavation of Bactra (Balkh) itself.[5] However, these excavations have been severely complicated by the unstable geo-political situation in Afghanistan and have focused mostly on the later Hellenistic period, with comparatively little attention paid to Achaemenid sites. With this dearth of native textual or archeological evidence one must turn to the Greco-Roman histories to reconstruct the history of the province. It is a shame then that Bactria rarely appears in these histories as well. This is unsurprising given the extreme distance between

[4] Joseph Naveh and Shaul Shaked, eds., *Aramaic Documents from Ancient Bactria* (London: The Khalili Family Trust, 2012), 19.
[5] Rachel Mairs, *The Hellenistic Far East: Archeology, Language, and Identity in Greek Central Asia* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2014), 16–26;34-35.

Bactria and the Mediterranean but makes analysis of the region difficult nonetheless—at least for most of its history.

More so than other regions of the empire, the period of Alexander's conquest is critical in understanding the province, if only because it is the rare moment when Greek and Bactrian history intersect, putting it center stage in the histories that are otherwise uninterested in the area. We are even more fortunate, then, that this snapshot comes at an important period of transition and change for the region. Unfortunately, while most of the chroniclers of Alexander's campaign are present, a lacuna notably consumes Diodorus' record from 330 to 326 BCE. This includes the entirety of the Bactrian rebellion (329-327 BCE). As for the historians of prior ages, Thucydides and Xenophon are understandably useless. This leaves Herodotus and Ctesias and their common criticisms of factual veracity. Ctesias is an important source for the region, despite his penchant for the sensational, due to his better position as court physician of Artaxerxes II.

Briant's *L'Asie Centrale* has been seminal in formulations of Achaemenid Central Asia. Xin Wu of Fudan University has been doing extensive analysis of the archeology of Achaemenid Central Asia as well. Much of the writing on Achaemenid Bactria is still in its infancy however. While a few volumes have been written on the subject, such as *L'Asie Centrale*, much of the discussion is still prone to the oscillations in consensus emblematic of a field of study too new to have a dominant historical understanding, or at least not one that lasts for long.

The Achaemenid Status Quo

For Alexander, Bactria may have seemed a respite from the chaos of the preceding months. After defeating the Achaemenid king Darius III just north of Babylon at the battle of Gaugamela in the autumn of 331 BCE, Alexander and his army had marched through most of

Iran at break-neck speeds chasing the Persian king and the rest of the Achaemenid court in exile. Darius III had been killed by one of his confidants—Bessus, the satrap of Bactria—east of Rhagai, near modern Tehran. Alexander continued his pursuit further east, now chasing Bessus, forcing him to flee first to Bactria and ultimately beyond the borders of the empire completely. Ultimately it was not Alexander who caught Bessus but the members of Bessus' own party who arrested him and turned him over to Alexander. Bactria was the first place where Alexander could afford to linger for any substantial period since his victory at Gaugamela.

Instead of a much-needed break, Alexander soon faced rebellion and unrest throughout Bactria and Sogdiana. While the Bactrian rebellion was not the first act of localized resistance to Alexander's occupation during his conquest of the Achaemenid Empire,[6] it was unique in terms of its length, scale, and—most importantly—the role played by local aristocrats in fomenting and coordinating efforts against Alexander.[7] Many of these nobles had in the months prior been involved first in Bessus' overthrow of Darius III and later in Bessus' own arrest. These actions, while showing no particular loyalty to a single Achaemenid monarch, nor even to the Achaemenids as a dynasty, nonetheless demonstrate the investment and involvement of these nobles in the Achaemenid imperial system—a system which guaranteed their positions of status both within Bactria and without. However, before discussing the rebellion itself, in order to determine why the rebellion against Alexander came about we must first understand what the locals stood to lose with the collapse of Achaemenid power.

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[6] Arr. *Anab.* 3.25.5-7; 3.28.2-3 describes two successive revolts in the Satrapy of Areia, to the southeast of Bactria, however both rebellions were led directly by the Persian satrap Satibarzanes, a hold over from the Achaemenid regime, and both were organized with the intent of aiding Bessus in the hope of an Achaemenid counter-offensive.
[7] A. B. Bosworth, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian's History of Alexander*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 18.

The presence of this local nobility is not unusual given our understanding of the Achaemenid administration. Arrian calls these nobles "hyparchs" and the same term appears in histories of the western empire.[8] In its western usage it seems to be a generic term for anyone serving under a satrap, whether a local official or an Iranian one, and not indicative of a specific Achaemenid office or title. While the mention of hyparchs in Ionia seems to coincide with imperial officers, other uses, especially relating to the hyparchs of Caria, are in reference to local dynasts.[9] Given how tied the hyparchs of the Bactrian rebellion are to the region in question—with Arrian often giving them ethnic identifiers such as Oxyartes "the Bactrian"—we can assume the Bactrian hyparchs fall into the latter category of local leaders rather than formal Achaemenid officials.[10] In general, the Achaemenid administration seemed to preserve pre-existing administrative features and divisions where they found them, such as the division of Egypt into its traditional "nome," so the existence of a native elite is not unprecedented.

However, these local strongmen did not serve as a replacement for the formal organs of state. These elites may have had a certain autonomy and latitude for self-governance, but ultimate authority still rested with the satrap. The Aramaic documents preserved in the Khalili collection date from between 353-324 BCE, and so cover the late Achaemenid period into the early Macedonian period. Though their provenance is uncertain, it is believed they originate from a single satrapal archive at Bactra. Group A in particular covers a series of letter sent between Akhvamazda, the satrap, and Bagavant, the governor of Khulmi (possibly modern Khulm, just east of Bactra). These letters show a vigorous and proactive Achaemenid administration. Of those Aramaic documents which survive, two letters are concerned with the

[8] "ὑπάρχους" Arr. *Anab.* 4.1.5
[9] Christopher Tuplin, "The Administration of the Achaemenid Empire," in *Coinage and Administration in the Athenian and Persian Empires: The Ninth Oxford Symposium on Coinage and Monetary History*, ed. Ian Carradice (Oxford: B. A. R., 1987), 121.
[10] "Ὀξυάρτου…τοῦ Βακτρίου" Arr. *Anab.* 4.18.4

construction of fortifications, another with the roofing of buildings. The series of orders sent by Akhvamazda to Bagavant show that the satrap in Bactra was able to wield control on a fairly granular level, such as addressing specific complaints about the treatment of camel drivers.[11]

At the same time, despite a clear imperial presence in the governance of the satrapy, the administration seems to have kept mostly to itself, concerned mainly with the maintenance of imperial property first and foremost. Most of the construction or maintenance attested is in service of imperial infrastructure or the personal property of officials.[12] This is consistent with other parts of the empire. The Aršama letters in particular serve as a valuable point of comparison. Named after their author, the satrap of Egypt, who wrote them while away in Babylon, they are the only other surviving example of Achaemenid correspondence written on leather besides those in the Khalili collection. Among the letters, several command subordinate officials to manage affairs for Aršama's personal lands.[13] Akhvamazda makes similar requests of Bagavant, such as clearing sand from a caravanserai which Akhvamazda owns.[14] In addition to state property, and the separate estates of the royal family, it was standard practice to award private tracts of land to satraps and other high-ranking officials separate from the duties of their office.[15] These are distinct from the colonial estates acquired individually by Iranian noble families across the empire. Alexander's translator in Bactria, Pharnoukes, is likely one such Iranian colonist. Though Arrian states that Pharnoukes hails from Lycia in Asia Minor, his name is Iranian in origin, so he is probably a transplant from the imperial core.[16]

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[11] Naveh and Shaked, *Aramaic Documents,* Fortifications: A4-5 (Khalili IA1; IA3); Roofing: A6 (Khalili IA5); Camel drivers: A1 (Khalili IA6).
[12] Naveh and Shaked, A6 (Khalili IA5).
[13] John Hyland, "Vishtaspa Krny: An Achaemenid Military Official in 4th-Century Bactria," *Achaemenid Research on Texts and Archaeology (ARTA)*, no. 3 (2013): 4–5.
[14] Naveh and Shaked, *Aramaic Documents,* A2 (Khalili IA4)
[15] Tuplin, "Administration of the Achaemenid Empire," 133–37.
[16] "Φαρνούχην τὸν ἑρμηνέα, τὸ μὲν γένος Λύκιον τὸν Φαρνούχην" Arr. *Anab.* 4.3.7.

