# Resistance against the Achaemenid Empire: the Egyptian Rebellions of 521 and 487/86 BC

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# Chapter 2

## The Sources: From Greco-Roman Narratives to Achaemenid Seals

### 2.1 Introduction

Almost two hundred years ago, the historian Franciscus Ley published a dissertation on Achaemenid Egypt in Latin. The book was called *Fata et conditio Aegypti sub imperio Persarum* (i.e. the fate and condition of Egypt under the Persian Empire). Though the book counted only seventy-six pages, *Fata et conditio* provided a narrative history of the Twenty-Seventh Dynasty that was quite detailed for its time. It included, among other things, an account of Cambyses' invasion of Egypt, descriptions of Egyptian resistance against Persian rule, a summary of Egypt's secession from the Persian Empire in ca. 400 BC, and a discussion of the wars between Egypt and Persia in the decades that followed.[73] In light of the wealth of information that *Fata et conditio* provided, it is interesting to observe that the book mentioned neither Egyptian nor Persian sources. Instead, Ley's history was based on a group of ancient Greco-Roman texts. These texts included the *Histories* of Herodotus, the *Peloponnesian War* by Thucydides, and the *Universal Library* of Diodorus of Sicily.[74] Such texts prompted Ley to conclude that the Egyptians had been the most treacherous and most seditious of all the peoples of the Persian Empire: "Etenim Aegyptii omnium populorum, quibus Persae imperabant, infidissimi ac seditiossimi semper fuerunt."[75]

As is well known, Ley's reliance on Greco-Roman texts for the historical reconstruction of Achaemenid Egypt was part of a long-standing tradition. The texts had been copied from antiquity to the Middle Ages, and eventually ended up in the hands of European scholars.[76] For the reconstruction of the Persian Empire, the Greco-Roman texts were particularly important

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[73] See Ley, *Fata et conditio*, 9-10, 12-16, 20-28.

[74] Ibid., 3-4.

[75] Ibid., 16. I.e. "For the Egyptians were always the most treacherous and seditious of all the peoples that the Persians ruled."

[76] See e.g. Sancisi-Weerdenburg and Drijvers, *Roots of the European Tradition*, and Degen and Manning, "Western Europe," 1564-1608, and Dandamaev, "Eastern Europe," 1629-36. For Iranian scholarship on the Persian Empire, which followed a different trajectory, see e.g. Coloru, "Once Were Persians," 87-106, and Mousavi, "Iran," 1637-47.

as long as many of the languages and scripts that had been in use in ancient western Asia remained undeciphered. This was partly still the case when *Fata et conditio* was written: published in 1830, Ley wrote the book when the decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphs, demotic and cuneiform was in its early stages, which largely precluded the use of local and contemporary sources for his reconstruction of Achaemenid Egypt.[77] It goes without saying that this is no longer an issue. After ca. two centuries of excavations and publications, the Persian Empire can be studied on the basis of Greco-Roman narratives as well as Old Persian, Elamite, Babylonian, hieroglyphic, demotic, Aramaic and a host of other texts – in addition to a rich variety of material culture.[78] This observation likewise applies to Achaemenid Egypt, and the rebellions that were waged there.

As discussed in Chapter 1, it is not always clear from modern studies that the rebellions of Persian-Period Egypt can be studied on the basis of a rich source base. Most studies have focused on the traditional Greco-Roman texts, while other sources that document the rebellions have been little used. One possible explanation for this phenomenon is the narrative quality of the Greco-Roman sources: some of the Egyptian rebellions are described from beginning to end, and include clear indications of their date, the battles that were fought between imperial and rebel forces, how the rebellions were defeated, and what happened in their aftermaths.[79] This stands in stark contrast with Egyptian sources, few of which provide us with clear-cut narratives of political events.[80] Instead, the relevance of Egyptian sources to the study of the Egyptian rebellions primarily lies in their date formulae, which sometimes refer to non-Persian kings who ruled parts of Egypt, and in occasional references to (violent) unrest.[81] Nevertheless,

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[77] The decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphs had only been accomplished in 1824, after which the process of publishing ancient Egyptian sources slowly took off; see Pope, *Story of Decipherment*, 76-84. The decipherment of demotic and cuneiform was accomplished at slightly later dates: demotic was deciphered around 1830 (Ray, *Rosetta Stone*, 46); Old Persian cuneiform was largely deciphered by 1839 (Pope, *Story of Decipherment*, 106-10); the decipherment of Akkadian cuneiform was considered a *fait accompli* in 1857 (ibid., 114-117); while Elamite was not fully understood until ca. 1890 (ibid., 117).

[78] For an introduction to the sources of the Persian Empire, see e.g. Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, and the overviews collected in Jacobs and Rollinger, *Achaemenid Persian Empire*, 1:75-332.

[79] This is most clearly the case for Inaros' revolt (see 2.2.2); but see also 2.2.1, on the rebellions of the 520s and 480s BC.

[80] Partial exceptions are the autobiography of Udjahorresnet (see 2.4.1.2), and several Egypto-Persian monuments from the reign of Darius I (see 2.3.3.1).

[81] See 2.4.1.2 and 2.4.2.

the prominent use of Greco-Roman texts instead of contemporary sources from the Persian Empire itself is surprising in light of the debate on Hellenocentrism and (proto-)Orientalism in Achaemenid Studies. Among other things, this debate has highlighted that Greco-Roman authors often described events that happened decades or even centuries before their lifetime; and that the authors in question were mostly men who lived outside of the Achaemenid Empire, in polities that were sometimes at war with the Persians. These observations have raised questions about the reliability of the narratives, ranging from simple historical errors to more profound misrepresentations of events that may have been colored by negative prejudices against the Persians and their subjects.[82] Of course, questions regarding reliability can likewise be raised in relation to non-Greco-Roman sources. It is undeniable, for example, that the royal inscriptions of the Persian kings represented reality in a way that favored the image of the monarch and the Empire as a whole, as did Persian art.[83] The historical value of all sources therefore needs to be carefully weighed.

Whether a particular ancient source provides us with reliable information on a specific event can only be assessed on a case-by-case basis. In part, such assessments rely on an evaluation of the source at hand: when it was produced, in what context, and by whom. For example, the *Histories* of Herodotus is a valuable source for modern studies of the Persian Empire because it was written by a contemporary of the Empire in the (late) fifth century BC, who, moreover, stemmed from Caria, a region that fell occasionally under Persian control. Though many stories in the *Histories* do not reflect historical reality – one thinks, for example, of a story about an Egyptian pharaoh who became blind because he had offended the gods, after which he cured his eyesight with the urine of a faithful woman (Herodotus, *Histories* 2.111) – , it is plausible that his work did reflect the kinds of stories that circulated in the second half of the fifth century BC, among Greeks, Persians, Egyptians, and other groups whom Herodotus identified as his informants. In addition, some of these stories clearly concerned historical political events, several of which had taken place within living memory of Herodotus' contemporaries. Xerxes'

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[82] The debate on Hellenocentrism and (proto-)Orientalism in Achaemenid studies took off in the 1970s and '80s; for discussions of the debate and its consequences regarding the use of Greco-Roman sources, see e.g. Kuhrt and Sancisi-Weerdenburg, "Introduction," ix-xiii, Harrison, *Writing Ancient Persia*, 15-18, Colburn, "Orientalism, Postcolonialism, and the Achaemenid Empire," 94-98, and McCaskie, "'As on a Darkling Plain,'" 151-58.

[83] See e.g. 2.3 and 2.5.4, and the more elaborate discussion of the Bisitun inscription in 3.2.

invasion of Greece is the most notable example.[84] The historical value of other works can be more difficult to assess. The *Stratagems* of Polyaenus, for example, was written by a Bythinian author in the second century AD, on the basis of older sources that cannot always be identified. Because ca. seven centuries separated Polyaenus from the Persian Empire, the reliability of some of his stories on the sixth to fourth centuries BC can be seriously questioned.[85] Having said that, a crucial aspect in the assessment of a source's historical value is not only the context of its production but also the existence of other sources – preferably from different contexts – that can be connected to the same people, phenomena and events. The existence of Persian, Egyptian and Babylonian sources that point to an Egyptian rebellion in the 520s BC renders it more likely, for example, that a story in the *Stratagems* of Polyaenus about an Egyptian rebellion in Darius I's early reign was not merely the stuff of fantasy.[86] This brings us back to the importance of a diverse source base, which, after ca. two centuries of excavation, decipherment, and publication, is now most certainly available for the Egyptian rebellions of the Persian Period.

To redress to overemphasis on Greco-Roman texts in modern studies of Persian-Period Egyptian resistance, the present chapter provides a detailed overview of all of the relevant sources that are currently at our disposal. The sources have been divided into four sections: Greco-Roman texts (2.2.), Persian (royal) sources (2.3), Egyptian sources (2.4), and miscellaneous sources (2.5). The latter include Greek inscriptions, cuneiform tablets from Babylonia and Persia, and Achaemenid seals. A primary aim of the chapter is to evaluate each corpus' "horizon of information." In other words, what do Persian sources tell us about the Egyptian rebellions that Greek sources do not, and vice versa? And what kind of information

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[84] Scholarship on Herodotus is vast. For a succinct introduction to the author and his work, see Lenfant, *Les Perses vus par les Grecs*, 214-27. For more detailed studies, one can consult Bakker, de Jong, and van Wees, *Brill's Companion to Herodotus*, Dewald and Marincola, *Cambridge Companion to Herodotus*, Rollinger, Truschnegg, and Bichler, *Herodot und das Persische Weltreich*, and Harrison and Irwin, *Interpreting Herodotus*. Though Herodotus' reliability and actual use of (non-Greek) sources has often been questioned – most famously by Fehling, *Die Quellenangaben bei Herodot* – , there is plenty of evidence that the historian consulted epigraphic and oral sources from both within and outside of the Greek world; see e.g. West, "Herodotus' Epigraphical Interests," 278-305, Moyer, "Herodotus and an Egyptian Mirage," 70-90, Ryholt, *Petese Stories II*, 31-46, and Thonemann, "Croesus and the Oracles," 152-67.

[85] For an introduction to Polyaenus and his work, see Lenfant, *Les Perses vus par les Grecs*, 339-41, and Brodersen, *Polyainos, Strategika*, 7-18.

[86] For the passage in question and a discussion of how it connects to other sources, see 2.2.1 and 3.4.1.

may one expect from hieroglyphic, demotic and Aramaic texts? In the end, these discussions will facilitate comparison between the different corpora. They will also allow one to more easily assess whether a particular rebellion is documented by one or multiple sources, and whether the rebellions as a whole shared certain characteristics. The latter issues will be revisited in the conclusion to the present chapter.

## 2.2 Greco-Roman texts

In the sixth to fourth centuries BC the Greek world and the Achaemenid Empire were intimately connected to one another. According to Herodotus, this connection had begun in the mid-sixth century BC, when Cyrus defeated the Lydian Empire of Croesus. The latter included a series of Greek city-states on its western coast, which became the first Greek settlements that fell within the orbit of the Persian Empire (see e.g. Herodotus, *Histories* 1.141-176).[87] In the decades that followed Cyrus' reign, the encroachment of the Empire on and near Greek lands continued gradually. The Greek islands of Samos, Lesbos and Chios were incorporated in the late sixth century BC, and Macedonia and Thrace were invaded shortly thereafter.[88] In 490 and 480 BC, Darius I and Xerxes even invaded the Greek mainland.[89] Though the Greeks were the eventual victors in the so-called "Greco-Persian Wars" – victories which would be celebrated for centuries to come – the Persian Empire continued to play a major role in Mediterranean politics in the late fifth and fourth centuries BC. In the decades that followed Xerxes' reign, for example, the Persians regained control of some of the Greek possessions that they had lost in the aftermath of 480/79 BC, and – when it suited them – fueled conflicts between Greek city-states by supporting one faction over another.[90]

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[87] For the Greek city-states of western Anatolia, see e.g. Greaves, "Greeks in Western Anatolia," 500-514, and Meyer, "Satraps of Western Anatolia," 90-92. For Cyrus' conquest, see Sams, "Anatolia," 614-15, and Meyer, "Satraps of Western Anatolia," 93.

[88] See e.g. Young, "Consolidation of the Empire," 67-70, Zahrnt, "Macedonia," 639-40, and Boteva-Boyanova, "Thrace," 649-50.

[89] The literature on the invasions is vast. For introductions, see e.g. Young, "Consolidation of the Empire," 67-72, 75-76, Hammond, "Expedition of Datis and Artaphernes," 491-517, Hammond, "Expedition of Xerxes," 518-90, Rollinger and Degen, "Establishment of the Achaemenid Empire," 430-38, and Meier, "Greek World," 627-32.

[90] See e.g. Hyland, *Persian Interventions*, 1-3, Dusinberre, "Asia Minor," 601, and Meier, "Greek World," 632-34.

It was within the context of the fifth to fourth centuries BC – after Xerxes had invaded Greece, and while the Persian Empire was still a political power to be reckoned with – that men from different regions of the Greek world began to write histories, tragedies, poems, philosophical treatises and political pamphlets that engaged with the Persian Empire in various degrees.[91] As mentioned above, some of these texts have been preserved in their entirety. A prime example is the *Histories* of Herodotus, which is often considered to be the first Greek "history" which has been preserved. The book chronicles the rise of the Persian Empire in the sixth century BC, and the development of hostilities between Greeks and Persians in the early fifth century BC. Due to the wealth of stories that it provides, the *Histories* has long been a crucial text in reconstructions of the (early) Achaemenid Empire.[92] Other texts that have been preserved in their entirety include the *Peloponnesian War* by Thucydides, which provides a history of the late fifth century BC war between Sparta and Athens, and the *Education of Cyrus* by Xenophon, an idealized biography of Cyrus the Great.[93] Some works, by contrast, are known only from "fragments," e.g. from summaries and quotes in books from later authors. The *Persica* by Ctesias, for example, chronicles the history of the Persian Empire down to ca. 398/97 BC, but is mainly known from snippets in the works of Nicolaus of Damascus (first century BC), Diodorus of Sicily (first century BC), Plutarch (first century AD), and Photius (ninth century AD).[94]

Though there were important differences between the aforementioned authors, it is fair to say that a primary focus of their work – and, to a large extent, that of the Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine authors who built on the Greek textual tradition – was the relationship between Greeks and Persians. The Greek mainland, the Greek communities of western Anatolia, and the islands of the eastern Mediterranean were of particular interest to them. Other regions, many of which fell under Persian rule, received less attention. This observation is particularly true for regions that lay east of the Zagros mountains, the political history of which is therefore more difficult to reconstruct than that of the Empire's western border.[95] Having said that, of the regions that received only peripheral attention in Greek texts, Egypt was a relatively

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[91] For an introduction to these texts, see e.g. Lenfant, *Les Perses vus par les Grecs*, 3-20, Brosius, "Greek Sources on Achaemenid Iran," 658-68, and Bichler and Rollinger, "Greek and Latin Sources," 169-85.

[92] For scholarship on Herodotus, see n. 84 above.

[93] See e.g. Lenfant, *Les Perses vus par les Grecs*, 390-93, 406-7.

[94] See e.g. Lenfant, *Les Perses vus par les Grecs*, 96-107, and Stronk, *Ctesias' Persian History*, 60-150.

[95] See e.g. Lenfant, *Les Perses vus par les Grecs*, 11-14, and Brosius, "Greek Sources on Achaemenid Iran," 659.

prominent topic. Greek authors occasionally referred to troubles in the Egyptian Delta and Nile Valley, to renewed Persian invasions of north Africa, and to the occasional involvement of Greek soldiers in Egypto-Persian conflicts. Such references ranged from a few sentences to descriptions of several paragraphs.[96] The present section provides an overview of those references that (may) relate to Egyptian rebellions – from unrest in the late sixth century BC to Egypt's secession in ca. 400 BC.

*2.2.1 Early resistance (late sixth to early fifth century BC)*

The earliest episodes of Egyptian resistance are known from a handful of paragraphs in the works of three different authors: the *Histories* of Herodotus, *On Rhetoric* by Aristotle, and the *Stratagems* by Polyaenus. The historicity of some of the episodes is difficult to assess. The first that should be mentioned is connected to Psamtik III, the last king of the Saite Dynasty. In Book Three of the *Histories*, Herodotus describes that Psamtik's armies were defeated by Cambyses, and that he was captured in Memphis. After testing Psamtik's character, the Persian king decided to let him live. At some point, however, Psamtik meddled in political affairs: he "plotted evil" and was "caught raising a revolt among the Egyptians." When his plans were discovered, Psamtik drank bull's blood, and died on the spot (*Histories* 3.10-15). The episode is sometimes mentioned in introductions to Achaemenid Egypt.[97] It is probably best, however, to exclude the episode from the list of Egyptian rebellions proper. The words used to describe Psamtik's acts are πολυπρηγμονέειν, i.e. to "meddle (in state affairs)," and μηχανώμενος, i.e.