The picture we are left with is a province divided into a complicated patchwork of estates, ruled over by a central administration but with local leaders nonetheless given significant clearance to manage their own affairs. One must then wonder why the local elites may have been so invested in such a seemingly byzantine system. There is evidence that the Bactrians were, at some points, less than pleased with the Achaemenids. Though it never came to fruition, Herodotus reports that the satrap of Bactria during the reign of Xerxes I (486-485 BCE) thought he could incite the Bactrians into revolt against the imperial center.[17] Likewise, Ctesias reports that the province did revolt against Artaxerxes I (465-424 BCE), and describes the forces as "evenly matched," with Artaxexes prevailing ultimately thanks to poor weather which impeded the Bactrians.[18]

This description of the Bactrians and Persians as "evenly matched" is a common trend, especially in Ctesias. Though this is likely because he spends more time on the region than other historians of the age. Describing the original conquest of Bactria under Cyrus, Ctesias once again says that the Bactrians and the Persians were "evenly matched" and that the Bactrians only surrendered after hearing of Cyrus' relation to Astyages, the former Median king.[19] This parity in power is not necessarily hard to believe. Though Babylon and Egypt get far more attention for their economic prosperity, Bactria likely had significant resources of its own, both monetary and otherwise. Strabo claims that the dominance of the later Greco-Bactrian kingdom was due mainly to the region's immense fertility.[20] The archeological survey of eastern Bactria

[17] "ὡς ἀποστήσων νομὸν τὸν Βάκτριον καὶ ποιήσων τὰ μέγιστα κακῶν βασιλέα" Hdt. 9.113
[18] "Ἀφίσταται Ἀρτοξέρξου Βάκτρα καὶ ὁ σατράπης, ἄλλος Ἀρτάπανος· καὶ γίνεται μάχη ἰσοπαλής. Καὶ γίνεται πάλιν ἐκ δευτέρου, καὶ ἀνέμου κατὰ πρόσωπον Βακτρίων πνεύσαντος, νικᾷ Ἀρτοξέρξης καὶ προσχωρεῖ αὐτῷ πᾶσα Βακτρία". Phot., *Bibl.,* 72.35
[19] "Καὶ ὅτι πρὸς Βακτρίους ἐπολέμησε καὶ ἀγχώμαλος ἡ μάχη ἐγένετο· ἐπεὶ δὲ Βάκτριοι Ἀστυΐγαν μὲν πατέρα Κύρου γεγενημένον, Ἀμύτιν δὲ μητέρα καὶ γυναῖκα ἔμαθον, ἑαυτοὺς ἑκόντες Ἀμύτι καὶ Κύρῳ παρέδοσαν." Phot., *Bibl.,* 72.2
[20] "τοσοῦτον δὲ ἴσχυσαν οἱ ἀποστήσαντες Ἕλληνες αὐτὴν διὰ τὴν ἀρετὴν τῆς χώρας, ὥστε τῆς τε Ἀριανῆς ἐπεκράτουν καὶ τῶν Ἰνδῶν" Strab. 11.11.1.

undertaken by the *Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan* (DAFA) from 1974 to 1978 revealed significant evidence of extensive irrigation works, maintained with little interruption for a period of multiple millennia, which would corroborate Strabo's description.[21] In addition to its agricultural wealth, its access to India would have been an immense source of manpower, including elephants, for any possible war or rebellion. This is without considering that the Badakhshan mountains to the east were the site of the only active lapis lazuli mine in antiquity, a luxury good used for blue dye.[22]

The immense wealth of the territory meant it offered both great rewards and great risk. Its resources would make it a captivating target for exploitation but could just as easily become a problem if they were leveraged against the Achaemenids. With this in mind, it makes it more plausible that the Achaemenids may have given some special concessions to the local nobles to keep them amenable to Persian rule. Ctesias claims that at Cyrus' death he divided the empire between his two sons Cambyses and Tanyoxarces,[23] with the latter being given dominion over Bactria and its surrounding provinces. Though in this arrangement Tanyoxarces is subordinate to his brother Cambyses (perhaps establishing the tradition of the "second after the king"), Ctesias claims that Tanyoxarces had no tribute obligations. If this exception trickled its way down to the native aristocracy, it might explain their continued loyalty to the Achaemenid state if they had fewer tax requirements. In addition, there are two other reasons the Bactrians may have been reluctant to see the end of Achaemenid sovereignty. The first is that the participation in the wider Achaemenid administration opened up opportunities for advancement on an empire-wide level. The second is that the Achaemenid presence brought security and fortified their positions both from threats within and without.

[21] Mairs, *Hellenistic Far East*, 35–36.
[22] Mairs, 28–29.
[23] Herodotus refers to Cambyses' brother as Bardiya.

Achaemenid Advancement

The Bactrians loom large in the twilight hours of the Achaemenid empire. While some of this pre-eminence may be attributable to their position as the last province to be conquered, the integration of the Bactrians into the larger politics of the Achaemenid state indicates that this influence was not solely a coincidence of geography. Even before the collapse of the empire Bactrians may have had significant appointments throughout the empire. Though he was imprisoned for running afoul of Darius III, the name of the first satrap of Media under Alexander, Oxydates (lit. given by the Oxus), suggests he could have been connected to Bactria in some way.[24] Furthermore, after his overthrow of Darius III, Bessus assumed all the signifiers of Achaemenid rule: taking the regnal name Artaxerxes V and adopting the royal costume. Yet, Arrian nonetheless describes his royal party as including a seemingly even mix of Persians in exile and Bactrians.[25] Some of this is certainly attributable to Bessus' prior status as satrap of Bactria, however, his maintenance of Achaemenid imperial aesthetics suggests that Bessus still envisioned himself as ruler of a Persian empire, not a Bactrian one. He maintains this stance until his eventual betrayal, even as the majority of his forces are constituted by Bactrians. Arrian says Bessus had 7,000 Bactrian cavalrymen at his disposal, likely the remainder of his contribution to the Achaemenid army at Gaugamela. Bosworth connects this 7,000 cavalrymen number to the 7,000 cavalrymen which Curtius claims began the later rebellion against Alexander, theorizing it to be representative of the size of the local aristocracy.[26] Regardless, while two Bactrian nobles—Oxyartes and Spitamenes—are named accompanying Bessus to Nautaka in Sogdiana, the 7,000 cavalry disband once Bessus crosses the Oxus and abandons Bactria. The Bactrians

[24] John Hyland, "Alexander's Satraps of Media," *Journal of Ancient History* 1, no. 2 (November 2013): 123.
[25] Ἐν τούτῳ δὲ ἀφικνοῦνται παρ᾽ αὐτὸν Περσῶν τινες, οἳ ἤγγελλον Βῆσσον τήν τε τιάραν ὀρθὴν ἔχειν καὶ τὴν Περσικὴν στολὴν φοροῦντα Ἀρτοξέρξην τε καλεῖσθαι ἀντὶ Βήσσου καὶ βασιλέα φάσκειν εἶναι τῆς Ἀσίας· ἔχειν τε ἀμφ᾽ αὑτὸν Περσῶν τε τοὺς ἐς Βάκτρα διαφυγότας καὶ αὐτῶν Βακτριανῶν πολλούς· Arr. *Anab.* 3.25.3.
[26] Bosworth, *Commentary on Arrian*, 1995, 2:18.

had no interest in supporting a monarch that could no longer defend their interests of their property. These two nobles, Oxyartes and Spitamenes, would both be involved in the rebellion against Alexander and the latter would be the primary actor responsible for the arrest of Bessus, though this betrayal only occurs after Bessus retreats across the Oxus. The vulgate tradition suggests that Spitamenes and whole of the regnal party felt remorse for their betrayal of Darius III.[27] While the exact emotions cannot be taken at face value, the important takeaway is that the local nobility was not merely ambivalent to the collapse of the Achaemenid state but had some vested interest in ensuring the status quo. The relationship was not simply zero sum but was actively beneficial to the local aristocracy.

The Nomadic Frontier

Beyond career advancement, the threat of nomadic incursion may have influenced indigenous attitudes toward the Persian state as a form of protection. Given Bactria's status as a frontier province, it would be a mistake to ignore how border policy factored into the politics and administration of the province. Whatever domestic advantages cooperation might have given the local aristocracy, these advances would be pointless if the state was unable to secure their property from foreign adversaries.