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[96] Much has been written about the prominent role of Egypt in Greek texts; see e.g. Burstein, "Images of Egypt," 591-604, Vasunia, *Gift of the Nile*, Hartog, "Greeks as Egyptologists," 211-28, and Moyer, "Egyptian History," 1-12. Note, however, that such texts say relatively little about Persian Period Egypt (see e.g. Vasunia, *Gift of the Nile*, 7). This is especially clear in the case of the *Histories* of Herodotus: the book is famous for its elaborate Egyptian logos, but the latter's account of Egyptian history ends rather than begins with Cambyses' conquest (see *Histories* 2.1-182, 3.1-37). The information that Herodotus does provide on Persian Period Egypt has recently been examined by Tuplin, "Dogs That Do Not (Always) Bark," 99-123.

[97] See e.g. Perdu, "Saites and Persians," 149, and Klotz, "Persian Period," 2. At times, scholars have described the episode as a rebellion, which would have resulted in a second period of (short-lived) rule by Psamtik III. Contemporary evidence for such a rebellion is lacking, however: the demotic papyri that have been attributed to Psamtik's second period of rule by e.g. Griffith, *Cataologue of the Demotic Papyri*, 24 no. 40, and Pestman, *Les papyrus démotiques de Tsenhor*, 1:131 n. 3, have now been redated; see Pestman, "Diospolis Parva Documents," 145-48, and Chauveau, "Les archives d'un temple," 45-47.

to "contrive" or "devise" something.[98] Psamtik is subsequently said to have been "caught" in the act of "raising a revolt among the Egyptians" (ἀπιστὰς γὰρ Αἰγυπτίους ἥλω). It is therefore unclear whether Herodotus believed that a rebellion had actually broken out, or whether Psamtik was planning some kind of conspiracy and was seized before he managed to put it in motion.

The second episode of resistance that is known from the *Histories* is complicated by a similar ambiguity. In Book Four, the historian says that Aryandes, whom Cambyses had installed as satrap over Egypt, was executed by Darius I. He was put to death on the charge of insurrection (ἐπανίσταιτο). However, Herodotus indicates that Aryandes' real fault had been the minting of silver coins, which were as pure as Darius' coins were gold (*Histories* 4.166). The story has sometimes been connected to a passage in the *Stratagems* by Polyaenus (second century AD).[99] The latter states that the Egyptians rebelled (ἀποστάντων) because of the cruelty of Aryandes, and that Darius had to invade the country. The Persian king won back the support of the Egyptians by showing piety towards the Apis bull (*Stratagems* 7.11.7). *On Rhetoric* by Aristotle, written in the fourth century BC, complements these accounts to some degree. It states that both Darius I and Xerxes had conquered Egypt before they invaded Greece (*On Rhetoric* 2.20.3, 1393a32-b4). The reference implies that two separate Egyptian rebellions had existed: one which was thwarted by Xerxes (see below), and one which was thwarted by his father. The latter must have predated 490 BC, which is the year of Darius I's failed campaign at Marathon (see below).[100] Though the passages of Herodotus, Polyaenus and Aristotle are difficult to reconcile with one another, they suggest that one or multiple Egyptian uprisings occurred in the late sixth to early fifth century BC.

The third episode of Egyptian resistance that is known from the *Histories* brings us on firmer ground. In Book Seven Herodotus writes that Darius I made preparations for a full-scale invasion of Greece after a Persian contingent had been defeated by the Athenians at Marathon. The preparations for the invasion took at least three years. In the fourth year, the Egyptians rebelled (Αἰγύπτιοι (…) ἀπέστησαν ἀπὸ Περσέων; *Histories* 7.1). The unambiguous phrasing shows that Herodotus considered the episode to be a genuine rebellion on the part of the inhabitants of Egypt. Shortly after the rebellion, Darius I is said to have passed away. It was

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[98] Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 1442, 1131.

[99] See e.g. Wiedemann, *Geschichte Aegyptens*, 235-37, Maspero, *Les empires*, 684-85, and the discussion in 3.4.1.

[100] See e.g. Hammmond, "Expedition of Datis and Artaphernes," 506-17.

therefore Xerxes who sent an army to Egypt, and defeated the uprising. In addition, Xerxes installed a new satrap over the country, and "laid Egypt under a much harder slavery than in the time of Darius." When these affairs were taken care of, Xerxes continued his father's preparations for the invasion of the Greek mainland (*Histories* 7.4, 7.7). As mentioned above, *On Rhetoric* by Aristotle echoes Herodotus' account by stating that Xerxes had invaded Egypt before he invaded Greece (*On Rhetoric* 2.20.3, 1393a32-b4). Herodotus' account allows us to date the episode to ca. 487/86 – 485/84 BC.[101]

## 2.2.2 The rebellion of Inaros (mid-fifth century BC)

Ca. two decades after the rebellion of 487/86 BC had been defeated, a new one broke out at the start of the reign of Artaxerxes I. Of all the Egyptian rebellions from the Persian Period, this one is the best known. The fundamental narrative is provided by the *Peloponnesian War* of Thucydides. As mentioned above, the *Peloponnesian War* is primarily focused on the war between Athens and Sparta that began in 431 BC. The first chapter of the book, however, discusses the causes of the conflict, and attempts to reconstruct the rise of Athens as an imperial power in the ca. fifty years that preceded the war's outbreak. This narrative, known as the Pentakontaetia, mainly consists of summaries of Athenian military expeditions in the Mediterranean (see Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War* 1.89-117). Within this framework, Thucydides provides us with the following story: somewhere in the first few years of Artaxerxes I's reign, Inaros, son of a man called Psamtik, and king of the Libyans who dwelt near Egypt, caused Egypt to rebel (ἀπέστησεν) against Persian rule. Inaros' original base of operations was Marea, a town in the western Delta. Shortly thereafter, Inaros requested the assistance of the Athenians, who happened to be engaged with an expedition on Cyprus. Upon Inaros' request, the Athenians – and several of their unnamed allies – diverted the two hundred ships which they were using to Egypt, made themselves masters of the Nile, and occupied two-thirds of Memphis. The remaining one-third consisted of the city's "White Wall," a fortress in which the Persians and those Egyptians who had not joined the rebellion had taken refuge (Thucycides, *Peloponnesian War* 1.104). After an unspecified amount of time, Artaxerxes I decided to respond to the unrest in Egypt by sending an army under the leadership of Megabyzus. This army defeated the Egyptians, expelled the Greeks from Memphis, and forced the latter to withdraw to the island of Prosopotis. The siege of Prosopitis lasted a year and a

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[101] On Herodotus chronology for the rebellion, see 4.2.

half, before the Persians finally managed to capture the island. (ibid. 1.109). With the Persian capture of Prosopitis, Greek involvement in the rebellion was effectively ended. The involvement had lasted six years in total. Some of the Greek soldiers managed to escape the country via Libya and Cyrene, but most had perished. As for Inaros, he was betrayed, captured, and crucified (ibid. 1.110).

Aside from the *Peloponnesian War* of Thucydides, the rebellion of Inaros is known from several other works. These works complement – and sometimes contradict – Thucydides' account. For example, the *Histories* of Herodotus tells us that the bones of Persian soldiers who had fallen during Inaros' rebellion could still be seen on a battlefield near Papremis (*Histories* 3.12), and that Achaemenes – a brother of Xerxes, who had been installed as satrap of Egypt after the previous rebellion – was killed (ibid. 7.7). In addition, the *Persica* of Ctesias notes that the Athenians had sent forty rather than two hundred ships to Egypt (*Persica* F14 36), and that Inaros was killed only after the Persian queen Amestris had spent years trying to convince the king that this would be the best course of action (ibid. F14 38-39).[102] It should be clear that these references are much more detailed than the allusions to unrest in the late sixth and early fifth century BC (see above). This contrast may be the result of two things. First, the rebellions in the reigns of Darius I and Xerxes seem to have unfolded without the assistance of Greek city-states, while such involvement is well-documented for the rebellion of Inaros.[103] Second, the first rebellions had happened several decades before the earliest Greek historical works were written, while Inaros' rebellion fell within living memory of both Herodotus and Thucydides. The Greek historians, in other words, may have been significantly better informed about – and perhaps also more interested in – the Egyptian rebellion of the mid-fifth century BC, than the unrest of the early fifth and late sixth century BC.

### 2.2.3 (Semi-)autonomous kings (mid- to late fifth century BC)

The exact impact which Inaros' rebellion had on Persian governance of Egypt is unclear. Several Greek references suggest, however, that (parts of) the country remained unstable. First, it seems that an Egyptian man by the name of Amyrtaios, who may have been prominently involved in Inaros' rebellion, escaped Persian capture (see Herodotus, *Histories* 2.140, 3.15,

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[102] For other Greek references to Inaros, see e.g. Wallace, "Egyptian Expedition," 253-54, and Kahn, "Inaros' Rebellion," 424-25.

[103] See also 2.5.1 below.

and Ctesias, *Persica* F14 36). According to Thucydides, Amyrtaios ruled in the marshes (Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War* 1.110), i.e. the Egyptian Delta. He continued to rule there in the years that followed Inaros' defeat. At some point, Amyrtaios even obtained the military assistance of Athens and its allies, who sent sixty ships to Egypt – presumably for a battle with the Persians (*Peloponnesian War* 1.112). Second, Herodotus states that the sons of Inaros and Amyrtaios – who were called Thannyras and Pausiris respectively – received a certain degree of autonomy from the Persians. The historian claims that this was a general Persian custom: "even though kings revolt from them, they give back to their sons the sovereign power" (Herodotus, *Histories* 3.15). The exploits of Thannyras and Pausiris are not otherwise mentioned. Third, three references suggest that one or multiple kings ruled (parts of) Egypt in the second half of the fifth century BC. Two of the references can be connected to a certain Psamtik, who is said to have sent grain to Athens in ca. 445 BC (Philochorus, *FGrH* 328 F 119; Plutarch, *Pericles* 37). The third reference suggests that an anonymous king of Egypt threatened Phoenicia in ca. 411 BC (Diodorus of Sicily, *Universal Library* 13.46.6). What their connection was – if any – to Inaros, Amyrtaios, Thannyras, and Pausiris is unclear.

As should be clear from the preceding summary, our understanding of the men who are identified as "king" (βασιλεύς) of (parts of) Egypt in the second half of the fifth century BC is incomplete. The Greek works which refer to them omit information about their rise to power and their exact relationship to the Persian government. In part, this lack of detail may have been the result of the chronological and thematic limits of various Greek historical works. The main narrative of Herodotus' *Histories*, for example, ends with the Persian retreat from Greece in 479 BC, while the last historical event referred to in the book dates to ca. 430 BC.[104] It was not Herodotus' objective to provide a full description of political events in the decades that followed Inaros' rebellion – let alone of the role that Egyptian (rebel) kings may have played in those events. In addition, the narrative of Ctesias's *Persica*, which ends in 398/97 BC, might have included references to late fifth century BC problems in Egypt; but as only parts of its narrative are known through the summaries and quotes of later authors this is difficult to verify.[105] Despite this obstacle, the various references described above suggest that parts of Egypt may have been ruled by (semi-)autonomous pharaohs in the years that followed Inaros'

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[104] The last securely dateable event in the *Histories* is the execution of two Spartan envoys that had been sent to Persia (Herodotus, *Histories* 7.137); see Evans, "Herodotus' Publication Date," 145-46.

[105] See Llewellyn-Jones and Robson, *Ctesias' History of Persia*, 90. The end-date of Ctesias' narrative is provided by Diodorus, *Historical Library* 14.46.

rebellion. It is possible that their rule was condoned by the Persian government: other regions of the Empire are known to have been ruled by local kings, who were subordinate to – and paid taxes and tribute to – the Great King in Persia.[106] At the same time, the references suggest that the Egyptian kings drew their own plans: they undermined Persian authority by fostering an independent relationship with Athens on the one hand, and by attempting to expand their rule into territories beyond the Egyptian border on the other.

*2.2.4 Egypt's secession (ca. 400 BC)*

In line with the limited information that Greek authors provide on the kings of the second half of the fifth century BC, they reveal little about Egypt's secession from the Persian Empire in ca. 400 BC. Our primary information stems from the *History of Egypt* by Manetho. The latter was an Egyptian priest, who wrote a Greek history of his country in the third century BC. Like the *Persica* of Ctesias, the work is only known from citations and summaries by later authors.[107] The fragments suggest that the majority of Manetho's work consisted of king lists, which he had divided into separate dynasties. Manetho's Twenty-Seventh Dynasty consisted of Persian kings (from Cambyses to Darius II, i.e. from ca. 526 to 405/4 BC); the Twenty-Eighth Dynasty which followed Darius II's reign consisted of one Egyptian king, "Amyrtaios of Sais," who would have ruled six years (*History of Egypt* Fr. 70-72).[108] Scholars generally assume that this Amyrtaios – apparently a later namesake of the Amyrtaios who had ruled "the marshes" in the mid-fifth century BC – was the leader of a rebellion in the early reign of Artaxerxes II (ca. 405/4 – 359/58 BC).[109] This rebellion eventually ensured Egypt's secession from Persian rule for several decades. Though the start date of the rebellion is unclear, it is possible that Amyrtaios II benefitted from a political event that is described in detail by the *Persica* of Ctesias and the *Anabasis* of Xenophon: in ca. 401 BC, a war broke out between Cyrus II the Younger and his brother Artaxerxes II, both of whom claimed the Persian throne. After a fierce

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[106] For the hypothesis that the Egyptian kings were condoned by the Persians (as already suggested by Herodotus, *Histories* 3.15), see e.g. Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 575-77, 596-97, and Hyland, "Aršāma, Egyptian Trade, and the Peloponnesian War," 253-54.

[107] For an introduction to Manetho and his work, see Verbrugghe and Wickersham, *Berossos and Manetho*, 95-120.

[108] See Waddell, *Manetho*, 174-79.

[109] See e.g. Perdu, "Saites and Persians," 152, and Klotz, "Persian Period," 8.

battle at Cunaxa, Artaxerxes won the war.[110] Shortly thereafter, Xenophon suggests that Artaxerxes was angry with the Egyptians and that Egypt needed to be reconquered (*Anabasis* 2.1.14, 2.5.13). The only Greek reference to an Egyptian king who may have ruled in ca. 400 BC, however, stems from the *Universal Library* of Diodorus of Sicily. Contrary to Manetho, this first century BC account states that a ruler called Psamtik received a Persian satrap in Egypt shortly after the war between Cyrus and Artaxerxes (*Universal Library* 14.35). This is the last reference to the existence of a rebellion and/or rebel king in Achaemenid Egypt that can be found in Greek histories.[111]


## 2.3 Persian royal sources

In the early summer of 1836, a lieutenant from the British East India Company made regular trips to mount Bisitun, a mountain in the province of Kermanshah, western Iran. The lieutenant, whose name was Henry Creswicke Rawlinson, was twenty-six years old at the time. He had been stationed in Kermanshah to raise and train Kurdish troops for Bahram Mirza, the governor of the province, and a brother of the recently crowned Muhammad Shah. Rawlinson's visits to Bisitun, however, were not connected to the military duties with which he was charged. They were prompted by a fascination for a monumental inscription that was cut into the rock face of the mount, more than sixty meters above ground level: the monument consisted of a relief, which depicted a crowned man and several bound figures that stood before him, surrounded by ancient cuneiform writing. As would become clear later, the inscription was written in three different languages – Old Persian, Elamite, and Babylonian – , and had been created at the behest of Darius I (r. 522 – 486 BC) to commemorate his accession to the throne. Rawlinson, captivated by the idea of unlocking the secret to the as yet undeciphered cuneiform scripts,

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[110] See e.g. Lee, "Cyrus the Younger," 103-21. Whether the Egyptian rebellion preceded or postdated the war is uncertain. Amyrtaios II's reign probably began in ca. 404 BC – as Manetho suggests – , but he was only recognized as king in southern Egypt in ca. 400 BC (see e.g. Ruzicka, *Trouble in the West*, 37, and Quack, "Egypt," 560-61). It is possible that he started out as (semi-)autonomous king, who eventually expanded his rule in Egypt. It has also been suggested that Cyrus II may have benefitted from Amyrtaios' rebellion, rather than the other way around; see Lee, "Cyrus the Younger," 103-4.

[111] Greek texts do refer to the Persian reconquest of Egypt in ca. 343 BC, and at several failed attempts at reconquest that preceded it; see e.g. McKechnie, "Greek Wars," 27-45. For the existence of an additional Egyptian rebel king in the Second Persian Period – which is mentioned neither by Manetho nor by Greek histories – , see 2.4 below.

spent his spare time in Iran copying and studying the signs. After extensive work, he made his translations of the Old Persian version of the Bisitun inscription public in the late 1830s and 1840s.[112]

Though Rawlinson was neither the first European nor the only one who had attempted to translate the inscriptions of the Persian kings, his work on the Bisitun inscription occupies a special place in the history of scholarship on the Persian Empire. By and large, this is due to the fact that the Bisitun inscription is the longest Persian royal text that has been preserved. Neither Darius I himself, nor his predecessors and successors, ever left an inscription behind that was as elaborate as the one near Kermanshah.[113] The significance of this is twofold. First, when Rawlinson published his translations of the Bisitun inscription, they provided scholars with a rich array of previously unknown words in Old Persian. This would be key in deciphering the scripts and languages of the Elamite and Babylonian versions of the inscription, the understanding of which was still largely lacking.[114] Second, the text provided scholars with the longest narrative that was written from the perspective of a Persian king. The Bisitun inscription therefore was – and still is – a crucial text for historians of the Persian Empire who wish to go beyond the narratives of Greco-Roman historians to write a more "imperially centered" history of the Persian state. Incidentally, as more than half of the text consists of descriptions of revolts that were waged against Darius' reign, it is a significant source for the study of rebellion in the Persian Period as well. Because of its importance, the following section provides a short summary of the Bisitun inscription. In addition, it discusses the unique position of the inscription within the corpus of Persian royal inscriptions at large, and provides an overview of (possible) references to Egyptian rebellions in both it and a number of other Persian royal sources.

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[112] For a detailed overview of Rawlinson's time in western Iran, see Adkins, *Empires of the Plain*, 30-43, 58-85. For a description of the Bisitun monument, see ibid., 74-76. It should be noted that the decipherment of Old Persian cuneiform was a gradual and collective process; for Rawlinson's role in it, as well as that of other European scholars, see Pope, *Story of Decipherment*, 85-110, and Tavernier, "Old Persian," 640-44.

[113] For a general discussion of Persian royal inscriptions, see below.

[114] See e.g. Pope, *Story of Decipherment*, 106-10, 113-17.

*2.3.1 The Bisitun monument*

The Old Persian, Elamite and Babylonian versions of the Bisitun inscription, as well as the accompanying relief, were inscribed on the rocks of mount Bisitun between ca. 521 and 518 BC. The inscription essentially tells the story of Darius I's rise to power in the summer of 522 BC, and of several military campaigns that were waged from 522 to ca. 519/18 BC.[115] For simplicity's sake, the story can be divided into three parts. The first part of the inscription focuses on Darius' accession. After a lengthy genealogy, the inscription states that Cambyses, Darius' predecessor and distant relative, had killed his brother Bardiya in secret. Cambyses then went to Egypt, which – it is implied – he conquered at the time. After that, a man called Gaumata began a rebellion in Persia, and claimed to be Bardiya. Gaumata was supported by Persians, Medes, and a host of other peoples, many of whom apparently believed his claim. Though several people knew of Gaumata's true identity, only Darius and six other men dared to act. They killed Gaumata in a fortress in Media. Cambyses, meanwhile, had died in unknown circumstances, so Darius was granted the kingship of the Persian Empire. The second part of the Bisitun inscription describes events that followed Darius' accession to the throne. In particular, it describes a series of rebellions (Old Persian *hamiçiya-*) that were waged against Darius' reign, and the manner in which the Persian king managed to defeat them. First, the inscription claims that people in Elam and Babylonia rebelled against Darius once Gaumata had been executed. Darius sent an army to Elam, and personally led a force against Babylonia. While Darius was in Babylon, additional rebellions occurred in Persia, Media, Assyria, Egypt, Parthia, Margiana, Sattagydia, and Scythia. Some of these rebellions are described in detail in the inscription, including the dates and locations of battles, numbers of captured prisoners, and methods of execution. Others, including the rebellion in Egypt, receive no further comment. The general message is, however, that Darius managed to defeat the rebellions within his first year on the throne. The third part of the inscription was added at a later date. It provides a description of two military campaigns which Darius fought in his second and third years of rule: one was prompted by a rebellion in Elam; the other, which was waged against the Scythians, was apparently initiated by Darius himself. Finally, the relief that accompanies the

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[115] See Bae, "Comparative Studies," 16-30, for the history of the inscription's engraving, and ibid., 76-236, for an edition of the Old Persian, Elamite, and Akkadian versions of the text, which exhibit minor differences among one another. See Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 141-57 no. 5.1, for a convenient translation of the Old Persian text. A more elaborate summary and discussion of the inscription is provided in Chapter 3.

**Figure 2.** Part of Darius I's trilingual inscriptions and relief at mount Bisitun. (Photo from https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/dc/Bisotun_Iran_Relief_Achamenid_Period.JPG)

inscriptions at mount Bisitun provides a visual "summary" of Darius' victories. It depicts Darius as a crowned monarch, trampling a man beneath his feet, and standing in front of nine figures whose hands are bound behind their backs and whose necks are tied together with rope. Short cuneiform labels identify the prisoners with Gaumata and with the other (rebel) kings whom Darius described as having defeated. A figure in a winged disk, which hovers above the scene, grants Darius a ring, which is generally understood as a symbol of power.[116]

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[116] For a detailed discussion of the relief's iconography, see Root, *King and Kingship*, 182-226, and Rollinger, "Relief at Bisitun," 5-51. For the cuneiform labels, see Bae, "Comparative Studies," 227-36. In the years that followed the inscription's creation the text was disseminated through various media: see the discussion in 3.3.

*2.3.2 Other Persian royal inscriptions*

Within the larger tradition of royal inscriptions in ancient western Asia, the Bisitun inscription is not exceptionally remarkable. The kings of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, for example, made accounts of their military campaigns that were filled with similar details, such as descriptions of rebellion, capture of prisoners of war, destruction of cities, and methods of execution. Monumental reliefs sometimes accompanied these inscriptions, and provided visual testimony of the wars which the Assyrians fought with their subjects and neighbors.[117] Within the corpus of Persian royal inscriptions, however, the Bisitun monument can be said to be unique. As mentioned above, neither Cyrus and Cambyses, nor Xerxes and his successors have left inscriptions behind that rival the length and historical detail of the Bisitun inscription. In fact, the majority of the Persian royal inscriptions – as well as Persian monumental art – avoids historical narrative altogether.[118] To appreciate this aspect of the Persian royal corpus, it is important to take a brief look at the inscriptions of Cyrus and Cambyses on the one hand, and those of Darius I and his successors on the other.

2.3.2.1 The royal inscriptions of Cyrus and Cambyses

At present, ca. seven royal inscriptions can be attributed to the reign of Cyrus. The inscriptions stem from Babylonia and were written in the Babylonian language.[119] Among them, the so-called Cyrus Cylinder is by far the best known. It was probably found in the area of the Esagil in Babylon, or in one of the city's walls. The text is comparable to the Bisitun inscription in that it describes a specific political event: in short, the text claims that Marduk, the chief deity of Esagil, had ordered Cyrus to march to Babylonia; Cyrus then took Babylon without a fight, and showed himself to be a righteous king by e.g. allowing displaced peoples to return to their homelands, and by strengthening the city wall Imgur-Enlil. Most scholars assume that the

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[117] See e.g. Bagg, "Where is the Public," 58-60, 62-65, and Baker, "'I Burnt, Razed, (and) Destroyed,'" 48-54.

[118] For the ahistoricism of Persian royal inscriptions and art, see e.g. Root, *King and Kingship*, 182, Sancisi-Weerdenburg, "Persian Kings and History," 93-96, 110, and Rollinger, "Thinking and Writing about History," 195-202.

[119] The authorship of several inscriptions from Pasargadae is debated: the inscriptions claim that they were made by Cyrus, but most scholars assume that they were created by Darius I; see e.g. Stronach, "Old Persian Cuneiform Script," 195-203, and Rossi, "Inscriptions of the Achaemenids," 77-78.

cylinder was created shortly after the Babylonian conquest to legitimate Cyrus' reign.[120] The remainder of Cyrus' inscriptions are much shorter than the cylinder. They consist of ca. six bricks, which would have been placed in buildings in Ur and Uruk, and which are stamped with inscriptions of one to two lines each.[121] What ties the cylinder and the bricks together is that they extoll Cyrus with a mixture of Babylonian and non-Babylonian titles: Cyrus is celebrated as the "king of Babylon" and "king of Sumer and Akkad," but also as the "king of Anshan" – an ancient city in southwestern Iran – , and as the descendant of a long line of Anshanite kings.[122] It seems, in short, that the Persian conqueror chose to model his inscriptions directly on Mesopotamian precursors, while (subtly) adapting those traditions to his own needs.[123]

A similar observation can be made regarding the inscriptions of Cyrus' son. Though no Babylonian inscription has been attributed to Cambyses, the king is known from two royal texts in Egypt. Both are written in hieroglyphs and are connected to the burial of an Apis bull in Memphis. The inscriptions claim that Cambyses prepared a proper burial for the holy animal, and they extoll the king in traditional pharaonic terms as "king of Upper and Lower Egypt," and "son of Re."[124] Like his father, therefore, Cambyses chose to follow the prevailing

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[120] Literature on the Cyrus Cylinder is vast. For editions and translations of the text, see e.g. Schaudig, *Die Inschriften Nabonids*, 550-56, Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 70-74, and Schaudig, "Text of the Cyrus Cylinder," 16-25. For discussions of the text, see e.g. Kuhrt, "Cyrus Cylinder," 83-97, van der Spek, "Cyrus the Great," 233-64, Schaudig, "Magnanimous Heart of Cyrus," 67-91, and Pongratz-Leisten, "'Ich bin ein Babylonier,'" 92-105. The exact find spot of the text is unknown; see Taylor, "Cyrus Cylinder: Discovery," 35-68.

[121] For an overview of the bricks, see Waters, "Cyrus Rising," 36-39, and Waerzeggers, "Silence as Propaganda." It is possible, though uncertain, that a cylinder from Ur should also be attributed to Cyrus' reign; see ibid.

[122] The significance of the title "king of Anshan" is debated; see e.g. Potts, "Cyrus the Great," 7-28, Waters, "Cyrus Rising," 28-32, Stronach, "Cyrus, Anshan, and Assyria," 46-52, and Schaudig, "Magnanimous Heart of Cyrus," 84-88.

[123] See Kuhrt, "Cyrus Cylinder," 88-93, van der Spek, "Cyrus the Great," 253-55, Waters, "Cyrus Rising," 33-37, Schaudig, "Magnanimous Heart of Cyrus," 68-84, Pongratz-Leisten, "'Ich bin ein Babylonier,'" 93-94, for the Cyrus Cylinder as a typical Mesopotamian royal inscription, which was based on both Neo-Babylonian and Neo-Assyrian traditions. Waerzeggers, "Silence as Propaganda," highlights the cylinder's and the bricks' divergence from those traditions.

[124] For an edition of the texts, see Posener, *La première domination perse*, 30-36 nos. 3-4; for an English translation, see Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 122-24 nos. 4.12-13. Whether other texts from Cambyses' reign - such as a sculptural fragment with the beginning of the king's name that was found in the palace of Apries at Memphis (Petrie, *Palace of Apries*, 11 no. 31) - were the result of royal initiative as well is unclear.

traditions of a region that he had recently conquered. There is no hint, in this case, that the texts were influenced by Persian royal ideology.


## 2.3.2.2 The royal inscriptions of Darius I and later Persian kings

At present, more than fifty royal inscriptions can be attributed to the reign of Darius I.[125] As is well known, the inscriptions are quite different from those of his predecessors. They are associated with several innovations, which would eventually become the standard for Persian royal inscriptions in general. Four of these innovations can be highlighted here. First, many of Darius' royal inscriptions were left behind in southwestern Iran, specifically in Persia, Elam and Media.[126] Other inscriptions were left behind in Egypt, and – to a lesser extent – in Babylonia and Phanagoria.[127] Compared to the inscriptions of Cyrus and Cambyses, which were left behind in single provinces, this was both a significant geographical expansion and indicative of a gradual shift in focus (i.e. from province to imperial center). Second, many of Darius' inscriptions were not written in one but in three different languages: Old Persian, Elamite, and Babylonian. A handful included Egyptian as well. The use of Old Persian is especially noteworthy as it had not been a written language before Darius acceded to the throne.[128] Third, though Darius' inscriptions built on Near Eastern precedents, their

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[125] The number is based on the inscriptions listed by Lecoq, *Les inscriptions de la Perse*, 187-249, and Schmitt, *Die altpersischen Inschriften*, 9-18. The number is artificial, however, as some of the texts that are counted as one inscription consist of multiple versions (e.g. in Elamite and Babylonian), while some texts that are counted as individual inscriptions consist of captions that one might attribute to other, larger inscription (e.g. labels that identify different figures in the Bisitun inscription). Omitted by the authors are texts that are written only in Egyptian or Babylonian, and the recently published Old Persian inscription from Phanagoria (see below).

[126] See Lecoq, *Les inscriptions de la Perse*, 187-247, and Schmitt, *Die altpersischen Inschriften*, 9-17, 36-148 (DB, DE, DH, DN, DM, DP, DS).

[127] See Lecoq, *Les inscriptions de la Perse*, 246-48, Schmitt, *Die altpersischen Inschriften*, 10, 17-18, 99, 146-51 (DK, DSab, DZ), and Vittmann, "Ägypten zur Zeit der Perserherrschaft," 382-86 (Egyptian inscriptions); Voigtlander, *Bisitun Inscription,* 63-66, and Seidl, "Ein Monument Darius' I.," 101-14 (Babylonian inscription); and Shavarebi, "An Inscripion of Darius I," 1-15 (Phanagorian inscription). An inscription by Xerxes states that Darius intended to leave an inscription behind in Armenia as well; see Lecoq, *Les inscriptions de la Perse*, 263-64 (XV). The authenticity of an inscription in Romania is more dubious; see Schmitt, *Die altpersischen Inschriften*, 10 (DG).

[128] For a list of trilingual and quadrilingual inscriptions from Darius' reign, see Finn, "Gods, Kings, Men," 254-57. For the use of Old Persian, see e.g. Stronach, "Old Persian Cuneiform Script," 195-203, and Rossi, "Inscriptions of the Achaemenids," 77-78.

terminology was distinctly different from that used by Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian kings. It was also different from Cyrus' adaptation of Mesopotamian traditions in the Cyrus Cylinder. The standard titles used by Darius were not "king of Babylon" or "king of Anshan," for example, but "great king" and "king of kings."[129] Fourth, they consistently extolled Auramazda – a deity which had never appeared in royal inscriptions before – as the king's supreme god.[130]

Many of the novelties which Darius introduced in his royal inscriptions were already visible in the inscription on mount Bisitun. Engraved in a mountain in Media, the Bisitun inscription was the Empire's first inscription in Iran. It was also the Empire's first trilingual inscription, the first text that used Old Persian, the first that used a new set of imperial titles, and the first that extolled Auramazda. In short, the Bisitun inscription laid the foundation for all the elements that we now consider as typical for "Persian" or "Achaemenid" royal inscriptions. The only exception to this rule was its level of historical detail. After ca. 518 BC, explicit descriptions of military campaigns or of other political events began to be avoided in Darius' *res gestae*. The main focus instead fell on building activities on the one hand and on the Empire's size and diversity on the other.[131] An inscription on a tablet from Susa is typical in this regard: it states that Darius, "great king, king of kings, king of lands," built a palace "with the protection of Auramazda"; what follows is a long list of materials that were used for the construction of the palace, as well as a list of provinces from which the materials were brought to Persia; the inscription concludes that everything was "brought from afar" and that Darius "organised it (…) thanks to the protection of Auramazda."[132] The monumental art of the imperial cities reflected the same general focus: statues and palace reliefs did not depict the king's military

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[129] See e.g. Wiesehöfer, "'King of Kings,'" 55.