Two of the Aramaic documents from the Khalili collection, A4 and A5, both record instances of the Persian administration directing the construction of fortifications along the steppe frontier.[28] Given the short time elapsed between the two documents (both written during the tenures of Bagavant and Akhvamazda) it is possible this is evidence of a single building program executed across the whole of the province. However, regardless of their relationship to

[27] *Metz Epitome* §14
[28] Naveh and[a]
haked, *Aramaic Documents*, A4-5 (Khalili IA1; IA3).

each other, the construction of walls suggests a need to defend against attackers. The most likely candidates are the Saka tribes who occupied the Central Asian Steppe.[29] The abundance of battle scenes on cylinder seals against figures who appear to resemble steppe warriors—such as a seal that appears on one of the Aramaic documents—suggests regular hostilities against the Saka and other tribes.[30]

C2 in particular, an Aramaic document dated to year 1 of an unnamed king, is notable for the appearance of a Vishtaspa *krny* who has been identified with Hystaspes the Bactrian, who appears in both Arrian and Curtius' histories.[31] *krny* is generally taken to be equivalent to the title *κάρανος* given as the title of Cyrus the Younger by Xenophon but otherwise unattested in Persianate sources of the period.[32] Though Xenophon implies that *κάρανοι* have extraordinary powers, with some assuming the office to be a specific marriage of civil and military administration, a closer analysis seems to indicate it is more likely the title given to the head of a campaign.[33] Assuming this to be true, the presence of a *κάρανος* can mean only one thing: war. One must then ask with whom, although this answer seems obvious. Given Bactria's position on the cusp of the Eurasian steppe, it would make sense that Vishtaspa's mystery campaign would be against these steppe nomads. Given the significant evidence pointing to active Achaemenid actions against the nomads on the frontier it is likely that they posed just as much of a threat to the native aristocracy as they did the imperial administration.

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[29] The Saka are equivalent to the Central Asian groups Arrian calls Scythians (*Σκύθαι*)
[30] Xin Wu, "Enemies of Empire: A Historical Reconstruction of Political Conflicts between Central Asia and the Persian Empire," in *The World of Achaemenid Persia: History, Art, and Society in Iran and the Ancient Near East.*, ed. John Curtis and St. John Simpson (New York: I. B. Tauris, 2010), 546.
[31] Naveh and Shaked, *Aramaic Documents*, C2 (Khalili IA20). Hystaspes is the Greek transliteration of Vishtaspa.
[32] Shaked and Naved, 2012 initially interpreted *krny* as a surname *Karanya* connected to the House of Kāren, a noble house prominent in later Iranian history, however this has since been challenged, see Hyland, 2013.
[33] Eduard Rung, "Some Notes on Karanos in the Achaemenid Empire," *Iranica Antiqua* L (n.d.), https://doi.org/10.2143/IA.50.0.3053524.

However, the basis for these "hostilities" are mostly state focused and sanctioned, and may not be entirely representative of the popular sentiment. The question of Bactrian-Steppe relations was likely not a simple case of antagonism—relations between settled and nomadic communities rarely are—instead the dialogue between these two groups was complex, and the inability to understand these complexities on the part of the Macedonians would later contribute to their difficulty in securing the province.

At intervals the nomadic groups on the Central Asian frontier seem to have been just as invested and involved in the Achaemenid system as the Achaemenids themselves. Over the course of Arrian's account the nomadic tribes play a critical role in the internal politics of the empire, and Bactria especially, both during and prior to the rebellion—and seem to be able to enter and exit the province at will. At the battle of Gaugamela, Arrian describes the different peoples that make up Darius' army and mentions the Saka, whom Arrian is keen to point out are present "not as Bessus' subjects but in fulfillment of the terms of their alliance with Darius."[34] The presence of Scythian allies would seem to contradict archeological indications of hostilities between the Achaemenids and nomadic tribes, however that is ignoring the factional nature of nomadic politics and each group's individual Achaemenid relations. Arrian's own tendency to speak in generalities, such as "European" or "Asian" Scythians (a distinction which Arrian himself seems to ignore at times) gives the impression of a monolithic Steppe diplomacy. However, the Achaemenid's own inscriptions indicate that the administration was keenly aware of nomadic differences. Darius I's funerary inscription on his tomb at Naqsh-i Rustam lists all of the *Dahyava* he rules (these are the nations of his empire, the ethnic units which are not exactly equivalent to the borders of their satrapal counterparts). Included within this grouping are two groups: the Saka *Haumavarga* and the Saka *Tigraxauda*. Due to their placement among the list

[34] οὐχ ὑπήκοοι οὗτοι Βήσσου, ἀλλὰ κατὰ συμμαχίαν τὴν Δαρείου (Arr., *Anab.* 3.8.3).

of subject nations—placed next to each other and at the end of the eastern nations—we can assume these groups are two separate tribes of Saka both dwelling on the Central Asian Frontier.[35] Likewise another eastern nomadic group, the Dahae, are named alongside the Saka *H.* and Saka *T.* in an inscription dating from the reign of Darius' successor Xerxes I.[36] These different groups listed are only those considered part of the Achaemenid Empire and do not include other groups with which the Persians may have had hostilities. It is entirely possible there were many groups the Persians were aware of which did not make it onto their royal inscriptions.

The Dahae listed in Xerxes' inscription appear again during Bessus' retreat across the east of the Empire. Bessus is said to have the support of these nomads, whom Arrian names as Bessus' third group of supporters besides the native Bactrians and the Persians in exile. Furthermore, while the Bactrians disperse upon Bessus' crossing of the Oxus, the Dahae continue to support him. Like the Bactrian support for Bessus, the presence of Dahaean allies is significant given Bessus' Achaemenid pretensions, posturing himself as a full Achaemenid monarch, in which case the Dahae are acting to restore Achaemenid rule. Critically, the Dahae are described by Arrian as the Dahae "on this side of the Tanais River."[37] The river Arrian calls the Tanais is the same as the Jaxartes which is often assumed to have been the de facto border of the Achaemenid Empire in Central Asia, and was also taken by ancient geographers as a boundary between Europe and Asia. The Dahae are not the only tribe stated to be on the Achaemenid side of the Jaxartes. The Abii, whom Arrian describes as Scythians, are said to dwell in Asia—i.e. south of the Jaxartes. The presence of nomadic groups on the near side of the

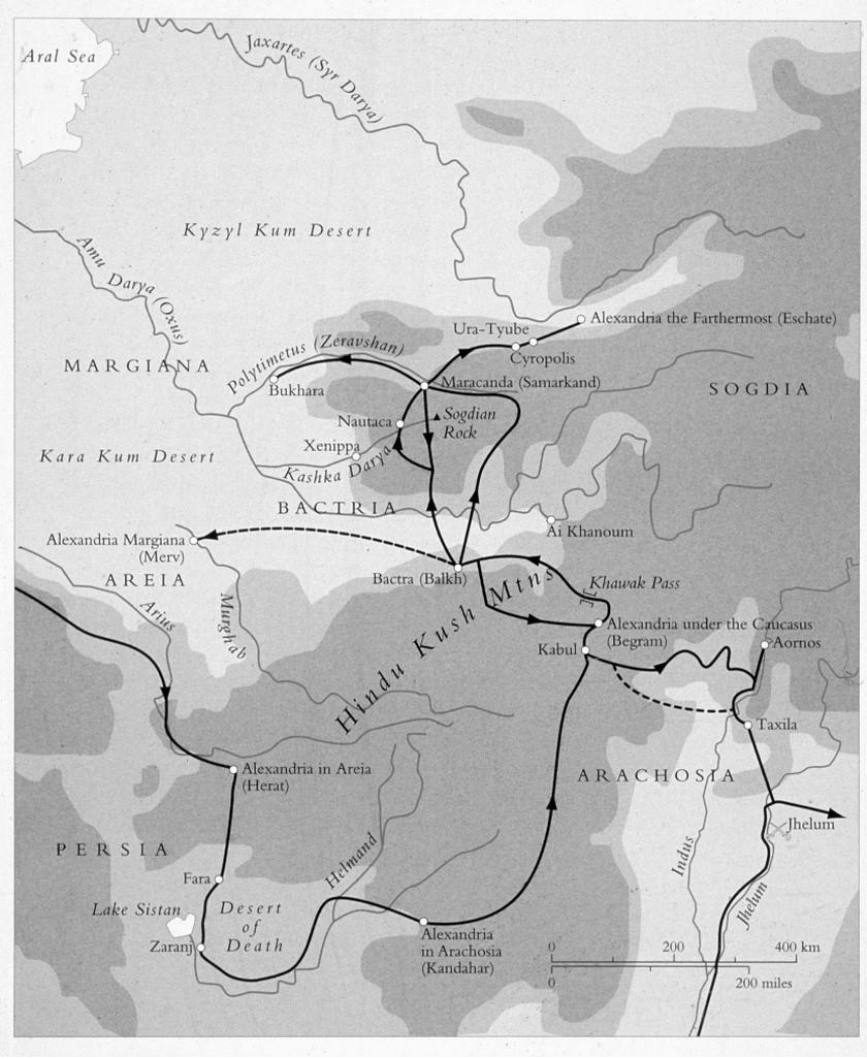
[35] Xin Wu, "Central Asia in the Context of the Achaemenid Persian Empire" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2005).
[36] Wu, 19.
[37] Δάας τοὺς ἐπὶ τάδε τοῦ Τανάϊδος ποταμοῦ ἐποικοῦντας (Arr. *Anab.* 3.28.10).