[130] On the significance of Auramazda, see e.g. de Jong, "Religion of the Achaemenid Rulers," 1203-4, and Henkelman, "Heartland Pantheon," 1224-27.

[131] For a detailed discussion of this development – which already began, in some form, with the addition on Darius' second and third years of rule in the Bisitun inscription – , see Sancisi-Weerdenburg, "Persian Kings and History," 91-112, and Rollinger, "Thinking and Writing about History," 196-202.

[132] See Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 497 11.13 ii b (DSaa).

endeavors, but focused on mythical animals, enthroned or worshipping monarchs, and the large number of ethnic peoples that made up the Persian Empire instead.[133]

By and large, the royal inscriptions that were created after the Bisitun monument were mimicked by Darius' successors. The inscriptions created by Xerxes and the Persian kings that succeeded him included, in other words, elaborate Persian titles, praise for Auramazda, references to the size of the Empire, and the occasional comment on construction works. Most of them were written in Old Persian, Elamite, or Babylonian, and were left behind in Persia, Elam, or Media. The vast majority did not, however, include descriptions of rebellion, military victories, or political events of any other kind.[134]


### 2.3.3 References to Egyptian rebellions

It goes without saying that the ahistoricism of the majority of the Persian royal inscriptions is an obstacle for historians of the Persian Empire. Simply put, it robs scholars of a "Persian" or "imperial" perspective on a wide range of political events. This observation applies to the rebellions of Persian Period Egypt as well as, for example, to the Greco-Persian wars. The issue is further exacerbated by the fact that the archives of the Persian court, which will have included royal correspondence on a variety of political matters, have not been preserved.[135] Having said that, there is a small handful of Persian royal sources that forms an exception to the general rule. The Bisitun inscription is of course the most prominent exception. It provides us with an extensive royal account of court conspiracy, of provincial resistance, and of military campaigns that resulted in Persian victories. It also includes a reference to an Egyptian revolt that broke out in 522/21 BC. As this is the earliest Egyptian revolt for which sufficient evidence exists, it

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[133] See e.g. Root, *King and Kingship*, 309-11. This is not to say that the military aspect of the Empire was entirely avoided in monumental art; see e.g. Tuplin, "War and Peace," 36, who emphasizes the number of soldiers that are portrayed on the walls of Persepolis.

[134] For editions of the royal inscriptions of Darius' successors, see Lecoq, *Les inscriptions de la Perse*, 250-76, and Schmitt, *Die altpersischen Inschriften*, 151-99.

[135] For the significance of this loss, compare e.g. Radner, "An Imperial Communication Network," 64-93, with Kuhrt, "State Communications," 112-40. Note that histories or chronicles which were written by Persian scribes - if they ever existed - have not been preserved either. For possible references to their existence, see e.g. Llewellyn-Jones and Robson, *Ctesias' History of Persia*, 58-61. What has been preserved are two large administrative archives from Persepolis; for the relevance as well as limits of these archives to the study of Persian Period Egypt, see 2.5.3 below.

is elaborately discussed in Chapter 3. Other references to rebellion might occur in several stelae from Darius' reign, in an inscription from Xerxes' reign, and, more indirectly, on a handful of coins that have been attributed to Artaxerxes III. As they provide us with possible glimpses of an imperial perspective on resistance, they are briefly discussed below.

### 2.3.3.1 The canal stelae

The so-called "canal stelae" are a series of monumental stelae from the reign of Darius I. They were found in the nineteenth and early twentieth century at different sites in northeastern Egypt. It seems that they were originally erected along an ancient canal that was dug through the Wadi Tumilat, and which was meant to connect the Delta to the Red Sea. Some of the stelae were inscribed with Egyptian hieroglyphs, some with Old Persian, Elamite and Babylonian cuneiform, and at least two were inscribed with all four languages.[136] Regrettably, the hieroglyphic texts, which seem to have provided a detailed account of Darius' decision to dig the canal, have only been preserved in fragments.[137] The cuneiform versions are in a better state of preservation. They extoll Auramazda, provide Darius' list of titles, and give the following brief statement:

Darius I, *Canal stelae* (DZc)

"King Darius proclaims: I am a Persian; from Persia, I seized Egypt. I ordered this canal to be dug, from a river called Nile, which flows in Egypt, to the sea which goes to Persia. So this canal was dug as I had ordered, and ships went from Egypt through this canal to Persia, as was my desire." (Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 485-86 11.6)[138]

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[136] Both the exact number of stelae and their original appearance are difficult to reconstruct as some are merely known from fragments. For recent discussions of the stelae – including translations of the texts – , see Wasmuth, *Ägypto-persische Herrscher- und Herrschaftspräsentation,* 125-56, and Mahlich, *Der Kanalbau.* For the significance of the canal – and the extent to which it was used in antiquity – , compare Tuplin, "Darius' Suez Canal," 270-78, with Klotz, "Darius I and the Sabaeans," 274-76 and Colburn, *Archaelogy of Empire*, 13-15.

[137] See Posener, *La première domination perse*, 48-87 nos. 8-10, Klotz, "Darius I and the Sabaeans," 277-80, and Wasmuth, *Ägypto-persische Herrscher- und Herrschaftspräsentation*, 134-48.

[138] For a more detailed discussion of the cuneiform texts, see Wasmuth, *Ägypto-persische Herrscher- und Herrschaftspräsentation*, 148-56.

Though the main topic of the stelae is evidently the canal and not a military campaign, it is noteworthy that the text attributes the "seizure" of Egypt to Darius (Old Persian *grab-*). As has been previously noted, this statement ignores Cambyses' conquest of the country.[139] The omission may be interpreted in multiple ways. One possibility is that the statement should be taken literally: Darius had (re)conquered Egypt, after – we must assume – a rebellion had broken out in the country.[140] That such a rebellion had occurred during Darius' reign is clear from the Bisitun inscription. In this case, the canal stelae may be interpreted as a type of victory monument, which celebrated Darius' hold on Egypt and which, at the same time, commemorated the digging of a canal that would connect the country more closely to Persia.[141] Another possibility is that the statement in the stelae had less to do with reality and more with an attempt to downplay the significance of the reign of Cambyses, Darius' predecessor. That this may have played a role is suggested by the Bisitun inscription, which is distinctly vague about Cambyses' conquest of Egypt: the Old Persian and Elamite versions of the inscription simply state that Cambyses "went to" Egypt after he had killed Bardiya; the Babylonian version adds that he went "with troops," but omits a reference to an outright invasion.[142] This lack of specificity may have allowed Darius to claim the conquest of Egypt for himself. Third and finally, it is possible that the text on the stelae was the result of both elements: the Egyptian rebellion that broke out within only a few years of Cambyses' invasion may have provided Darius with an easy means to sidestep his predecessor's conquest and to claim the annexation of the country for himself. In the absence of historical details which could help us contextualize Darius' "seizure" of Egypt, all three possibilities should remain in consideration.[143]

### 2.3.3.2 The "Daiva" inscription

The so-called "Daiva" inscription is a royal inscription from the reign of Xerxes. The text is known from three Old Persian versions, and one Elamite and Babylonian version, each of

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[139] See e.g. Lecoq, *Les inscriptions de la Perse*, 248.

[140] See e.g. Oppert, *Le peuple et la langue des Mèdes*, 170, and Posener, *La première domination perse,* 180.

[141] The monumental Egypto-Persian statue of Darius I, the cuneiform inscriptions of which emphasize that it was made "so that whoever sees it in time to come will know that the Persian man holds Egypt" (Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 478 11.2), might be viewed in the same light.

[142] See Bae, "Comparative Studies," 88-91.

[143] The date of the stelae's creation, which is sometimes placed in the early fifth century BC, remains difficult to ascertain; see e.g. Tuplin, "Darius' Suez Canal," 249-55.

which was found on a separate stone tablet. Though the assumption is that the tablets were originally buried in the foundations of royal buildings, they were found in secondary contexts: four stones were found in the "garrison quarters" at Persepolis in 1935; and one was found at Pasargadae in 1963, where it had functioned as a "makeshift drain-cover" within the citadel.[144] The text of the inscriptions begins with a standard praise to Auramazda, and a proclamation of Xerxes' titles and genealogy. It then provides us with a list of thirty lands over which Xerxes ruled. What follows can be quoted in full:

Xerxes, *Daiva inscription* (XPh)

"Xerxes the king proclaims: When I became king, there is among those countries which (are) inscribed above (one, which) was in turmoil. Afterwards Auramazda brought me aid; by the favour of Auramazda I defeated that country and put it in its proper place.

And among those countries there were (some) where formerly the *daiva*s had been worshipped.[145] Afterwards by the favour of Auramazda I destroyed that place of the *daiva*s, and I gave orders: 'The *daiva*s shall not be worshipped any longer!' Wherever formerly the *daiva*s have been worshipped, there I worshipped Auramazda at the proper time and with the proper ceremony.

And there was something else, that had been done wrong, that too I put right. That which I have done, all that I have done by the favour of Auramazda. Auramazda brought me aid, until I had done the work." (Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 304-5 7.88)[146]

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[144] On the inscriptions from Persepolis, see Kent, "Daiva-Inscription of Xerxes," 292, Schmidt, *Treasury of Persepolis*, 11-12, and Schmidt, *Persepolis*, 1:209. An additional fragment of the Elamite inscription was later found by Ali Sami; see Cameron, "'Daiva' Inscription of Xerxes," 470-71. On the inscription found at Pasargadae, see Stronach, "Excavations at Pasargadae," 19-20. Note that these studies contradict Mousavi, *Persepolis*, 25, and Mousavi, "Visual Display and Written Record," 73-75, who states that five – rather than four – Daiva inscriptions were found at Persepolis.

[145] For the meaning of "daiva", see Herrenschmidt and Kellens, "Daiva," 599-602. The exact meaning in Old Persian is unclear, but it seems to have referred to gods, possibly with a negative connotation – e.g. "demonic" gods.

[146] For editions of the inscription, see Lecoq, *Les inscriptions de la Perse*, 256-58, and Schmitt, *Die altpersischen Inschriften*, 164-69.

The text ends with an encouragement to worship Auramazda and to his respect his law. In addition, it asks the god to protect Xerxes, his family, and his kingdom from harm.

Ever since its publication, the Daiva inscription has featured prominently in discussions of Xerxes' reign. Due to the lack of historical details, however, interpretations of the text have varied considerably. The interpretations may be divided into two different camps. First, some scholars have connected the "turmoil" (Old Persian *yaud-*) at the start of Xerxes' reign and the destruction of the sanctuary of the "daiva" to specific political events. Egypt, for example, has been suggested as a possible candidate for the country which Xerxes "put in its proper place," as Herodotus states that the country was in rebellion when Xerxes acceded to the throne.[147] Other events which have been connected to the inscription include the Babylonian rebellions of 484 BC and Xerxes' invasion of Greece in 480 BC.[148] By contrast, since at least the 1990s scholars have tended to highlight the lack of historical detail in the inscription. It has been argued that the text should be divorced from a specific historical referent, and that it should be read as a "timeless" statement on Xerxes' duties as king instead.[149] It is important to observe that the two interpretations are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The inscription may have been created as the result of one or more historical episodes – including the 487/86 – 485/84 BC rebellion in Egypt – , but kept deliberately vague so that the text could refer to both past and future events. The general message was, in any case, that the Persian king would succeed in all his endeavors with the help of his supreme deity.

### 2.3.3.3 Achaemenid coins

For the sake of completeness, one should mention that a series of Persian Period coins exists that may be interpreted as a type of royal propaganda. The coins can be divided into four groups: one group consists of six staters, which show an enthroned Achaemenid ruler with an Egyptian double crown on one side, and a lion on the other; a second group consists of two

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[147] See e.g. Hignett, *Xerxes' Invasion of Greece*, 89 n. 5, and Nyberg, *Die Religionen des alten Iran*, 365-66. The suggestion has recently been taken up by Tuplin, "Dogs That Do Not (Always) Bark," 111, though with reservations. For a discussion of the Egyptian rebellion that Xerxes defeated, see 2.2.1 above and Chapter 4.

[148] See e.g. Nyberg, *Die Religionen des alten Iran*, 365-66, Hartmann, "Zur neuen Inschrift des Xerxes," 158-60, and Lévy, "L'inscription triomphale de Xerxès," 117-22.

[149] See e.g. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, "Persian Kings and History," 96-98, 109-10, Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexaner*, 550-53, Henkelman, *Other Gods Who Are*, 9-10, and Waters, *Ancient Persia*, 118-19.

obols, which show an enthroned Achaemenid ruler whose crown cannot be identified on one side, and the portrait of a beardless man with an Egyptian double crown on the other; a third group consists of two hemiobols, which show the portrait of a beardless man on one side and that of a bearded man on the other, both of whom wear an Egyptian double crown; and the fourth group consists of at least twenty-three tetradrachms, which depict a portrait of Athena on one side, an owl on the other, and which bear a demotic inscription that can be read as "Artaxerxes pharaoh (l.p.h.)."[150] Though none of the coins bear an exact date, modern scholars have often attributed them to the reign of Artaxerxes III.[151] This date can be supported by two different arguments. First, some of the coins can be associated with larger hoards, the deposition of which has been dated to the (mid-)fourth century BC. A tetradrachm with the name of Artaxerxes, for example, appears to have come from a coin hoard that was found in Iraq. Some of the issues in the hoard bear inscriptions of Sabaces and Mazaces, who were satraps of Egypt shortly before Alexander's conquest. The last issues of the hoard can be dated to Mazaeus, who was satrap of Cilicia in the mid-fourth century BC and Alexander's governor of Babylonia from ca. 331 to 328 BC.[152] Second, some of the images on the coins look very similar to those on other fourth century BC specimens. For example, the image of an enthroned ruler – though without the Egyptian double crown – is known from several coins that bear Mazaeus' name. In addition, both the Mazaeus coins and the coins of group one described

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[150] See Kovacs, "Two Persian Pharaonic Portraits," 56 nos. 1-2, and Wasmuth, *Ägypto-persische Herrscher- und Herrschaftspräsentation*, 201-4 (group one); Kovacs, "Two Persian Pharaonic Portraits," 57 no. 3 (group two); ibid., 57 no. 4 (group three); Mørkholm, "A Coin of Artaxerxes II," 1-4, Vleeming, *Some Coins of Artaxerxes*, 1-4, van Alfen, "'Owls' from the 1989 Syria Hoard," 24-27, and Anderson and van Alfen, "A Fourth Century BCE Hoard," 163-64 (group four). Note that Quack, Review of *Ägypto-persische Herrscher- und Herrschaftspräsentation*, 162, prefers to interpret the "ruler" on the coins of group one as a deity. Note also that some of the inscriptions in group four - a few of which include Aramaic - are virtually illegible; see Vleeming, *Some Coins of Artaxerxes*, 4, and Anderson and van Alfen, "A Fourth Century BCE Hoard," 164.

[151] See Mørkholm, "A Coin of Artaxerxes II," 2-3, Vleeming, *Some Coins of Artaxerxes*, 1-2, Kovacs, "Two Persian Pharaonic Portraits," 58-59, Anderson and van Alfen, "A Fourth Century BCE Hoard," 163, and Wasmuth, *Ägypto-persische Herrscher- und Herrschaftspräsentation*, 204-5.

[152] See Mørkholm, "A Coin of Artaxerxes II," 1-2. See also van Alfen, "'Owls' from the 1989 Syria Hoard," 1-2, and Anderson and van Alfen, "A Fourth Century BCE Hoard," 155-56, for the mid-fourth century BC date of two hoards that were allegedly found in Syria, and which included Artaxerxes coins.

**Figure 3**. A Persian Period stater with the figure of an enthroned ruler who wears the Egyptian double crown. (Photo from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Artaxerxes_III_as_Pharao.jpg)

above bear an Aramaic inscription that reads "Lord of Tarsus."[153] If (some of) the coins of groups one to four can indeed be attributed to Artaxerxes III, it is possible that they should be interpreted as a type of victory coinage. After all, Artaxerxes III was the king who reconquered Egypt in ca. 343 BC, after it had been independent from the Persian Empire for several decades. The widely circulating artefacts – which featured Achaemenid rulers with Egyptian crowns and titles – could therefore have been created to celebrate the renewed Achaemenid hold on Egypt.[154]

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[153] See Anderson and van Alfen, "A Fourth Century BCE Hoard," 158-60, and Wasmuth, *Ägypto-persische Herrscher- und Herrschaftspräsentation*, 203-5. Whether the Aramaic inscription should be read as a reference to the deity Baal of Tarsus, or as a reference to Achaemenid authority over Tarsus, is unclear.

[154] See e.g. Wasmuth, "Political Memory," 228-30, and Wasmuth, *Ägypto-persische Herrscher- und Herrschaftspräsentation*, 205, who interprets the coins of group one in this way (an interpretation not accepted by Quack, Review of *Ägypto-persische Herrscher- und Herrschaftspräsentation*, 162). In addition, Kovacs, "Two Persian Pharaonic Portraits," 59, has entertained the possibility that the coins of group two and three may have served to introduce Artaxerxes IV as crown prince, and that they served to highlight Achaemenid rule of Egypt even if – or perhaps precisely because – an Egyptian rebellion was threatening Persian authority at the time. On this rebellion, which was led by a pharaoh called Khababash, see below.

## 2.4 Egyptian sources

In the winter of 1851, Auguste Mariette, an Egyptologist who was connected to the Louvre Museum, discovered a series of subterranean chambers at Saqqara. The chambers were part of the Saqqara Serapeum, a building where the Apis bulls – animals that were considered to be divine in Egypt – were buried in antiquity. The discovery of the complex was truly remarkable: thousands of objects were found, from minor works of art to monumental granite sarcophagi, many of which were inscribed with the names and titles of pharaohs under whose reigns the animals had passed away.[155] Though the majority of these pharaohs was already known to scholars, a handful had not been previously identified. Among them was a certain "Khebasch," whose name was written on a small black granite sarcophagus. "Qu'est-ce que le roi Khebasch," Mariette wondered, "dont le nom se révèle ici pour la première fois? Y eut-il donc à Memphis un roi (...) dont l'histoire n'a jamais entendu parler?"[156] It took ca. twenty years before Mariette's question could be answered. A second inscription that mentioned the enigmatic ruler, known as the Satrap Stele, was found in 1870. This inscription allowed scholars to identify Khebash – presently known as Khababash – as a rebel king who had been contemporary with the Persian Empire.[157] He was the first such king to be identified in Egyptian sources.

Today, the reign of pharaoh Khababash, which has been dated to the Second Persian Period of Egypt, is attested by at least seven Egyptian texts. Aside from the Apis sarcophagus and the Satrap Stele, Khababash's name has been identified in the date formula of a demotic papyrus from Thebes, in an inscription on a sling bullet from the Apries palace at Memphis, and in minor hieroglyphic texts that were inscribed on a vase, a scarab, and a faience amulet.[158] It is important to observe that most of these artefacts were probably created during Khababash's

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[155] See e.g. Mariette, *Choix de monuments*, 8-11, Mariette, *Le Sérapeum de Memphis*, 1-84, and Vercoutter, *Textes biographiques*, ix. For a critical examination of Mariette's discovery, see Málek, "Who Was the First," 65-72.

[156] Mariette, *Le Sérapeum de Memphis*, 54. For an edition of the inscription, see Gunn, "Inscribed Sarcophagi," 86-87.

[157] For a recent translation of the Satrap Stele, see Schäfer, *Makedonische Pharaonen*, 31-38. Note that some scholars have mistakenly attributed the discovery of pharaoh Khababash to the Satrap Stele rather than the Apis sarcophagus; see e.g. Burstein, "Prelude to Alexander," 149, and Wojciechowska, *From Amyrtaeus to Ptolemy*, 75-76.

[158] For an overview of the sources, see Huss, "Der rätselhafte Pharao Chababash," 97-98, and Moje, "Zu den Namensschreibungen," 55-62. Whether Khababash is mentioned on a Napatan stele is less certain; see Huss, "Der rätselhafte Pharao Chababash," 98-99.

reign. The only exception is the Satrap Stele, which was written during the reign of Alexander IV, and which refers back to things that had happened in the Persian Period.[159] That most of the Egyptian sources which refer to Khababash were contemporary with his reign is typical: unlike Greco-Roman and Persian sources, which generally provide us with references to rebellions after they had ended, the majority of the Egyptian sources at our disposal were created while the rebellions were in progress.[160] For simplicity's sake, one can divide these sources into two groups: one group consists of hieroglyphic texts; the second group consists of texts that were written in demotic and Aramaic.[161] An important third group consists of uninscribed material remains. The following paragraphs provide an introduction to each and discuss their potential contribution to the study of Egyptian resistance.

### 2.4.1 Hieroglyphic sources

Some of the best-known hieroglyphic sources from Persian Period Egypt are the Apis inscriptions from Cambyses' reign and the inscribed statue of Udjahorresnet. As discussed

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[159] For a discussion of the "Persian" portion of the stele, see e.g. Ladynin, "'Adversary Ḫšryš(ꜣ),'" 87-113, Schäfer, "Persian Foes," 143-52, and Schäfer, *Makedonische Pharaonen*, 195-96. Whether the stele refers to Xerxes or a later Persian king remains a point of discussion. The idea that Xerxes was mentioned prompted some early scholars to connect Khababash to the revolt of the 480s BC; see e.g. Birch, "On a Hieroglyphic Tablet," 22-25, and Mariette, *Monuments divers*, 1:3. In 1907, however, Khababash' reign was re-dated to the fourth century BC on the basis of two papyri from Thebes; see Spiegelberg, *Der Papyrus Libbey,* 1-6.

[160] Egyptian texts which refer back to events in the Persian Period – rare as they are – generally leave resistance to Persian rule unmentioned. The Satrap Stele is an exception (see above), as are several Persian Period Aramaic texts (see 2.4.2.2 below). In addition, the Demotic Chronicle and the *History of Egypt* by Manetho, both of which were written in the third century BC, implicitly refer to rebellion because they mention Amyrtatios II, whose successful revolt in ca. 400 BC resulted in Dynasty 28. It is nevertheless telling that neither Manetho nor the Demotic Chronicle identify Amyrtaios as a rebel: he is simply portrayed as a pharaoh who ruled after the Persian kings of Dynasty 27. For translations of the texts, see Quack, "The So-Called Demotic Chronicle," 27-34, and Waddell, *Manetho*, 174-79 (Fr. 70-72). Note that the practice of omitting Persian Period rebellions is paralleled by king lists and histories from Hellenistic Babylonia, which refer back to the Persian Period without mentioning the revolts of 522-21 and 484 BC; see Waerzeggers, "Babylonian Kingship," 203-4.

[161] Excluded from the following section are texts written in hieratic, Greek, Phoenician, and Carian; their Persian Period numbers are negligible in comparison with the other textual groups, and – more importantly – none of them refer to rebellion. For some Persian Period hieratic texts, see e.g. Vleeming, *Demotic Graffiti*, 426 no. 2154, 433 no. 2179, 438 no. 2197, 471 no. 2281. For Greeks, Phoenicians and Carians in Egypt, see Vittmann, *Ägypten und die Fremden*, 44-83, 155-235

above, the Apis inscriptions commemorate the burial of an Apis bull under the auspices of the Persian king; the statue provides us with the autobiography of a high court official who experienced the transfer from Saite to Persian rule.[162] The sources are emblematic for the corpus of Egyptian hieroglyphic texts in general: on the one hand, the corpus consists of texts that were created at the behest of the pharaoh, and which were inscribed on stelae, statues, naoi, and temple walls; on the other hand, the corpus includes private texts, which were often created by or for high-placed officials, and which were written on statues, seals, tomb walls, and rock faces. The majority of these inscriptions are focused on one of two things: they either record religious matters, such as the worship of specific deities, or the names, titles, and genealogy of the people on whose behalf the texts were written. The inscriptions only rarely consist of what might be called narrative or historical texts. The following pages provide a brief introduction to both categories and discuss how they are chronologically and geographically distributed.[163]

### 2.4.1.1 Royal inscriptions

The majority of the royal inscriptions from Achaemenid Egypt was created in the first decades of Persian rule. Some examples have already been discussed: Cambyses, who ruled Egypt for ca. four years, is known from two Apis inscriptions that were found in the Saqqara Serapeum. Other royal inscriptions from his reign have not been preserved.[164] Darius I, whose reign lasted ca. thirty-six years, can be connected to a series of stelae that were set up along the Wadi Tumilat in northeastern Egypt. The latter were inscribed with a combination of hieroglyphic and cuneiform texts.[165] The name of Darius I has also been identified in a number of monolingual hieroglyphic inscriptions that were excavated at different sites throughout the country: the sources consist of a temple block from Busiris, an Apis inscription from Saqqara, two wooden naoi, one of which was found at Hermopolis, part of an inscribed pillar from Karnak, a temple block from Elkab, and several temple inscriptions from the Kharga and

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[162] See 1.1 and 2.3.2.1.

[163] For an overview of Persian Period hieroglyphic sources, both of royal and private nature, see Vittmann, "Ägypten zur Zeit der Perserherrschaft," 373-429. Some sources which defy easy categorization – i.e. minor hieroglyphic texts that were inscribed on scarabs, vases, and religious paraphernalia – are mentioned in the footnotes of the following pages.

[164] See 2.3.2.1.

[165] See 2.3.3.1 above.

Dakhla Oases.[166] This relatively large number of inscriptions stands in stark contrast with Darius' successors: neither Xerxes nor later Persian kings appear to have left hieroglyphic inscriptions behind in the Nile Valley.[167] Their attention was instead directed at Persia, Elam, and Media, the political triangle that formed the heart of the Persian Empire.[168]

As mentioned above, most of the royal inscriptions from Achaemenid Egypt do not comment on political events. In this they are similar to the inscriptions from the center of the Achaemenid Empire. The canal stelae from the reign of Darius I, which provide an account of the digging of a large canal that was meant to connect the Delta to the Red Sea, are a rare exception.[169] Instead, the relevance of the royal inscriptions to the study of the Egyptian rebellions lies in two other factors. One factor is that some of the inscriptions include date formulae and can be connected to specific archaeological sites. This allows one to reconstruct when a particular region in Egypt fell under the authority of the Persian government, rather than that of a rebel king. For example, a royal epitaph from the Saqqara Serapeum dates to 13 Epeiph of year four of Darius I, which indicates that Memphis fell under Persian rule in November 518 BC – not long after the events described by the Bisitun inscription.[170] A second factor is that some of the royal inscriptions hail non-Persian pharaohs. The above-mentioned Apis inscription from the reign of Khababash is one example. Another example is Petubastis Seheribre, whose reign can

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[166] See Traunecker, "Un document nouveau," 209-13, and Vittmann, "Ägypten zur Zeit der Perserherrschaft," 385-86. For Darius' possible attestation in the Dakhla Oasis, see Kaper, "Dakhleh Oasis in the Late Period," 171-72. Note that Darius' well-known royal statue from Susa, inscribed with both hieroglyphs and cuneiform, may originally have been erected in Egypt as well; see Vittmann, "Ägypten zur Zeit der Perserherrschaft," 384, and Wasmuth, *Ägypto-persische Herrscher- und Herrschaftspräsentation*, 102. For minor hieroglyphic inscriptions from Darius' reign, see the references in Vittmann, "Ägypten zur Zeit der Perserherrschaft," 385-88.

[167] A handful of royal inscriptions which mention "Darius" are sometimes attributed to Darius II, but their date remains a point of discussion; see Vittmann, "Ägypten zur Zeit der Perserherrschaft," 401-3. The only hieroglyphic inscriptions that can be attributed to Darius I's successors with certainty are a series of minor inscriptions on vases, which were found throughout the Empire; see ibid., 395, 398 for further references. In addition, it should be noted that a bronze object, allegedly found at Faqous, bears a short Old Persian inscription from the reign of Xerxes; see Michaélidis, "Quelques objets inédits," 95-96. A similar Old Persian inscription mentions Darius, presumably Darius I; see ibid., 91-93, and Schmitt, *Die altpersischen Inschriten*, 10, 99 (DKa). Both objects are currently part of the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden in Leiden.

[168] See Lecoq, *Les inscriptions de la Perse*, 250-76, and Schmitt, *Die altpersischen Inschriften*, 151-99.

[169] See 2.3.3.1 above.

[170] See Posener, *La première domination perse,* 36-41, no. 5. The significance of this inscription is further discussed in Chapter 3.

be dated to the early years of Persian rule, and who is elaborately discussed in Chapter 3. His name is attested by several inscribed temple blocks that were found in the Dakhla Oasis, and by a wooden naos of unknown provenance.[171] It is important to observe that such non-Persian royal inscriptions are often difficult to date with precision. Their attribution to the Persian Period – and hence the identification of the relevant kings as Egyptian rebel kings – is based on the archaeological context, artistic style, and paleography of the hieroglyphic inscriptions on the one hand, and on the evidence of demotic papyri on the other.[172] When a plausible date has been established, however, the inscriptions can provide us with important evidence. They may illuminate the geographical reach of the rebellion, and – if the texts include references to regnal years – the rebellion's duration. In addition, the royal inscriptions provide us with a glimpse of the rebel kings' royal ideology, such as the type of pharaonic titles that were claimed, and the kind of throne names that were adopted.

### 2.4.1.2 Private inscriptions

At present, hieroglyphic inscriptions that were made on behalf of private parties are our main sources for the elite of Egyptian society. High-placed officials and priests – such as city governors, naval commanders, god's fathers, court physicians, high priests and overseers of royal construction works – are attested by monumental tombs, for example, that were inscribed with their name(s) and title(s). Other sources include a wide range of grave goods, stelae that were dedicated to specific deities, statues that were erected in the courtyards of temples, inscribed sealings that were once attached to papyri, and the occasional rock graffito.[173] At times, such sources allow us to reconstruct the career of specific officials in some detail. The best-known example of the Persian Period is Udjahorresnet. The latter's inscribed statue – which may have been erected in the temple of Neith at Sais during the reign of Darius I – provides a detailed autobiography. The official is also known from (fragments of) several other statues, and from a tomb at Abusir, which housed, among other things, a large limestone sarcophagus. The inscriptions on the objects indicate that Udjahorresnet had begun his career

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[171] See Kaper, "Petubastis IV," 127-37 (temple blocks), and Yoyotte, "Pétoubastis III," 216 no. 1, 220, pl. 19 c (naos). Like Khababash, Seheribre is also mentioned on a scarab; see ibid., 216 no. 2.

[172] For demotic papyri that refer to rebel kings, see 2.4.2.1 below.

[173] For an overview of priests and officials in the Persian Period, see Vittmann, "Rupture and Continuity," 89-121, and Vittmann, "Ägypten zur Zeit der Perserherrschaft," 377-81, 388-93, 396, 398, 405-9.

**Figure 4.** The inscribed statue of Udjahorresnet. (Photo from https://www.museivaticani.va/content/museivaticani/en/collezioni/musei/museo-gregoriano-egizio/sala-i--reperti-epigrafici/_naoforo-vaticano.html)

during the reign of Amasis II, and that his primary offices had been "overseer of foreign mercenaries" and "overseer of royal *kbnwt*-vessels," i.e. ships – possibly warships – that were primarily used in the Mediterranean Sea. After Cambyses' conquest, Udjahorresnet's titles were replaced with an altogether different one: the Persian king assigned to him the office of "chief physician," which Udjahorresnet continued to hold during the reign of Darius I. It was in this capacity that he visited the Persian court in Elam, before being sent back to Egypt.[174]

In some ways, the private hieroglyphic inscriptions from Persian Period Egypt are similar to the royal inscriptions discussed above. Many of the inscriptions have been dated to the first decades of Persian rule, for example, in particular to the reign of Darius I. Private inscriptions from the reigns of Xerxes and his successors do exist but are relatively rare.[175] In addition, most of the inscriptions do not refer to political events; the passages on Udjahorresnet's statue which refer to Cambyses' conquest of Egypt are an exception.[176] Instead, the relevance of

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[174] For the inscriptions on the statue – which mention the visit to Elam – , see Posener, *La première domination perse,* 1-26 no. 1, and Kuhrt, P*ersian Empire,* 117-22 no. 4.11; for the (fragments of) other statues, see Wasmuth, "Statues of Udjahorresnet," 195-219; for the tomb, see Bareš, *Shaft Tomb of Udjahorresnet,* esp. 45-78. The exact meaning of the title "overseer of royal *kbnwt*-vessels" is debated; compare e.g. Lloyd, "Triremes and the Saïte Navy," 268-79, with Darnell, "*Kbn.wt* Vessels," 67-89. For recent studies on Udjahorresnet, see Wasmuth and Creasman, "Udjahorresnet and His World."