Achaemenid divide would seem to indicate that the Central Asian border was rather porous, allowing for the movement of foreign peoples through nominally Achaemenid territory. While it is likely that these Dahae south of the Jaxartes were engaged in a kind of vassal relationship, given their appearance on Xerxes I's list of subject nations, even in that instance it shows that Achaemenid influence did not end with towns and cities but held sway over itinerant populations the same as sedentary ones. Thus, nomadic populations were just as much a part of the Achaemenid system as their settled counterparts. The degree to which the interests of the Bactrian hyparchs converged with those of their nomadic neighbors is best seen in the rebellion yet to come, however, even in this prior Achaemenid period we see a capacity for cooperation between the settled and nomadic populations equaling their capacity for conflict.

In general then it seems that being a part of the Achaemenid empire came with certain benefits for the Bactrian nobles. While they likely had to put up with a significant imperial administrative presence and the tribute obligations that came with that, not only were their tribute mandates likely lower than other regions, they received in return access to the common Achaemenid political sphere, allowing them to expand their influence on an empire-wide scale. In addition they were probably also dependent on the resources and coordination of the Achaemenid state to defend their property from the threat of nomadic invasion, or equally dependent on the stability provided by the Achaemenid system of Central Asian alliances, which stretched beyond the formal boundaries of the empire and wedded many of these nomadic tribes to the Achaemenid state. In 329 BCE, Alexander entered a region whose functioning, both domestically and in terms of foreign relations, rested on a series of relationships with the Achaemenid imperial center—relationships which Alexander was about to destroy.

Rebellion

Immediately following Alexander's occupation of the province in 329 BCE, seven cities in Sogdiana revolted against Alexander, killing their Macedonian garrisons.[38] This was merely the beginning of what would become a more than year-long (329-327 BCE) campaign by Alexander to subdue the provinces of Bactria and Sogdiana. However, the fact that Bactria and its elites had the power and intent to organize a rebellion would not be special by itself. Popular revolution was far from an exclusively Bactrian concept. What makes the rebellion in Bactria significant was that it was not an act of separatism against the imperial center. The actions of individual agents within the rebellion, whether they be the Bactrians themselves or



[38] "καὶ ἐν τούτῳ οἱ πρόσχωροι τῷ ποταμῷ βάρβαροι τούς τε τὰ φρούρια ἐν ταῖς πόλεσι σφῶν ἔχοντας στρατιώτας τῶν Μακεδόνων ξυλλαβόντες ἀπέκτειναν," Arr. *Anab.* 4.1.4

their nomadic counterparts, reflect a desire to reaffirm or reestablish the old Achaemenid power structure. Given how instrumental many of these same Bactrians were earlier in supporting the rule of Bessus, and their close involvement with the Achaemenid state in general, we can assume that these rebellions were not for the purpose of creating a separate state, at least not initially, but rather the restitution of the Achaemenid regime.

The concerns of the Bactrians which led them to revolt were not entirely unfounded. While Alexander had hastened through most of the Iranian Plateau without making many changes, now that formalized Achaemenid resistance had been defeated with the arrest of Bessus it seems Alexander had some items on his agenda. Arrian blames the initial outbreak of violence on the incitement of the Bactrian hyparchs whom Alexander called to a meeting shortly after arriving in the province, the contents of which "portended nothing good for them."[39] Shortly before this meeting Alexander also announced plans for the construction of a city on the Jaxartes, Alexandria-Eschate, which would control the only major crossing along the river's upper course.[40] Whatever plans Alexander had for Bactria-Sogdiana, it seems that he would likely not respect the position that the Bactrian hyparchs had held in the prior administration and likely stood to weaken their power.

Beyond Arrian's vague assertion that the Bactrian hyparchs were to blame for the rebellion against Alexander, the development of this revolt over its several stages supports the idea of an insurrection mounted primarily by a local Bactrian aristocracy. While the rebellion began in the seven Sogdian cities, its quick spread into the hinterlands reflects the involvement of the Bactrian hyparchs in leading the rebellion, given their power likely resided in private

[39] "ἐς ἕνα ξύλλογον ἐπηγγέλκει Ἀλέξανδρος ξυνελθεῖν τοὺς ὑπάρχους τῆς χώρας ἐκείνης εἰς Ζαρίασπα, τὴν μεγίστην πόλιν, ὡς ἐπ᾽ ἀγαθῷ οὐδενὶ τοῦ ξυλλόγου γιγνομένου." Arr. *Anab*. 4.1.5

[40] Arr. *Anab.* 4.1.3-4 describes the foundation of a city on the Jaxartes, though the term Alexandia Eschate is not used. The name, *Ἀλεξανδρέσχατα*, is taken from Appian *Syr*. 57.298

manorial estates outside the purview of the prior Achaemenid administration.[41] Curtius is even more explicit in connecting the rebellion to the Hyparchs, claiming that Alexander's plans for Alexanderia Eschate were put off by the Sogdians and Bactrians in revolt, whose core "consisted of 7000 cavalry, whose authority the rest followed."[42] These 7,000 cavalry being likely the same group who had earlier abandoned Bessus at the Oxus.[43] Out of this class of Bactrian hyparchs, Curtius goes on to name two nobles in particular—Spitamenes and Catanes—as the *defectionis auctores*;[44] the former of whom had previously been key in the capture of Bessus. While in Arrian's account Spitamenes appears later, in the context of the revolt during the siege of Marakanda, given his involvement with the betrayal of Bessus he can easily be included in Arrian's description of the inciters as "the party who arrested Bessus." Following his reintroduction Spitamenes certainly is, if not the leader, then a prominent actor in Arrian's narrative of the revolt.

Even in this earliest stage of the rebellion, though, the question of the nomadic frontier once again raises itself. While Alexander is stationed at Marakanda, the local center of Sogdiana, he receives envoys from two different Saka tribes: the Abii and the group Arrian calls "European Scythians." While Arrian does not say what the purpose of the Abii's embassy is, Curtius claims they intended to "submit to Alexander."[45] Similarly, while Alexander uses the Scythian embassy as a justification to scout out their lands, Arrian says that the diplomats were sent to Alexander

[41] Bosworth, *Commentary on Arrian*, 1995, 2:18.
[42] "sed consilium distulit Sogdianorum nuntiata defectio, quae Bactrianos quoque traxit. vii milia equitum erant, quorum auctoritatem ceteri sequebantur." Curt. 7.6.14
[43] Bosworth, *Commentary on Arrian*, 1995, 2:18.
[44] "Alexander Spitamenen et Catanen, a quibus ei traditus erat Bessus, haud dubius quin eorum opera redigi possent in potestatem, coercendo qui novaverant res, iussit accersi. At illi, defectionis ad quam coercendam evocabantur auctores," Curt. 7.6.15
[45] "Legati deinde Abiorum Scytharum superveniunt, liberi ex quo decesserat Cyrus, tum imperata facturi." Curt. 7.6.11

with the intention of establishing a pact of friendship.[46] Despite Alexander's own clandestine intentions, the eagerness on the part of these Saka to formalize treaties with the new Macedonian regime may suggest that they had formerly had such agreements with the Achaemenids.

Due to the structure of Arrian's account, some blame the Sogdian revolt against Alexander on the foundation of Alexandria Eschate, with the description of the foundation of Alexandria Eschate in Arrian being followed immediately by the revolt of the Sogdian cities. Given its position on a key river crossing, one which seems not to have been policed prior to Alexander's arrival, some claim the city's control of the river crossing disrupted local Sogdo-Scythian relationships—portraying said relationship as something akin to symbiosis.[47] Others find this explanation unlikely given the evidence of Saka-Sogdian hostilities, however this dismissal is insufficient given the presence of tribes on either side of the Jaxartes in the form of the aforementioned Abii and Dahae.[48] Furthermore, though they arrive too late to assist, an army of Saka appears on the other side of Jaxartes apparently intending to join the revolt against Alexander.[49] Curtius gives a different explanation for the arrival of the Saka on the far side of the Jaxartes, though it is no less suggestive of the importance of the river-crossing, saying that the king of Scythians sent the army in direct response to the foundation of Alexandria Eschate, describing the city as "a yoke upon their necks."[50]

Besides the interests of the nomads beyond the borders of the province, the progress of the revolt within Sogdiana and Bactria in this early stage is uncertain. Arrian portrays

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[46] "καὶ τούτοις ξυμπέμπει Ἀλέξανδρος τῶν ἑταίρων, πρόφασιν μὲν κατὰ πρεσβείαν φιλίαν ξυνθησομένους" Arr. *Anab.* 4.1.2

[47] Frank Holt, *Alexander the Great and Bactria: Formation of a Greek Frontier in Central Asia* (New York: E. J. Brill, 1988).