[175] See e.g. Vittmann, "Rupture and Continuity," 89-121, and Vittmann, "Ägypten zur Zeit der Perserherrschaft," 377-81, 388-93, 396, 398, 405-9. Note that the alleged scarcity of private monuments from the Persian Period has been challenged recently, primarily by Colburn, *Archaeology of Empire*, 131-45. The latter argues that many of the Egyptian private statues lack precise date indicators. The majority of them have nevertheless been assigned to the Saite Period on the one hand and to the period of the Native Dynasties on the other; virtually none have been assigned to the Persian Period, because scholars have long assumed that the periods of Persian rule would have been times of oppression and disruption. As Colburn has observed, this argument is largely circular: one assumes that the Persian Period would have been marked by a dearth of sources, so little is attributed to it; this then reinforces the idea that the Persian Period was indeed marked by a dearth of sources. In other words, more artefacts may have been created under Persian rule than has thus far been acknowledged. Though Colburn's criticism is warranted, the fact remains that very little can be dated to the Persian Period with certainty. Artefacts that can be dated to the Saite period, based on e.g. a king's cartouches and prosopography, outnumber the Persian Period examples by a significant degree; compare Vittmann, "Ägypten zur Zeit der Perserherrschaft," 377-81, 388-93, 396, 398, 405-9 (tens of objects), with the Saite Period private inscriptions listed by Jansen-Winkeln, *Die 26. Dynastie*, v-xxxvi (hundreds of objects, excluding the long list of artefacts that are dated to the "26. Dynastie insgesamt" but not to a specific king).

[176] See e.g. Schütze, "Originality of Udjahorresnet's Biographical Inscriptions," 166-67. Note that several private inscriptions from the fourth century BC refer to "foreigners" and "Asiatics," which provide us with a rare – though

private inscriptions to the study of the Egyptian rebellions primarily lies in the names of kings that are occasionally mentioned within the texts. This can be illustrated with reference to a number of rock inscriptions from the Wadi Hammamat. During the reign of Darius I, ca. fifteen inscriptions were left behind on the rocks of the wadi by an "overseer of works" called Khnemibre. Most of them record Khnemibre's name, title(s), and the date of his visit.[177] Later inscriptions from the same site were left behind by Persian governors, and are dated to the late reign of Darius I, Xerxes, and Artaxerxes I.[178] As some of the inscriptions were left behind during periods of rebellion, their date formulae – all of which hail Persian kings – have been used as evidence for continued Persian control of southern Egypt.[179] At the same time, a handful of sources have been preserved that mention non-Persian pharaohs. Two inscribed sealings feature the throne name of Petubastis Seheribre, for example, in conjunction with the titles and names of two Egyptian officials. One of them was found in connection to demotic papyri.[180] More enigmatic is a private statue that was excavated at Mit Rahina. It appears to have been created under a pharaoh who was called "Psamtik Amasis."[181] A sistrum handle of unknown provenance is inscribed with the same royal names.[182] Regrettably, the latter sources cannot be dated with precision; it is possible that they should be attributed to the reign of Psamtik IV, who ruled parts of Egypt in the 480s BC, or to the reign of Psamtik V, who ruled parts of Egypt in ca. 400 BC.[183] Theoretically, such inscriptions can provide us with a glimpse of the rebellions' geographical reach, and of the identity of some of the rebel kings' supporters.

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vague – Egyptian perspective on contemporary Egyptian-Persian relations; see Klotz, "Two Studies," 136-54, and Vittmann, "Ägypten zur Zeit der Perserherrschaft," 405-9.

[177] See Posener, *La première domination perse*, 88-92 nos. 11-12, 98-116 nos. 14-23, Goyon, *Nouvelles inscriptions rupestres*, 117 no. 108, Fanfoni and Israel, "Documenti achemenidi," 77-78, and 4.3.1.2.

[178] See Posener, *La première domination perse*, 117-29 nos. 24-34, and Goyon, *Nouvelles inscriptions rupestres*, 118-20 no. 109.

[179] See 4.3.

[180] See Yoyotte, "Pétoubastis III," 217 nos. 3-4, and Chapter 3.

[181] Jansen-Winkeln, *Die 26. Dynastie*, 584-85 no. 9.

[182] See Gauthier, "Un roi Amasis-Psammétique," 187-90, and Jansen-Winkeln, *Die 26. Dynastie*, 583 no. 4.

[183] For Psamtik V, see 2.4.2.1 below. The suggestion that the hieroglyphic sources should be attributed to Psamtik III strikes me as unlikely, *pace* Jansen-Winkeln, *Die 26. Dynastie*, 583-85 nos. 4 and 9. The sistrum handle explicitly identifies "Amasis" as Psamtik's throne name, while the throne name of Psamtik III was Ankhkaenra. That a scarab with the royal names "Psamtik Nebkaenra" should be attributed to Psamtik III is more plausible; nb would then have been a scribal mistake for anx. Compare Kienitz, *Die politische Geschichte Ägyptens*, 233, with Jansen-Winkeln, *Die 26. Dynastie*, 584 no. 8.

## 2.4.2. Texts written in demotic and Aramaic

Generally speaking, texts written in demotic – the common Egyptian script at the time – and Aramaic – the *lingua franca* of the Achaemenid Empire – are of a different nature than texts written in Egyptian hieroglyphs. As should be evident from the discussion above, the latter largely consist of texts that were inscribed on stone, metal or wood, and which were left behind by people who had the means to create such artefacts. The demotic and Aramaic texts, however, mostly consist of archival texts, which were written on papyrus, leather or potsherds.[184] Examples of archival texts include marriage contracts, records of temple income, and private letters to far-away family members. In the case of Persian Period Egypt, the vast majority of such texts can be connected to families, many of which belonged to the so-called "middle class" of Egyptian society. These were people of moderate to considerable means, who could own e.g. houses, fields and livestock, but who were not sufficiently wealthy or politically powerful to be part of the country's elite.[185] By contrast, the archives of high officials such as Udjahorresnet are largely lost. The same observation applies to the archives of the Achaemenid state apparatus and of Egyptian temple institutions – though some texts give us a glimpse of what these archives may have looked like.[186] The following section provides an introduction

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[184] A large body of demotic and Aramaic texts that were inscribed on e.g. stone exists as well, but comparatively few of them can be dated to the Persian Period. For examples, see e.g. Vleeming, *Some Coins of Artaxerxes*, xxix-xxx, Vleeming, *Demotic Graffiti*, xlviii-li, and Porten and Yardeni, *Aramaic Documents*, 4:224-98. In addition, a small handful of literary texts has been preserved as well. This two fifth century BC Aramaic papyri from Elephantine, which record versions of the story of Ahiqar and of the Bisitun inscription of Darius I (see Porten and Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents*, 3: 23-53 C1.1, 59-71 C2); and two fragmentary Aramaic papyri from Saqqara, which record stories with an Egyptian background on the one hand, and (possibly) a second version of the Bisitun inscription on the other (see Porten, "Prophecy of Hor bar Punesh," 427-66, and Quack, *Die demotische und gräko-ägyptische Literatur*, 78-80; Segal, *Aramaic Texts*, 85 no. 62, and Wesselius, Review of *The Bisitun Inscription*, 443). The Aramaic rock graffito at Sheikh Fadl, a part of which appears to preserve an early version of the later Inaros Cycle, used to be dated to the fifth century BC (see e.g. Holm, "Sheikh Fadl Inscription," 193-224), but has been redated to the fourth century BC (see Köhler et al, "Preliminary Report," 79-81). The Aramaic-Demotic P. Amherst 63, of uncertain provenance, might also be dated to the fourth century BC (see Holm, "Nanay and Her Lover," 3 n. 12). In addition, a group of demotic literary texts from Saqqara are probably to be dated to the fourth century BC, though one or two might be earlier (see Smith and Tait, *Saqqâra Demotic Papyri, ix-xi*, 192-195, nos. 24-25). Their fragmentary state makes it difficult to reconstruct the stories that they once recorded.

[185] See e.g. Vleeming, *Gooseherds of Hou*, 10.

[186] See e.g. Hughes, "So-Called Pherendates Correspondence," 75-86, Chauveau, "Les archives démotiques," 1-19, Taylor, "Bodleian Letters," 21-49, and Smith, Martin, and Tuplin, "Egyptian Documents," 287-99.

to the archival texts that are presently at our disposal, divided by language. In addition, it discusses their chronological and geographical distribution, and their relevance to the reconstruction of Egyptian rebellions.

2.4.2.1 Demotic archival texts

According to information collected in the online database Trismegistos, ca. 742 demotic archival texts can be dated to the period between the invasion of Cambyses (ca. 526 BC) and the conquest of Alexander the Great (ca. 332 BC).[187] More than 300 of these texts can be dated to the periods of Persian rule: at least 296 demotic texts stem from the First Persian Period (ca. 526 – 400 BC), and ca. 6 texts can be dated to the Second Persian Period (ca. 343 – 332 BC). In terms of geographical distribution, it is important to observe that the Persian Period texts have been found at roughly twelve different sites. The sites range from Memphis in the north to Elephantine in the south, and many have yielded between one to twenty texts each.[188] An

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[187] This number is based on the amount of demotic texts written on papyri, leather or potsherds that are dated to 526 - 332 BC by the online database Trismegistos. For the period from 800 BC to 800 AD, Trismegistos' coverage of demotic papyrology and epigraphy is "almost 100%"; see "Coverage for Egypt and the Nile Valley," Trismegistos, KU Leuven, accessed December 8, 2021, https://www.trismegistos.org/about_coverage.php. Nevertheless, the numbers presented here should be understood as approximations. First, the numbers are based on "strict" searches in the database, which only yield texts that fall exactly within one's chosen time span. A "not strict" search would increase the number of demotic texts from 742 to 1366; see "How a date search works," Trismegistos, KU Leuven, accessed December 8, 2021, https://www.trismegistos.org/calendar/calendar_howsearchworks.php. Second, there is some noise in the data. An example are the ostraca from Ayn Manawir: some of the ostraca are listed twice in Trismegistos, once under their inventory number and once under their provisional excavation number. As a result, the database lists 506 ostraca, while only 460 have been published. For the latter number, see Agut-Labordère, "Ostraca de 'Ayn Manâwir," Achemenet, CNRS, accessed December 10, 2021, http://www.achemenet.com/fr/tree/?/sites-archeologiques/ayn-manawir/la-documentation-demotique. Third, the number includes a small handful of demotic literary texts (see n. 184 above).

[188] Persian Period demotic texts have been published in a wide variety of articles, monographs, and edited volumes. For an overview of texts which bear exact date formulae, see Thissen, "Chronologie der frühdemotischen Papyri," 113-17, 120-21, and Depauw, *A Chronological Survey*, 9-10, 27. For studies of individual archives, see e.g. Shore, "Swapping Property as Asyut," 200-206, Vleeming, *Gooseherds of Hou*, Pestman, *Les papyrus démotiques de Tsenhor*, Vittmann, *Der demotische Papyrus Rylands 9*, Farid, "An Unpublished Early Demotic Family Archive," 185-205, and Ebeid, "The Unknown Hormerti," 113-29. The area around Memphis and the island of Elephantine occupy a special position: hundreds of demotic texts have been found at each site; however, due in part to their

important exception is the site of Ayn Manawir. Since excavation of this small village in the Kharga Oasis began in 1994, more than 460 demotic ostraca have been found among the ruins of its buildings. Some record contracts which regulated a person's right to irrigate land, an issue of particular importance in the largely barren landscape of the Western Desert; others record the sale of (parts of) buildings, and the collection of taxes on behalf of local temples.[189] As the ostraca date from the early reign of Xerxes to year twelve of Nectanebo II, they make up more than 50% of the demotic texts from the period between 526 to 332 BC. In addition, as more than 150 ostraca can be dated to the First Persian Period, the texts from Ayn Manawir make up about 50% of the Persian Period demotic corpus as well.[190]

Like the hieroglyphic inscriptions discussed above, the demotic texts from Persian Period Egypt rarely refer to rebellion – at least not in such explicit terms. A demotic letter from Elephantine, written in October 486 BC, might be the only exception. The letter was written by an Egyptian man called Khnumemakhet, who noted that there were "men who rebel" (*rmtw nty bks*) on an unspecified mountain. Khnumemakhet feared that the men might ambush a transport of grain for which he was responsible, so he asked his Persian superior for armed reinforcements.[191] The rebellious men, who are often identified as "brigands" by modern scholars, might be connected to the revolt of 487/86 BC, which broke out in the months before the letter was written.[192] Aside from this document, the primary value of demotic archival texts lies in their date formulae. The vast majority are dated to Persian kings, but a handful are dated to the early regnal years of non-Persian pharaohs. As some of these texts are part of larger

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fragmentary state and in part to incomplete publication it is unclear how many of them were written during periods of Persian rule. See e.g. Smith and Tait, Saqqâra Demotic Papyri, ix-x, Smith and Martin, "Demotic Papyri," 23-78, Martin, Smith, and Davies, "Demotic Letters," 123-47, Ray, *Demotic Ostraca*, and Quack, *Review* of Demotic Ostraca, 110-11 (Memphis); Zauzich, *Ägyptische Handschriften*, Zauzich, *Papyri von der Insel Elephantine*, Martin, "Demotic Texts," 277-385, and Müller, "Among the Priests of Elephantine," 222-25 (Elephantine).

[189] See e.g. Agut- Labordère, "Qu'est-ce qu'un 'jour d'eau,'" 195-201, Chauveau, "Les archives démotiques," 1-19, and Agut-Labordère, "Les prélèvements en orge," 71-79.

[190] For the date range of the ostraca, see Chauveau, "Inarôs," 39-40 A single ostracon dates to the reign of Amasis; see ibid., 40. Note that the number of 150 ostraca is based on Trismegistos; this group includes texts that lack exact date formulae but which can be dated to the fifth century BC on the basis of e.g. prosopography. For a list of 95 First Persian Period texts from Ayn Manawir that bear exact date formulae, see Agut- Labordère, "Administrating Egypt," 691-93.

[191] For an edition of the text, see Spiegelberg, *Die demotischen Papyri Loeb*, 1-7 no. 1, pls. 1-2. An English translation - with several important adjustments - is provided by Martin, "Demotic Texts," 296-97 C4.

[192] See Chapter 4.

archives, the reigns of the relevant pharaohs can be dated with much better precision than would be possible on the basis of hieroglyphic inscriptions. Several ostraca from the archives at Ayn Manawir are a good example. At present, three texts have been identified that are dated to the fifth and sixth regnal year of a pharaoh called Psamtik.[193] The date range of the Ayn Manawir corpus (see above) renders an identification with one of the three Psamtiks of the Saite Dynasty unlikely. In addition, some of the individuals who are mentioned in the Psamtik texts also feature in texts that were written in the late First Persian Period on the one hand and in the period of the Native Dynasties on the other. As a result, this previously unknown pharaoh – who is presently known as Psamtik V – can be dated to about 400 BC. He is probably identical with the "king Psamtik" who is briefly mentioned by Diodorus of Sicily, and who is said to have ruled Egypt shortly after Artaxerxes II's defeat of Cyrus the Younger (Diodorus of Sicily, *Universal Library*, 14.35).[194] Other rebel kings that have been identified in demotic archival

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[193] See Chauveau, "Les archives d'un temple," 44-47, and Agut-Labordère and Chauveau, "Les ostraca de 'Ayn Manâwir," 1-4. A fourth text from Ayn Manawir is also dated to Psamtik, but the regnal year is lost; see Chauveau and Agut-Labordère, "Ostracon d'Ayn Manâwir 6833," Achemenet, CNRS, accessed December 11, 2021, http://www.achemenet.com/fr/item/?/2078061=Demotic%20ostraca&1570269=%20Psammétique-Amyrtée&l=a&c=1&t=1.4/1/24/1/1575130. A fifth text - P. Berlin 13571, a demotic papyrus excavated at Elephantine - might be connected to the same king, but as it has no clear archival context its exact date remains uncertain; compare Chauveau, "Les archives d'un temple," 44-45, and Agut-Labordère and Chauveau, "Les ostraca de 'Ayn Manâwir," 1-4, with Erichsen, "Zwei frühdemotische Urkunden," 271-86, especially 274 and 277, Zauzich, *Ägyptische Handschriften,* 24-25 no. 41, Pestman, *Les papyrus démotiques de Tsenhor,* 1:131 n. 3, and Jansen-Winkeln, *Die 26. Dynastie,* 585.

[194] See Chauveau, "Les archives d'un temple," 44-47, and Agut-Labordère and Chauveau, "Les ostraca de 'Ayn Manâwir," 1-4. For the prosopographical connections among the texts, one can use the "anthroponymes cités" function on the ostraca published on the website of Achemenet. For example, "Harsiésé fils d'Ounamenheb et de Neskhonsou," who is principal party in one of the texts from Psamtik V's reign, also appears in a text from year 14 of Darius II (410 BC) and in year two of (the first period of rule of) Achoris (392 BC); see Chauveau and Agut-Labordère, "Ostracon d'Ayn Manâwir 4161," Achemenet, CNRS, accessed December 11, 2021, http://www.achemenet.com/fr/item/?/2078061=Demotic%20ostraca&1570269=%20Psammétique-Amyrtée&l=a&c=1&t=1.4/1/24/1/1572180, ibid., "Ostracon d'Ayn Manâwir 5486," Achemenet, CNRS, accessed December 11, 2021, http://www.achemenet.com/fr/item/?/2078061=Ostraca%20demotiques&1570204==Harsi%C3%A9s%C3%A9%20fils%20d%27Ounamenheb%20et%20de%20Neskhonsou&l=a&c=1&t=1.4/1/24/1/1573464, and ibid., "Ostracon d'Ayn Manâwir 5488," Achemenet, CNRS, accessed December 11, 2021, http://www.achemenet.com/fr/item/?/2078061=Ostraca%20demotiques&1570204==Harsi%C3%A9s%C3%A9%20fils%20d%27Ounamenheb%20et%20de%20Neskhonsou&l=a&c=1&t=1.4/1/24/1/1573488. It is important to observe that Psamtik V is commonly identified with Amyrtaios II, whose fifth regnal year is attested in an

texts include a different pharaoh called Psamtik – known as Psamtik IV – , whose second regnal year is mentioned in three papyri from Hou, and who can be connected to the rebellion of 487/86 BC; the famous Inaros, whose second regnal year is mentioned in an ostracon from Ayn Manawir; and Khababash, the rebel king of the Second Persian Period, whose first regnal year is mentioned in a papyrus from Thebes.[195] Aside from issues of chronology, the texts that are dated to their reigns provide us with a glimpse of the rebellions' geographical spread on the one hand, and of which communities in Egypt ended up recognizing local rulers at the expense of Persian emperors on the other.

## 2.4.2.2 Aramaic archival texts

According to Trismegistos, the number of Aramaic archival texts that can be dated to the period between 526 BC and 332 BC stands at ca. 706.[196] This is only slightly less than the number of

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Aramaic text from Elephantine; see Chauveau, "Les archives d'un temple," 45-47, and Agut-Labordère and Chauveau, "Les ostraca de 'Ayn Manâwir," 2-4 However, this identification requires one to assume that Amyrtaios adopted the name "Psamtik," that people at Ayn Manawir used this throne name rather than Amyrtaios' birth name in their date formulae - which is contrary to demotic practice -, while people at Elephantine and the later Egyptian historian Manetho chose to refer to the king's birth name. To assume that Psamtik V and Amyrtaios II were two separate kings, whose rule may have overlapped, seems simpler. This can be compared with the Babylonian rebellions of 484 BC, which are connected to two different rebel kings (see Waerzeggers, "Babylonian Revolts against Xerxes," 150-56), and the rebellion of Inaros, who is intimately associated with king Amyrtaios I (see Herodotus, *Histories* 3.15, Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, 1.110, 1.112, and Ctesias, *Persica* F14 36).

[195] See Pestman, "Diospolis Parva Documents," 145-55, Chauveau, "Inarôs," 39-46, and Spiegelberg, *Der Papyrus Libbey*. 1-6. Petubastis Seheribre is connected to three demotic papyri as well, two of which mention a regnal year one. The texts are letters, however, and omit the name of the ruling pharaoh – a standard practice. For the connection between the papyri and the king, see Chapter 3. It is interesting to note that Inaros, unlike the others, is not called "pharaoh" but "chief of the Bacales" (*pꜣ wr n nꜣ Bkn.w*), a Libyan tribe whose origins lay near Cyrene; see Winnicki, "Der libysche Stamm der Bakaler," 135-37.

[196] As with the demotic texts discussed above, the numbers presented in this section should be understood as approximations which are based on strict searches in the Trismegistos database. For the period from 800 BC to 800 AD, Trismegistos' coverage of Aramaic papyrology and epigraphy is "ca. 95%"; see "Coverage for Egypt and the Nile Valley," Trismegistos, KU Leuven, accessed December 8, 2021, https://www.trismegistos.org/about_coverage.php. That the numbers are approximate is especially true for the area around Memphis: at least 200 pieces of Aramaic papyri have been found in the Sacred Animal Necropolis at Saqqara, for example, many of which were probably written under Persian rule, but their fragmentary state often

demotic texts discussed above (i.e. 742). Both the chronological and geographical distribution of the texts is quite different, however. In contrast to the demotic corpus, ca. 697 Aramaic texts – 98.7% of the total corpus – can be dated to the First Persian Period (ca. 526 – 400 BC). No Aramaic texts have been dated to the Second Persian Period (ca. 343 – 332 BC). In addition, the texts have been found at roughly four different sites: Memphis (ca. 69 texts), Oxyrynchos (2 texts), Hermopolis (8 texts), and Elephantine (ca. 574 texts). A handful are of unknown or uncertain provenance.[197] The limited distribution of the texts aptly reflects the status of Aramaic in Egypt: the language was primarily used by foreign minorities on the one hand, and by the government of the Achaemenid Empire on the other.[198] The close connection between Aramaic, foreign minorities, and the Achaemenid government in Egypt is especially visible at the island of Elephantine. The island, located just north of the first cataract, dominates the Aramaic textual corpus from Persian Period Egypt (82.3%). As is well known, both it and the town of Syene, which lay on the eastern shore of the Nile, housed a large community of non-Egyptian families. The majority can be identified as "Judeans" or "Aramaeans," i.e. Aramaic-speaking peoples who originally stemmed from the Levant.[199] Some of them appear to have migrated to Egypt in the seventh to sixth centuries BC.[200] During the fifth century BC, many of them served as soldiers for the Achaemenid government. The hundreds of Aramaic papyri and ostraca that were excavated at Elephantine document their lives, as well as their apparent disappearance around 400 BC, when Egypt became independent.[201] Similar military

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excludes exact dating; see Segal, *Aramaic Texts*, 3-4. Note also that the number includes a small handful of Aramaic literary texts; see n. 184 above.

[197] The primary publication of the vast majority of Aramaic texts from Egypt is Porten and Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents*.

[198] For the role of Aramaic in the Achaemenid Empire, see Gzella, "Aramaic Sources," 117-31; for Aramaic in Egypt, see Vittmann, *Ägypten und die Fremden*, 84-119.

[199] On the difference between Judean and Jewish, see e.g. Becking, *Identity in Persian Egypt*, 18-20. At Elephantine, people called Judean are sometimes called Aramaean as well; see ibid., 19-20, 54-55, and van der Toorn, "Ethnicity at Elephantine," 147-64. For other ethnic communities at Elephantine-Syene, see Becking, *Identity in Persian Egypt*, 54-77.

[200] See Kahn, "Date of the Arrival of the Judeans," 139-64.

[201] See e.g. Porten, *Archives from Elephantine*, 8-19, and Becking, *Identity in Persian Egypt*, 20-23. For the end of the Aramaic archives from Elephantine – and what might have happened to the archive holders – , see ibid., 163-68.

communities were located in other parts of the country, notably at Memphis, and at several fortresses in the Delta.[202]

In keeping with the specific social background of the Aramaic texts, their relevance to the study of the Egyptian rebellions is somewhat different from that of the demotic texts discussed above. The vast majority of Aramaic texts is dated to Persian kings, for example. The only exception is a papyrus from Elephantine, which is dated to 23 Phamenoth of regnal year five of Amyrtaios II (i.e. 21 June, 400 BC).[203] This date fell shortly before Egypt's successful secession from the Persian Empire.[204] During other periods of rebellion, the community at Elephantine appears to have remained loyal to the Achaemenid government.[205] In addition, there are several Aramaic texts that explicitly refer to rebellion in Egypt, and more vaguely to unrest or troubles that may have been connected to them. The references can be divided into two groups. The first group consists of two letters from Elephantine. One of them states that Egyptian "detachments" (*dgln*) had rebelled (*mrdw*) at some point in the past, while the Judeans who wrote the letter had not left their posts. The claim precedes the description of a larger conflict between the Judeans and the Egyptian priests of Khnum, which began in ca. 410 BC.[206] A second letter mentions things that should be given to rebels (*lmrdy'*) in a fragmentary context; other pieces of the text mention people who were killed, groups of soldiers, and a fortress.[207] The second group of references stems from a collection of letters of unknown provenance. The majority were sent by Arsames,

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[202] See e.g. Kaplan, "Cross-Cultural Contacts among Mercenary Communities," 1-10. For the garrison at Memphis, see Colburn, *Archaeology of Empire*, 38-50. For fortresses in the Delta, see below.

[203] Porten and Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents*, 2:114-15 B4.6. Amyrtaios II is additionally mentioned in an Aramaic letter from ca. 399 BC, which appears to record his demise and the subsequent accession of pharaoh Nepherites; see ibid., 1:46-47 A3.9.

[204] An ostracon from Ayn Manawir dates to Mesore of year five of Artaxerxes II (i.e. October/November 400 BC), so at least some people in Egypt still recognized the Persian king in the months that followed the Amyrtaios document from Elephantine; see Agut-Labordère and Chauveau, "Les ostraca de 'Ayn Manâwir," 3-4.

[205] See 4.3.1.1 and 4.3.3 for a discussion of several Elephantine texts that were dated to Persian kings during periods of rebellion. In addition, a late fifth century BC Aramaic letter specifically states that the Judeans of Elephantine had not left their posts during a period of rebellion, while the Egyptians did; see below.

[206] See Porten and Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents*, 1:62-64 A4.5, and Tuplin, "Bodleian Letters," 121. The claim that the Judeans had not left their posts while the Egyptians did was probably meant to highlight the Judeans' loyalty to the Achaemenid government, in an attempt to increase the chances that the latter would side with the Judeans in the present conflict. For a study of the conflict, see e.g. Rohrmoser, *Götter, Tempel und Kult*, 240-90, and Tuplin, "Fall and Rise of the Elephantine Temple," 344-72.

[207] See Porten and Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents*, 1:90-91 A5.5, and Tuplin, "Bodleian Letters," 121.

a member of the Persian royal family who served as satrap of Egypt in the second half of the fifth century BC.[208] The letters are important for the study of Achaemenid Egypt – and the Achaemenid Empire as a whole – , as sources that can be connected to such high-ranking imperial officials are few and far between. Having said that, the letters mainly concern issues that were connected to Arsames' domains in Egypt, rather than official matters of state.[209] Among them, three refer to rebellion or disturbances: one letter states that thirteen of Arsames' slaves had been unable to get into a fortress "when Egypt rebelled (*mrdt*) and the (armed) force was garrisoned." The men were subsequently seized by "the wicked [I]n[ḫ]arou," and had been detained ever since. Arsames asked a Persian colleague of his to release them, so that they could perform their work as usual.[210] Another letter urges Nakhthor, the steward of Arsames' domains in Egypt, to be diligent in "the disturbances (?)" (*šwzy'*), and to guard Arsames' personnel and goods. A previous steward of Arsames had done this adequately "when the Egyptians rebelled" (*mrdw*).[211] A third mentions that an Egyptian called Petosiri, a servant of Arsames, had lost his father and the latter's entire household during "unrest (?)" (*ywz'*) in Egypt. He had asked Arsames to be reinstated as heir of the land which his father had owned – a wish which his master granted.[212] As none of the letters are dated or mention the dates of the events to which they refer, it is difficult to connect the "unrest" (*ywz'*), "disturbances" (*šwzy'*), and the time when the Egyptians "rebelled" (*mrdt, mrdw*) to events that are known from other sources.[213] The letter which mentions "[I]n[ḫ]arou" is a possible exception, as it may refer to

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[208] Three recently published volumes are dedicated to Arsames' career and the sources that can be connected to him: see Tuplin and Ma, *Aršāma and His World.* For a study of Arsames' career, based on both Egyptian and non-Egyptian sources, see Tuplin, "Aršāma: Prince and Satrap," 3-72; on the acquisition history of the Aramaic letters, see Allen, "Bodleian Achaemenid Aramaic Letters," 13-15; and for a translation of the letters, see Taylor, "Bodleian Letters," 21-49.

[209] For a study of estates held by high-ranking Persians – including Arsames – , see Henkelman, "Precarious Gifts," 13-66. It is important to observe that such estates could be fortified and guarded, and become significant nodes in political conflict; see ibid.

[210] See Taylor, "Bodleian Letters," 30-31, and Porten and Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents*, 1:110-11 A6.7. To which fortress the letter refers is unclear.

[211] See Taylor, "Bodleian Letters," 36-37, and Porten and Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents*, 1:116-17 A6.10.

[212] See Taylor, "Bodleian Letters," 38-39, and Porten and Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents*, 1:118-19 A6.11.

[213] See Tuplin, "Bodleian Letters," 120-23, and Tuplin, "Aršāma: Prince and Satrap," 64-72. The issue of connecting various signs of trouble and unrest to Egyptian rebellions is further discussed in Chapter 4.

the mid-fifth century BC rebel Inaros.[214] The letters do give us a glimpse, however, of the impact that such rebellions could have in Egypt: some people were killed, some were seized, some lost their possessions, while others managed to find a semblance of safety in fortresses that were guarded by soldiers who had remained loyal to the imperial regime.

*2.4.3 Archaeological sources*

Since the nineteenth century, numerous tombs, temples, palaces, fortresses and houses that were built in or used during the sixth to fourth centuries BC have been excavated in the Egyptian Delta, Nile Valley, and oases of the Western Desert.[215] Some examples include Naukratis, a harbor town with a significant Greek population in the northern Delta, Memphis, which featured a palace with significant Persian Period remains, and the Kharga Oasis, where several temple sites bear traces of the sixth to fourth centuries BC.[216] For the study of Achaemenid Egypt, the material remains of these sites are an important complement to the textual corpus discussed above.[217] Having said that, it is difficult – in the absence of a specific textual reference to rebellion – to associate certain items, buildings, or archaeological layers with relatively short periods of unrest. At present, there are only two phenomena which scholars have sometimes connected to the rebellions of the sixth to fourth centuries BC. One is the construction of fortifications in and on both sides of the Sinai desert; the other is the presence of a destruction layer at a single site in northeastern Egypt. As the two issues are closely intertwined, the following section discusses them in tandem.

2.4.3.1 Fortifications and destruction in northeastern Egypt

Traditionally, the eastern region of the Delta and the northern part of the Sinai desert formed an important Egyptian frontier zone. Especially from the New Kingdom onwards, the region

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[214] See e.g. Quack, "Zur Datierung der Aršama-Dokumente," 53-64. Tuplin expresses reservations about the identification: see Tuplin, "Bodleian Letters," 127, and ibid., "Aršāma: Prince and Satrap," 18-19, 62-72.

[215] For an overview of Persian Period archaeological sites in Egypt, see Wuttmann and Marchand, "Égypte," 97-128.

[216] See e.g. Villing et al., *Naukratis: Greeks in Egypt*, Petrie, *Palace of Apries*, Lopes and Braga, "Apries Palace," 247-58, and Colburn, "Pioneers of the Western Desert," 86-114.

[217] See Colburn, *Archaeology of Empire*, for a recent study of Achaemenid Egypt that prioritizes material remains.

was dotted by fortresses and fortified towns, which served as a line of defense against invasions from western Asia, and as launching points for Egyptian military campaigns in the Levant.[218] In the Saite to Persian Periods, such border sites included Tell Qedwa and Tell el-Herr (possibly Migdol) near the Mediterranean coast, Tell Dafana (Daphnae) on the Pelusaic branch of the Nile, and Tell Maskhuta (possibly Pithom) in the Wadi Tumilat, near the ancient canal that led to the Red Sea.[219] Tell Dafana is probably the best-known site. According to Herodotus, it was one of three sites that were established by Psamtik I to guard the borders of Egypt: "Elephantine facing Ethiopia" was the southern watchpost, "Marea facing Libya" was the northwestern one, and "Daphnae of Pelusium facing Arabia and Assyria" was the northeastern one (*Histories* 2.30). Like Elephantine, Daphnae was still in use in the Persian Period.[220] Though Daphnae has yielded only few texts in comparison with Elephantine, excavations have revealed that it was a classical Egyptian temple town. It included a fortified sanctuary, possibly an armory, and it housed a mixed Egyptian and non-Egyptian population.[221] Contrary to the importance attributed to Daphnae by Herodotus, however, it seems that the town was not the most important northeastern frontier site in the mid-first millennium BC. This role was reserved for

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[218] See e.g. Hoffmeier and Moshier, "Highway out of Egypt," 485-510, esp. 495-505.