[48] Bosworth, *Commentary on Arrian*, 1995, 2:16.

[49] "ἀκούσαντες οἱ πολλοὶ αὐτῶν, ὅτι ἔστιν οἳ καὶ τῶν ἐπέκεινα τοῦ ποταμοῦ βαρβάρων ἀπ᾽ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἀφεστᾶσιν, ὡς, εἰ δή τι λόγου ὂν ἄξιον νεωτερίζοιτο, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐπιθησόμενοι τοῖς Μακεδόσι." Arr. *Anab.* 4.3.6

[50] "At rex Scytharum, cuius tum ultra Tanaim imperium erat, ratus eam urbem, quam in ripa amnis Macedones condiderant, suis impositam esse cervicibus, fratrem, Carthasim nomine, cum magna equitum manu misit ad diruendam eam proculque amne submovendas Macedonum copias." Curt. 7.7.1

Alexander's campaign against the cities as an almost total victory, with few if any setbacks.[51] However, Curtius and the other vulgate sources portray a far more protracted campaign with fierce Sogdian resistance, with Spitamenes even able to expel the Macedonian garrison from the royal seat in Marakanda.[52] While Arrian's descriptions of fortifications and geography seem to largely coincide with understandings of local fortification practices and identified sites, his description of the events is inconsistent in places and generally overly simplistic, not to mention at odds with most other sources.[53] The archeological record, at least what remains, supports the idea of a more protracted campaign. C2, the Aramaic administrative document featuring Vishtaspa *krny*, is dated to this period, however it notably lacks a regnal year.[54] The omission of such a dating marker is highly unusual and has no parallel among the other documents which are extant. While seemingly a minor detail, the lack of a regnal name in the document would indicate major instability and confusion about who held power in Bactria. Even in Arrian's account, the extreme measures taken by Alexander the suppression of this early revolt may be reflective of his larger anxieties about maintaining control of the territory. Upon taking the city of Gaza he orders it to be razed to the ground and does the same to the city taken after that (which Arrian does not name); his cavalry runs down most of the population fleeing from the fourth and fifth cities; Cyropolis is ravaged and the final city—which surrendered without a fight—is razed also.

[51] Arr. *Anab.* 4.2.1 – 4.3.5: Capture of Gaza and two other cities (4.2.1-4); abandonment of the fourth and fifth cities (4.2.5-6); Siege of Cyropolis (4.3.1-4); surrender of the seventh city (4.3.5).
[52] Curt. 7.6.16 – 24: capture of one city (7.6.16); Siege of the Memaceni (7.6.17-23); Spitamenes in Marakanda (7.6.24)
[53] Bosworth, *Commentary on Arrian*, 1995.
[54] Naveh and Shaked, *Aramaic Documents*, 191.

While Alexander ultimately cemented his rule in the area, it seems it was not without some significant struggle.[55]

While Alexander may have hoped to stem any further unrest with such a show of force in the Autumn of 329 BCE, that would not be the case. On the contrary the rebellion would have renewed vigor as it moved from the cities and into the countryside, continuing through 328 BCE and into the spring of 327. The rebellion at this time seems to have had two main pillars. The first was the highly mobile Spitamenes employing locals as well as Saka allies, who ravaged the countryside. The second were a series of "rocks" in the hinterlands of Bactria-Sogdiana where the Hyparchs took refuge and fortified their positions.

After being uprooted from Marakanda, Spitamenes begins harassing the Macedonian forces sent to sent to capture him with a force of 600 Scythians. Arrian gives two competing accounts given by Ptolemy and Aristoboulos but the effect is the same, while attempting to pursue Spitamenes the Macedonian detachment sent is almost completely destroyed, either caught during a river crossing or in an ambush.[56] When Alexander attempts to respond, Spitamenes flees further, however Arrian says Alexander was able to kill some locals who had fled to rural strongholds before being forced to return to Bactra for the winter.[57] These strongholds are likely the same as or similar to the "rocks" which would play an important role later on. However, while Spitamenes' exploits may be noteworthy in their foiling of Alexander, the more significant aspect of Spitamenes' attacks is the support he receives from Saka allies and his ability to move in and out of the province quickly and easily. As already mentioned, at this

[55] Some have argued with dating the document to this period given that the document lacks a regnal year, making any date speculative at best. However, since this Vishtaspa is often connected with Hystaspes the Bactrian (Arr. *Anab.* 7.6.5) it makes a date in this period not unlikely.

[56] Arr. *Anab.* 4.5.2 – 4.6.2: Spitamenes assaults Marakanda (4.5.2-3); the Macedonian detachment (4.5.4-5); Ptolemy's account of the army's destruction (4.5.6-9); Aristoboulos' account (4.6.1-2).

[57] "ἐκεῖθεν δὲ ἀναστρέφων ἐπόρθει τὴν χώραν καὶ τοὺς ἐς τὰ ἐρύματα καταπεφευγότας τῶν βαρβάρων ἔκτεινεν, ὅτι ξυνεπιθέσθαι ἐξηγγέλλοντο καὶ αὐτοὶ τοῖς Μακεδόσι·" Arr. *Anab.* 4.6.5

stage Spitamenes had the support of 600 Scythians and, when harried by Alexander, is quickly able to withdraw from the province entirely. While Arrian merely calls them Scythians, Curtius is more specific in identifying Spitamenes' allies at this time as the Dahae, the same group who had previously supported Bessus in his bid for Achaemenid kingship.[58] This highlights both the interconnectedness of the province with its steppe frontier and the fractious nature of Steppe politics. While the Abii and European Scythians may have been eager to form a treaty with Alexander, the Dahae's involvement in their support of Bessus probably put them on poor footing with the Macedonians. In either case, far from being a vague collection of barbarian nomads on the border of the Achaemenid state, the nomadic groups of Central Asia were highly invested in the politics of the (formerly) Achaemenid state and Bactria-Sogdiana especially. Their presence within the province also shows how vague the true borders of the satrapy were, with nomads able to enter and exit at their own discretion.

In keeping with the picture of Scytho-Sogdian relations already established, We next see Spitamenes after the winter when Arrian reports he has taken refuge with the Scythians outside Sogdiana.[59] However, before this Alexander receives two more nomadic delegations, one from the European Scythians again, hoping to form a marriage alliance, the other from the Chorasmians, proposing a joint military expedition to conquer Colchis, the mythical land of the Golden Fleece.[60] While the nature of the Chorasmian embassy is debated given its somewhat suspect purpose, based off a common ancient misconception which merged the Caspian and Black seas (Colchis was in the area of modern Georgia), the presence of these embassies is once

[58] "Silvestre iter aptum insidiis tegendis erat; ibi Dahas condidit." Curt. 7.7.32
[59] "Σπιταμένης τε καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ τῶν Σογδιανῶν τινες φυγάδων ἐς τῶν Σκυθῶν τῶν Μασσαγετῶν καλουμένων τὴν χώραν ξυμπεφευγότες" Arr. *Anab.* 4.16.4
[60] "Φαρασμάνης ὁ Χορασμίων βασιλεὺς ξὺν ἱππεῦσι χιλίοις καὶ πεντακοσίοις. ἔφασκεν δὲ ὁ Φαρασμάνης ὅμορος οἰκεῖν τῷ τε Κόλχων γένει καὶ ταῖς γυναιξὶ ταῖς Ἀμαζόσι, καὶ εἰ θέλοι Ἀλέξανδρος ἐπὶ Κόλχους τε καὶ Ἀμαζόνας ἐλάσας καταστρέψασθαι τὰ ἐπὶ τὸν πόντον τὸν Εὔξεινον ταύτῃ καθήκοντα γένη, ὁδῶν τε ἡγεμὼν ἔσεσθαι ἐπηγγέλλετο καὶ τὰ ἐπιτήδεια τῇ στρατιᾷ παρασκευάσειν." Arr. *Anab.* 4.15.4

again a testament to the involvement of nomadic groups in imperial politics.[61] Though these delegations are painted by Arrian as submitting to the might of Alexander, it seems more likely that Alexander and the Macedonians had unwittingly inherited a complex system of nomadic tributaries and alliances formerly overseen by the Achaemenids. While moving into Sogdiana for the spring, Arrian mentions Alexander's subordinates taking another series of native strongholds, once again likely similar to the rocks which will take center stage later in Arrian's account of the rebellion.[62]

Before then, however, Spitamenes would make a final series of strikes against the Macedonians with the aid of nomadic allies. This time Arrian names Spitamenes' supporters as the Massagetae, and with their aid Spitamenes is able to move quickly from beyond the borders of Sogdiana entirely through the territory and into Bactria itself, threatening the satrapal capital of Bactra/Zariasapa, seemingly bypassing Alexander in the process. Taking a fortress near Bactra, Spitamenes then defeats a small detachment of Macedonian cavalry and subsequently takes control of Bactra, sacking the city before attempting to withdraw back to the steppe. At this point Spitamenes' army is reinforced by even more Massagetae, however in a confrontation with the Macedonians, Spitamenes is forced to retreat "into the desert." In response Alexander garrisons the whole of Sogdiana, forcing Spitamenes to attack as his means of escape have been cut off. Though Arrian's language is somewhat vague it is possible that this meant Alexander had begun to police the river crossing, preventing Spitamenes from withdrawing into the Steppe. However this is questionable given Spitamenes' subsequent reinforcement at Gabai, which Arrian describes as on the border between Sogdiana and the Massagetae, where he receives

[61] Bosworth, *Commentary on Arrian*, 1995, 2:101. As Bosworth mentions, Curtius places these embassies in a slightly different time and place, at Marakanda in the summer of 327 BCE, though the exact timing is not essential for our purposes.

[62] "Αὐτὸς δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν Ὄξον τε ποταμὸν ᾔει αὖθις καὶ εἰς τὴν Σογδιανὴν προχωρεῖν ἐγνώκει, ὅτι πολλοὺς τῶν Σογδιανῶν ἐς τὰ ἐρύματα ξυμπεφευγέναι ἠγγέλλετο οὐδὲ ἐθέλειν κατακούειν τοῦ σατράπου, ὅστις αὐτοῖς ἐξ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἐπετέτακτο." Arr. *Anab.* 4.15.7

another influx of nomadic troops. Though given later geographer's locating of the Massagetae west of the Oxus (yet another tribe located on the supposedly Persian side of the steppe frontier), Spitamenes may not have needed to go to the Jaxartes to receive Saka reinforcements. Regardless, Spitamenes engages in a second pitched battle with the Macedonians, suffering a decisive defeat. In the aftermath Arrian claims that his local Sogdian and Bactrian allies deserted him. While the Massagetae initially seem to continue to support Spitamenes, withdrawing with him into the desert, upon hearing that Alexander is pursuing them the Massagetae turn on him, sending his head to Alexander by way of an apology.[63]

Reconciliation

While the death of Spitamenes did not mean the end of the rebellion, it did seem to indicate a change in approach on the part of Alexander. By the time the Massagetae turned on Spitamenes in the Autumn of 328 BCE, Alexander had been trying to end the rebellion in Bactria-Sogdiana through force alone for over a year to little avail. As the rebellion progressed into its final stage, Alexander finally tried to give the Bactrians what they had desired all this time: security in their positions and reassurance that they would continue to hold the favor they had previously enjoyed under the Achaemenids. With this change of tactics, not only did Alexander bring the rebellion to its ultimate resolution, he also secured the Bactrians' active support in his imperial enterprise.

Following the winter of 328/327 BCE, Alexander laid siege to a series of fortresses occupied by the remaining Hyparchs. Arrian mentions two fortresses in particular, which he calls "rocks", the Sogdian Rock and the Rock of Khorienes. It should be noted that Arrian's

[63] Arr. *Anab.* 4.16.4 – 4.17.7: Spitamenes invades Bactria (4.16.4); Sack of Bactra (4.16.5); unsuccessful sally out (4.16. 6-7); 1st battle with Krateros (14.17.1-2); garrisoning the countryside (4.17.3-4); final defeat and Spitamenes' betrayal (4.17.5-7).

chronology of these sieges deviates greatly from other historians and likely for the worse. While Arrian mentions these sieges one after the other in the spring of 327 BCE, the vulgate historians have these sieges more evenly distributed within the chronology of the rebellion, with the earliest named siege occurring prior to the winter of 328 BCE.[64] This first siege, the Rock of Ariamazes, is mostly omitted from Arrian's account, or is fused with another siege, that of the Rock of Sisimithres, neither of which Arrian refers to by name but calls simply the Sogdian Rock (more literally the Rock in Sogdiana). In doing so Arrian condenses some of the key events that seem to have taken place, namely Alexander's marriage to the Bactrian princess Rhoxane.

Although it is unclear whether Rhoxane was captured at the Rock of Ariamazes or Sisimithres, the geographer Strabo reports that after taking the Rocks of Ariamazes and Sisimithres Alexander captures and subsequently marries Rhoxane, the daughter of Oxyartes, a prominent nobleman previously mentioned by Arrian accompanying Bessus in his flight to Nautaka.[65] Much has been romanticized about the relationship between Alexander and Rhoxane, however—romance aside—it seems to have yielded immediate political dividends. While the Rock of Ariamazes was taken by force, the Rock of Sisimithres was surrendered, likely with Rhoxane's marriage to Alexander as one of its terms. Although such a claim is mostly speculation, the following events at the Rock of Khorienes would seem to indicate that, beyond being merely a trophy for Alexander, the marriage to Rhoxane was in fact a key political alliance. Rather than attempting to seize Khorienes' citadel by force, Arrian reports that Alexander dispatched Oxyartes, now seemingly allied to the Macedonian cause, to negotiate Khorienes' surrender. Oxyartes, previously a staunch rebel leader and former supporter of Bessus, following the marriage of his daughter has quickly allied himself to the Macedonian

[64] Bosworth, *Commentary on Arrian*, 1995, 2:125.
[65] "ἑλεῖν δὲ καὶ πέτρας ἐρυμνὰς σφόδρα ἐκ προδοσίας, τήν τε ἐν τῇ Βακτριανῇ, τὴν Σισιμίθρου, ἐν ᾗ εἶχεν Ὀξυάρτης τὴν θυγατέρα Ῥωξάνην, καὶ τὴν ἐν τῇ Σογδιανῇ τὴν τοῦ Ὄξου, οἱ δ᾽ Ἀριαμάζου φασί." Strab. 11.11.4

cause. However, the change in loyalties of one nobleman is not incredible in and of itself, especially considering that following the marriage to Rhoxane he was now Alexander's father-in-law.[66]

What is more significant is Khorienes' reaction to such events. His surrender is particularly interesting considering he was in good standing for a siege. Curtius reports the march from Alexander's winter quarters to Khorienes' Rock was a near disaster, saved only by supplies provided by Sisimithres.[67] While the march to Khorienes' rock in Arrian's account is far less arduous than in Curtius' version, Khorienes' replenishment of Macedonian provisions suggests both that Khorienes was well stocked for an extended siege and that the Macedonians themselves were lacking in supplies for such an enterprise. Given the poor winter weather and the disparity in supply between the two groups, Khorienes' surrender was likely not motivated by a belief that the Macedonians could not be repelled. Instead the more likely explanation, given Oxyartes' role as a negotiator in Arrian's version, is that Khorienes was incentivized to surrender under favorable terms. The deal brokered certainly seems to have been ideal for Khorienes, as it saw him keep his position of power in the region, supplying the Macedonians as a show of friendship despite his formerly rebellious status.

The change in Alexander's approach from rebel suppression to negotiation seems to have worked. Following this surrender Alexander seems confident enough in the region's stability to continue with his Asiatic conquest, leaving the province and heading southwest towards India. He seems to have been correct in assessment, as no further native rebellions are attested. On the

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[66] It should be noted that in Curtius and the other vulgate sources the marriage to Rhoxane occurs *after* the surrender of Khorienes, however even then it is still likely to have served to cement agreements reached earlier between the Bactrian hyparchs and Alexander.

[67] "Postero die, convocatis amicis copiarumque ducibus, pronuntiari iussit ipsum omnia quae amissa essent redditurum. Et promisso fides exstitit. Nam Sisimithres multa iumenta et camelorum ii milia adduxit pecoraque et armenta; quae distributa pariter militem et damno et fame liberaverunt. Rex gratiam sibi relatam a Sisimithre perlaetus, sex dierum cocta cibaria ferre milites iussit, Sacas petens. Totam hanc regionem depopulatus, xxx milia pecorum ex praeda Sisimithri dono dat." Curt. 8.4.18-20

contrary, while there was notably a rebellion in 325 BCE, this was by Greek veterans settled in Bactria not, it seems, the Bactrians themselves. An anecdote from the marriage of Rhoxane in Curtius seems to epitomize this trend. When Alexander becomes besotted with Rhoxane, of relatively low birth, he justifies the marriage by saying:

> It was important for establishing his empire that Persians and Macedonians be joined in wedlock; that only in that way could shame be taken from the conquered and haughtiness from the victors. Achilles also, he said, from whom he traced his ancestry, had united with a captive maiden; lest the vanquished should think that a wrong was being done to them, he wished to be joined with Roxanê in lawful wedlock.[68]

If the Bactrians were concerned that they would lose their positions of importance, or that the Macedonians would fundamentally change the structure of the empire they had just conquered, the Bactrians need not have been so worried. We can be fairly confident that the framework of this imperial administration remained in place, largely unaltered during the reign of Alexander both since Alexander appears to name a new satrap of Bactria, and a Persian, Artabazos, no less,[69] and that C4, an Aramaic document dated to year 7 of Alexander's reign seems identical to prior Achaemenid documents in terms of form, structure, and language.[70] That said there does appear to be a shift in the upper-most strata of administration away from native officials in favor of Macedonian officials during the latter part of Alexander's rule, although this trend was far from uniform and can be taken less as a consistent pro-Macedonian policy as it was

[68] "ad stabiliendum regnum pertinere Persas et Macedones conubio iungi; hoc uno modo et pudorem victis et superbiam victoribus detrahi posse. Achillem quoque, a quo genus ipse deduceret, cum captiva coisse; ne inferri nefas arbitrentur victi,2 matrimonii iure velle iungi." Curt. 8.4.26
[69] "Ἀρταβάζῳ δὲ τῷ Πέρσῃ, ὅτῳ τὰ Βακτρίων ἐξ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἐπετέτακτο," Arr. *Anab*. 4.15.5
[70] Naveh and Shaked, *Aramaic Documents*, C4 (Khalili IA17).

distrust with the former Achaemenid satraps, a few of which had rebelled by this point such as Satibarzanes of Areia.[71]

Bactrians featured heavily in Alexander's imperial appointments, which saw hyparchs elevated to positions of prominence within provincial administrations. One such is example is Alexander's own father-in-law Oxyartes, who Alexander makes Satrap of the Paropamisadai during his Indian campaign.[72] Additionally, Alexander integrates "Bactrian, Sogdian, Arachosian, Zarangian, Areian, and Parthian cavalrymen" into his companions, even forming a fifth Hyparchy composed mostly of Iranian nobles—Bactrian and Sogdian included, such as Itanes, a son of Oxyartes (and also Alexander's brother-in-law)—which is led by "Hystaspes the Bactrian."[73]

However, the more longest lasting sign of Alexander's favor to the Bactrians were the efforts to entwine them dynastically with Alexander and the Macedonians. After returning to Susa in south-eastern Iran from his campaign in India, Alexander marries many of his generals to Iranian noblewomen. Significant among these brides are Amastrine, a daughter of Oxyatres (not to be confused with *Oxyartes*)—he is named as a brother of Darius but his name may suggest Bactrian heritage—who was wed to Krateros and Apama, wed to Seleucus, daughter of the same Spitamenes who was so instrumental in the rebellion against Alexander.[74] These marriages would go on to have major ramifications following the death of Alexander. Rhoxane would bear a child by him and in doing so be brought into the wars of the Diadochi following his death.

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[71] Hyland, "Alexander's Satraps of Media."
[72] Arr. *Anab.* 6.15.3
[73] "οἱ Βακτρίων δὲ καὶ οἱ Σογδιανῶν καὶ Ἀραχωτῶν ἱππεῖς καὶ Ζαραγγῶν δὲ καὶ Ἀρείων καὶ Παρθυαίων καὶ ἐκ Περσῶν οἱ Εὐάκαι καλούμενοι ἱππεῖς καταλοχισθέντες εἰς τὴν ἵππον τὴν ἑταιρικὴν… πέμπτη ἐπὶ τούτοις ἱππαρχία προσγενομένη, οὐ βαρβαρικὴ ἡ πᾶσα, ἀλλὰ ἐπαυξηθέντος γὰρ τοῦ παντὸς ἱππικοῦ κατελέγησαν ἐς αὐτὸ τῶν βαρβάρων… Ἰτάνης Ὀξυάρτου μὲν παῖς, Ῥωξάνης δὲ τῆς γυναικὸς Ἀλεξάνδρου ἀδελφός… ἡγεμὼν ἐπὶ τούτοις ἐπισταθεὶς Ὑστάσπης ὁ Βάκτριος." Arr. *Anab.* 7.6.3-5
[74] "Ὁ δὲ καὶ γάμους ἐποίησεν ἐν Σούσοις αὐτοῦ τε καὶ τῶν ἑταίρων·… Κρατερῷ δὲ Ἀμαστρίνην τὴν Ὀξυάτρου τοῦ Δαρείου ἀδελφοῦ παῖδα·… Σελεύκῳ δὲ τὴν Σπιταμένους τοῦ Βακτρίου παῖδα·" Arr. *Anab.* 7.4.5-6

Though initially unrealized, as Rhoxane and her child were ultimately killed, the dream of Greco-Bactrian aristocracy was realized once Seleucus, one of Alexander's former generals, took control of much of Alexander's former Asiatic territory. Though his marriage with Apama was eventually put to the side in favor of a marriage alliance with the Mauryan Empire in India, he would be succeeded by his son by Apama, Antiochus. Thus the Bactrians were elevated as much as possible within the broadly Hellenic hierarchy, with the Seleucid king himself being half-Bactrian.

While the rebellions of the Bactrians against Alexander did not create an independent Bactrian kingdom, they arguably succeeded in their true aim. Independence in the ancient world came with certain risks. While it might sound good in theory, it meant that the entirety of one's fortunes, good or bad, rested on their ability to defend their own property. The Achaemenid Empire, though hierarchical and fundamentally exploitative like all empires, may have offered security at the expense of freedom. The Achaemenid system provided both security and opportunity to the Bactrian hyparchs, protecting what wealth and status they already possessed and opening avenues of advancement where the Bactrians could aggrandize themselves on an empire-wide level. The advent of Alexander jeopardized the survival of that system. What the Bactrians sought from rebellion was not independence but respect. They wanted to ensure their status would be respected: one of many subjects, but first among them.

Conclusion

Four years after leaving Bactria, Alexander would die unexpectedly in Babylon in 323 BCE. Because Alexander named no direct successor, the empire that Alexander had conquered, maintained as a single state for two hundred years of Achaemenid rule, would fragment into a series of regional kingdoms, with Alexander's many generals each claiming some piece of the former empire. Some of these dynasties have already been mentioned: the Seleucids, founded by Seleucus Nicator in Syria and Mesopotamia, would extend control over most of the Achaemenids' Asiatic territory, though their realm would gradually collapse as eastern vassals declared their independence; the Ptolemies would ensconce themselves in Egypt for the next three hundred years, venturing at intervals into the wider Mediterranean. These Diadochi, the name given to Alexander's various successors, would continue to vie with one another for the duration of their existence, attempting in vain to restore the empire Alexander had won, and just as quickly lost.

This Hellenistic Period which followed Alexander's death in 323 BCE has seen its own reevaluation as of late, away from an old narrative of corruption and decadence entwined with their mixing with native populations and to a more positive interpretation of the period as being a time of cultural exchange and an expanded international community. However, in some senses this shift has gone too far in emphasizing the novelty of this period. The dissemination of Greek ideas has been mistaken for a broader multi-culturalism in general. However, as discussed in the Ptolemaic section of the Egypt chapter, this apparent cultural flowering is the result of a more repressive cultural policy, not a more open one. These Greek ideas were spread by force, not by their inherent popularity. Alexander had already taken steps to Hellenize his conquests, founding cities across the expanse of the Achaemenid territories and populating them with Greek veterans,

willing or otherwise, such as was seen in the foundation of Alexandria Eschate. However, taken together with his more Iranicizing policies, it seems Alexander intended this process to be a two-way exchange.

The Hellenistic Period: Innovation or Iteration?

In some senses, the subsequent cultural exchanges of the Hellenistic Period were mutual, but one party had far more power within that relationship than the other. The Greek-facing population of Alexandria may have adopted some Egyptian funerial practices, however it was done incompletely and fully voluntarily. By contrast, the statue of the deified Ptolemaic Queen Arsinoë was placed in every major Egyptian temple by no other impetus than an imperial edict. Greek populations were settled within the majority non-Greek provinces of the Seleucid Kingdom and given political autonomy in colonial poleis such as the capitals of Seleucia and Antioch with rights far exceeding those of the Syrians and Babylonians in the neighboring communities. The Babylonian royal records may record the name Seleucus in cuneiform, but how did that change the cultural milieu of Babylon itself?

Perhaps the biggest change from the Achaemenid to Hellenistic Period is not one of substance but of perspective. Prior to the conquests of Alexander, the Greeks, and by extension the narrative historians, existed (mostly) on the outside of a fundamental divide. That is, they existed outside the Achaemenid state. As mentioned, the nature of Achaemenid rule makes archeological study difficult. The Achaemenids did not leave much physical evidence of their rule in subject regions. However, just as the sudden explosion of Hellenistic artifacts is a product of their active efforts to enforce their culture, the comparative silence of the Achaemenid period is not a result of their lack of cultural output, but their lack of a particular Iranicizing program.

On the stairs of Persepolis, from what remains of the Apadana, the great audience hall built by Darius the great, there are carved figures from every near eastern nation. The Achaemenid palace intentionally displays the diversity of the empire's constituents. The Bactrians are featured, as are the Ionians, as well as Nubians from south of Egypt. Interspersed are Thracians from Bulgaria, Arachosians from Pakistan, Saka from beyond the Jaxartes, Armenians from the Caucuses. They are all depicted coming together, assembling before the King of Kings to give tribute and declare their loyalty. While this is not direct evidence of cultural exchange, and is of coursed an idealized image, it reflects the simple fact that the Achaemenid state unified a whole macro-region, and allowed for people and goods to move mostly unfettered. Though he is likely of Iranian extraction, Alexander's interpreter Pharnoukes, though hailing from Lycia in western Anatolia, is able to communicate with Sogdians living in Central Asia. In light of this one must ask to what extent was the Hellenistic Period truly a *new* phenomenon and how much does its exchange have roots in the Achaemenid Period. The Hellenistic Period may see the emergence of an *inter*-national community, but how much of this interaction was borne out of the fact that it had previously been *intra*-national

Nubian Tribute Bearers

The Achaemenid Legacy

The ghost of the Achaemenid empire would still haunt the region well into the common era. Whether by intention or simple accident, Alexander never had the chance to make meaningful reforms to the Achaemenid system. As a result, the various successor states would utilize the old imperial infrastructure, though imperfectly and sometimes ineffectively. However, they would never be able to completely fill the mantle that the Achaemenids had left vacant. Ironically, while the era of the Successors is defined by its Greekness, it was precisely this attachment to Hellenic customs that made effectively ruling what had been the Achaemenid Empire impossible. The signs were clear even during Alexander's lifetime, as he attempted unsuccessfully to introduce the decorum of the Persian court, such as *proskynesis*, a manner of prostration before the Persian monarch that was soundly rejected by Alexander's underlings. Likewise, Alexander's attempts to fold native peoples into his administration, whether it be the marriage of Macedonian officials to Iranian (and other) borne wives or the integration of natives into the ranks of the companions, were met with anger and distrust. The *epigonoi*, Iranian born soldiers armed and trained to fight in a Macedonian style phalanx, were seen as barbarizing and an attempt by Alexander to replace his own Macedonian troops.[75]

There was a flaw in the Hellenic imperial mentality that had not been anticipated by prior advocates of a Greek conquest of Persia, like Isocrates. The wealth of the Achaemenid state was just as vast as they had predicted, but the Greeks could not bear to rule barbarians. The Achaemenid system had depended on a relatively light touch. Force could be, and was, deployed to coerce subject nations into passivity, but the administration was just as much designed to

[75] Marek Jan Olbrycht, "The Epigonoi - the Iranian Phalanx of Alexander the Great," in *The Many Faces of War in the Ancient World*, ed. Waldemar Heckel, Sabine Müller, and Graham Wrightson (London: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 197.

avoid that kind of confrontation. The Achaemenids camouflaged their rule in whatever ways possible. They courted local elites, adopted the aesthetics of indigenous kingship, guaranteed some measure of autonomy to their subject nations; all in the effort to make foreign rule appear as native as possible. This proved untenable to the Hellenic "civilizing" impulse. The successors had little trust for their native subjects, so instead relied on a smaller base of Greek immigrant soldiers to maintain their power.

This approach ultimately lead to crisis and sometimes collapse. The Ptolemies were able to rectify their mistakes, nativizing their administration after a period of widespread unrest in the second century BCE. The Seleucids were not as successful. Though the Bactrians were initially pacified by the promise of internal prominence, as the Seleucids' attention strayed from appeasing their eastern subjects toward more immediate threats in the Mediterranean, the region broke away under the rule of a Greek governor who saw the week position of the Seleucids. The *frataraka,* local Iranian governors in the former Achaemenid heartland, would also agitate for independence from the Seleucids.[76] However, they would be incorporated into the growing Arsacid Empire. The Arsacid Empire, more commonly the Parthian Empire, was a state formed after the dynasty's founder, the eponymous Arsaces, leader of the Parni, a tribe from Central Asia, invaded the satrapy of Parthia which itself was in rebellion against the Seleucids. The Arsacids would go on to conquer most of the Seleucids' eastern holdings.

In response to the loss of their eastern provinces the Seleucids would scale back the breadth of their attentions, consolidating their state into a regional polity focused primarily on Syria. The collapse of the Seleucids in particular is often treated as a historical inevitability, the territory too vast to be governed effectively. Except for the fact that it *had* been governed

[76] M. Rahim Shayegan, *Arsacids and Sasanians: Political Ideology in Post-Hellenistic and Late-Antique Persia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 168.

effectively by the Achaemenids. The Seleucid failure was entirely preventable and was in large part a symptom of their inability to adopt the Achaemenid imperial philosophy wholeheartedly. The Arsacids, who would inherit most of the Seleucids' territory, would go on to successfully govern these territories lost by the Seleucids for over four hundred and fifty years from 247 BCE – 224 CE. They would do this by ruling in a similarly lax manner to the Achaemenids. The *frataraka* that had previously been a thorn in the side of the Seleucids were incorporated and effectively pacified by the Arsacids, who allowed them to govern themselves semi-independently. The *frataraka* would continue to rule the Fars region of Iran under Arsacid auspices for the entirety of the Arsacids' rule, until revolting against the Arsacids during a period of weakness and founding the Sasanian Empire. The Sasanians, though they drifted from the accommodating policy of the Achaemenids in practice, would connect their dynasty explicitly to the Achaemenids. The tombs of Naqshi-Rustam that had previously been the place of burial for the Achaemenid kings would have new tombs added for these new Sasanian monarchs. They would continue to appeal to a sense of Achaemenid ancestry until the conquest of the Sasanian Empire by the new Rashidun Caliphate between 633-654 CE.

The modern Achaemenid luminary Pierre Briant famously called Alexander "the last of the Achaemenids" due to his perpetuation of Achaemenid policies. Yet, if we judge the survival of the Achaemenids by the survival of their system, Alexander was *not* the last of the Achaemenids. The Achaemenid system outlived him. By orders of magnitude, the Achaemenids continued to define Near-East politics well into the common era. When Alexander gave the order to raze the palace at Persepolis in 330 BCE, one of his generals advised against it. Arrian says Parmenion argued that "it was ignoble to destroy what was now his, and that the peoples of Asia would not pay heed to him in the same way if they assumed he had no intention of governing

Asia but would merely conquer and move on."[77] In the end that is exactly what happened. It is easy to conquer an empire, it is much harder to rule one. For all Alexander's storied legacy he was just a great conqueror, not a Great King.

[77] "τὰ βασίλεια δὲ τὰ Περσικὰ ἐνέπρησε, Παρμενίωνος σώζειν ξυμβουλεύοντος, τά τε ἄλλα καὶ ὅτι οὐ καλὸν αὐτοῦ κτήματα ἤδη ἀπολλύναι καὶ ὅτι οὐχ ὡσαύτως προσέξουσιν αὐτῷ οἱ κατὰ τὴν Ἀσίαν ἄνθρωποι, ὡς οὐδὲ αὐτῷ ἐγνωκότι κατέχειν τῆς Ἀσίας τὴν ἀρχήν, ἀλλὰ ἐπελθεῖν μόνον νικῶντα."Arr. *Anab.* 3.18.12

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