[219] See e.g. Valbelle and Defernez, "Les sites de la frontière égypto-palestinienne," 93-100, Defernez, "Le Sinaï et l'Empire perse," 67-74, Smoláriková, *Saite Forts in Egypt*, 45-99, and Pétigny, "Des étrangers," 14-24. Other sites were probably inhabited in the Saite to Persian Periods as well, but the few material remains that are presently known makes it difficult to ascertain the extent of their settlement and/or fortifications; see e.g. Lupo and Kohen, *Tell el-Ghaba III*, 7-9, el-Maksoud and Valbelle, "Tell Héboua-Tjarou," 3, 39, Rzepka et al., "From Hyksos Tombs to Late Period Tower Houses," 72-78, and Stanley, Bernasconi, and Jorstad, "Pelusium," 452-53.

[220] For other (possible) fortresses and garrisons in Saite to Persian Period Egypt, see Smoláriková, *Saite Forts in Egypt*, 45-99, Kaplan, "Cross-Cultural Contacts," 4-10, and Tuplin, "Military Environment," 302-20. Unfortunately, the role of Marea remains obscure. According to Herodotus, the Persians maintained the garrisons at Elephantine and Daphnae (*Histories* 2.30.3) – which suggests, by virtue of its omission, that the garrison at Marea disappeared. Yet, Thucydides claims that Inaros launched his rebellion from Marea in the mid-fifth century BC (*Peloponnesian War* 1.104), which suggests that the site retained some of its importance. The site should probably be identified with Egyptian ḫꜣst Ṯmḥw, "desert region of the Ṯmḥw-Libyans." The latter is mentioned in several Late Period texts, including an Aramaic stele from year four of Xerxes; see Vittmann, *Ägypten und die Fremden,* 14-15, 106-10. It is debated with which archaeological site Marea should be identified, however; see e.g. Lloyd, *Herodotus: Book II*, 2:87-88. So far, the earliest remains from the site which modern archaeologists have labeled "Marea" in northern Hawwariya date to third century BC; see Derda, Gwiazda, Misiewicz, and Malkowski, "Marea/Northern Hawwariya," 124.

[221] See Leclère and Spencer, *Tell Dafana Reconsidered*, esp. 1-40, 135-36.

Tell el-Herr in the fifth century BC, and for several other sites in and near the Sinai desert in the fourth century BC.

First, Tell el-Herr, located ca. 25 km northeast of modern El-Qantara, was founded in the first half of the fifth century BC. The site was dominated by a quadrilinear fortress, the walls of which measured ca. 125 m in length. They included corner bastions and intermediate bastions on all sides.[222] The fortress was quite similar to that of Tell Qedwa, located a few kilometers to the north. This earlier fortress was founded in the late seventh century BC, but destroyed by "a violent conflagration" in the late sixth century BC. The destruction has been connected to Cambyses' invasion of Egypt: according to Herodotus, the Persian king met the army of Psamtik III near Pelusium (*Histories* 3.10-11), which fits with the area in which Tell Qedwa was located. Thus far, no material remains have been identified that point to a re-occupation of the site in the Persian Period.[223] Because the oldest ceramics from Tell el-Herr, Tell Qedwa's successor site, mainly date from the second quarter of the fifth century BC, some scholars have suggested that the construction of the new fortress did not follow directly on Cambyses' invasion of Egypt; instead, it may have been prompted by the Egyptian rebellion of 487/86 BC. The threat that such rebellions posed could have encouraged the Persian government to invest more heavily in their military infrastructure.[224]

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[222] See e.g. Valbelle, "Les garnisons de Migdol," 799-811, and Valbelle, "First Persian Period Fortress," 12-14. For the houses located within the fortress, and for an imposing structure identified as the governor's palace, see Marchi, *L'habitat dans les forteresses de Migdol*, and Defernez, Nogara, and Valbelle, *Un palais oriental*. The fortress is now commonly identified with Migdol, an Egyptian frontier site that features in the Hebrew Bible, and which is mentioned in an early fifth century BC letter from Elephantine. See e.g. Oren, "Migdol," 30-35, Hoffmeier, "Search for Migdol," 4-6, Marchi, *L'habitat dans les forteresses de Migdol*, 6, and Porten and Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents*, 1:30-31 A3.3.

[223] See Redford, "Report," 45-57, Smoláriková, *Saite Forts*, 48-54, and Hussein and Alim, "Way(s) of Horus," 1-13. According to Redford, the remains suggest that the construction of a new fortress was planned at Tell Qedwa after the first had been destroyed, but it appears not to have been finished/and or used (see Redford, "Report," 57). Note that the old fortress may have been known as Migdol in the Saite Period, before the name came to be associated with the Persian Period fortress at Tell el-Herr (see Oren, "Migdol," 30-35, Hoffmeier, "Search for Migdol," 4-6).

[224] See e.g. Defernez, "Le Sinaï," 73, Valbelle, "Les garnisons de Migdol," 799-800, and Defernez, *La céramique d'époque perse*, 476-78. A connection to Inaros' revolt in 463/62 BC has also been entertained, though the earliest ceramics predate the end of that rebellion; see ibid., 479-78.

Indeed, that the revolt of the 480s BC had some impact in the northeastern Delta is suggested by the remains of another frontier site: Tell el-Maskhuta. Like Tell Dafana, Tell el-Maskhuta was a partially fortified town that was resettled during the Saite Dynasty. It lay close to the ancient canal that led from the Pelusaic branch of the Nile to the Red Sea. A considerable number of its ceramics can be dated to the sixth to fifth centuries BC, indicating continued habitation from the Saite to Persian Period.[225] In the early fifth century BC, however, some type of destructive event appears to have affected the site: modern excavations have revealed the remains of a stone-lined well, which appears to have been deliberately blocked up with fragments of pottery, animal bones, stable wastes, and earth. The pottery fragments suggest that the refuse was dumped shortly after 500 – 490 BC. Traces of a burn layer were found as well. In the words of John Holladay: "who, around that time, would go stopping up a strongly built, stone-lined well in the 'suburb' of the principal town in the region? Answer: probably someone who hated to local power structure, i.e., the Persian administration of Egypt, which lost power in a popular revolt during the last years of Darius the Great (ca. 487-486 B.C.). Conversely, the well might have been stopped up as a parting gesture by the Persian administration of the town as a final act before abandoning the site."[226] Though we cannot be sure about the motives that drove people to block up the well, a connection to political resistance is not unlikely.[227]

Second, it has long been recognized that the fourth century BC was marked by the development of fortifications at Egypt's northeastern frontier on the one hand, and in Judah and Idumea – i.e. at the Persian Empire's new southwestern frontier – on the other.[228] On the Egyptian side,

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[225] See Holladay, *Tell el-Maskhuta*, 1-3, 19-27, 50-57, Holladay, "Maskhuta, Tell El-," 432-36, and Paice, "Preliminary Analysis," 316-32. For its identification with Pithom, see Collins, "Biblical Pithom," 135-49.

[226] See Holladay, *Tell el-Maskhuta*, 25-26. See also ibid., 55-57, and Paice, "Preliminary Analysis," 321, 323-26, 330.

[227] It may be interesting to compare this to a late fifth century BC conflict between the Judeans of Elephantine and the Egyptian priests of Khnum (on which see Rohrmoser, *Götter, Tempel und Kult*, 240-90, and Tuplin, "Fall and Rise of the Elephantine Temple," 344-72). One of the Aramaic letters that describes the conflict mentions that "[t]here is a well which was built with[in] the f[or]tress (which) did not lack water to give the garrison drink so that whenever they would be garrisoned (there) they would drink the water in [th]at well." The priests of Khnum, in an act of defiance, "stopped up that well" (see Porten and Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents*, 1:62-63 A4.5).

[228] In addition, the Native Dynasties saw the construction of "gigantic brick enclosure walls" at a variety of temple sites in Egypt; they were presumably intended as military defenses in the case of a Persian invasion. See e.g. Arnold, *Temples of the Last Pharaohs*, 93.

it stands to reason that the fortifications were meant to defend the country from Persian attempts at reconquest. The latter followed Egypt's successful secession from the Empire in ca. 400 BC. For example, after a short period of abandonment, the fortress at Tell el-Herr was rebuilt and resettled in the first half of the fourth century BC.[229] It is also probable, though less clear, that Tell el-Farama (ancient Pelusium) was fortified, a settlement that lay a few kilometers north of Tell el-Herr.[230] On the imperial side, one sees the appearance of fortified administrative centers at Lachish, Tell Jemmeh, Tel Haror, Tel Sera', Tel Ḥalif, Beth-Zur, Ramat Raḥel and 'En Gedi. The pottery remains suggest that all sites were built or began to be extensively populated in the early fourth century BC. Also noteworthy, though less clearly dated, are a series of fortresses in the Negev desert. Among them are Ḥorvat Rogem, Ḥorvat Ritma, Mesad Naḥal Haro'a, and Ḥorvat Mesora. The sites may have served to defend the region from Egyptian attacks on the one hand, and as launching points for Persian invasions of the Delta and Nile Valley on the other.[231] In the end, such Persian attempts at reconquest were successful, and ushered in the Second Persian Period of Egypt (ca. 343 – 332 BC). It is possible that the archaeologically attested abandonment of some of the Palestinian sites should be dated to this timespan; they had fulfilled their purpose, and hence lost their direct military relevance.[232]

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[229] See e.g. Valbelle, "Les garnisons de Migdol," 805-7, and Defernez, *La céramique d'époque perse*, 480-83. It is important to observe that the fortress at Tell el-Herr experienced two periods of (partial) destruction: one in the third quarter of the fifth century BC, and one in the first quarter of the fourth century BC. These phases have been connected to a variety of political events, but the dates preclude a solid connection to the Egyptian rebellions of the fifth century BC. See e.g. Defernez, *La céramique d'époque perse*, 478-79, Marchi, *L'habitat dans les forteresses de Migdol*, 6, and Valbelle, "Tell el-Herr," 25-26.

[230] In texts from the Ptolemaic Period onwards, Pelusium is often mentioned as the northern border site of Egypt par excellence; see Pétigny, "Des étrangers," 14-24, 34-35. According to Diodorus of Sicily, the site was fortified during the Native Dynasties in response to Persian military threats (*Universal Library* 15.42, 16.46). At present, such fortifications have not been identified, though it is clear from pottery remains that the site was occupied in the fifth and especially in the fourth century BC; see Defernez, "Le Sinaï et l'Empire perse," 68-69, and Stanley, Bernasconi, and Jorstad, "Pelusium," 452-53.

[231] In the past, some of these fortifications were linked to the aftermath of Inaros' rebellion in the mid-fifth century BC; see e.g. Hoglund, *Achaemenid Imperial Administration*, 165-205. For lower dates, see now Fantalkin and Tal, "Redating Lachisch Level I," 167-97, and Fantalkin and Tal, "Judah and Its Neighbours," 133-68. In a similar vein, the minting of Yehud coins and stamp-seal impressions in the fourth century BC has now been linked to a transformation of the imperial administration of the province following Egypt's independence in ca. 400 BC; see ibid., 148-53, and Lipschits and Vanderhooft, "Yehud Stamp Impressions," 75-94, esp. 86-90.

[232] See Fantalkin and Tal, "Judah and Its Neighbors," 169.

## 2.5 Miscellaneous

The Greek narrative texts, Persian royal inscriptions, and the textual and material remains from Achaemenid Egypt discussed above are our main sources for the study of the Egyptian rebellions. Together, they indicate when the rebellions began, how long they lasted, who supported them, which parts of Egypt were affected by them, and how the imperial government chose to respond. Other sources which allude to the rebellions – both from within and without the Achaemenid Empire – are comparatively scarce. Nevertheless, a handful of them does exist. This handful includes sources that refer to an Egyptian rebellion explicitly, as well as sources that can be used to study the rebellions in more indirect ways. For simplicity's sake, the sources are divided into the following groups: Greek inscriptions, Babylonian texts, Persepolitan texts, and Achaemenid seals. The following section provides an introduction to each.

### 2.5.1 Greek inscriptions

The literary, historical and philosophical texts which ancient Greek authors left to posterity are the best-known Greek texts from the period of the Persian Empire.[233] The Greek population of the sixth to fourth century BC Mediterranean has also left a significant body of contemporary inscriptions behind, however. As in Egypt, such inscriptions could consist of private graffiti, funerary texts that were inscribed on tomb stones, and epigrams on a variety of monuments that were erected in the public spaces of temples. Other text genres, which were more peculiar to the world of the Greek poleis, consisted of a city's religious calendars, public decrees that stated a city's laws or which listed its political allies, and monuments that commemorated soldiers who had fallen during battle.[234] Within this corpus, three inscriptions have thus far been identified that may be connected to Greek military involvement in Egyptian rebellions. In particular, all three have been associated with the rebellion of Inaros in the mid-fifth century BC. As the inscriptions provide us with an important complement to the Greek narrative texts discussed above, they deserve a closer look.

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[233] See 2.2 above.

[234] For introductions to Greek inscriptions, see e.g. Bodel, *Epigraphic Evidence*, and Rhodes and Osborne, *Greek Historical Inscriptions*, xiii-xxv. A selection of inscriptions that bear on political history can be found in Meiggs and Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions*, Rhodes and Osborne, *Greek Historical Inscriptions*, and Osborne and Rhodes, *Greek Historical Inscriptions*.

The best-known Greek inscription that can be connected to Inaros' rebellion is probably the "Nointel Marble," a marble stele which was found in the paving of a church at Athens in 1674. The stele, presently in the Louvre Museum, commemorates the death of soldiers who had belonged to the Athenian Erechtheid tribe. According to its heading, the soldiers had died "in the war, in Cyprus, in Eg[y]pt, in Phoenica, at Halieis, on Aegina, and at Megara, in the same year."[235] The remainder of the inscription consists of the soldiers' names, among whom featured at least two generals and 170 privates.[236] As has long been observed, the inscription should probably be connected to the events described by Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War* 1.104-105. The latter mentions that the Athenians had been on campaign against Cyprus when Inaros requested their assistance in Egypt. In addition, it mentions that the Athenians had been involved in battles at Halieis, Aegina and Megara roundabout the same time. What exactly happened in Phoenicia – a region that is not mentioned by Thucydides – remains obscure.[237] It is important to observe that the inscription may have been one of a series of ten stelae, each of which would have commemorated the fallen soldiers of a specific Athenian tribe.[238] If so, Athens' losses in the mid-fifth century BC would have been considerable.

The other two Greek inscriptions that may be connected to Inaros' rebellion stem from the island of Samos. Both were found in secondary contexts, but were probably erected in the Heraion, i.e. in the large temple of Hera on the southern side of the island. The first inscription consists of an epigram that was inscribed on a marble base. The base would have originally supported a statue, and the epigram suggests that it honored a certain Hegesagores son of Zoiilotes for seizing fifteen Phoenician ships during a battle between Greeks and Persians.[239]

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[235] Fornara, *Archaic Times*, 78-79 no. 78. For the Greek text, see Meiggs and Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions*, 73-75 no. 33. The circumstances of its find are mentioned by Fröhner, *Les inscriptions grecques*, vi.

[236] Tod, *Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions*, 43.

[237] See e.g. Fröhner, *Les inscriptions grecques*, 212, Tod, *Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions*, 42, and Meiggs and Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions*, 75. The exact date of these events – and hence the date of the inscription – is debated; they may be connected to ca. 459 BC; see Meiggs and Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions*, 75, and Kahn, "Inaros' Rebellion," 426-27. For the possible role of Phoenicians during Inaros' rebellion, see below.

[238] See Tod, *Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions*, 42, and Meiggs and Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions*, 75.

[239] See Peek, "Ein Seegefecht," 289-90, 292-95, Meiggs and Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions*, 76-77 no. 34, Dunst, "Archaische Inschriften," 152-53 no. 23, and Fornara, *Archaic Times*, 78 no. 77.

**Figure 5.** A stele which commemorates soldiers of the Athenian Erechtheid tribe, some of whom had died while fighting in Egypt. (Photo from https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/27/War_memorial_Louvre_Ma_863.jpg)
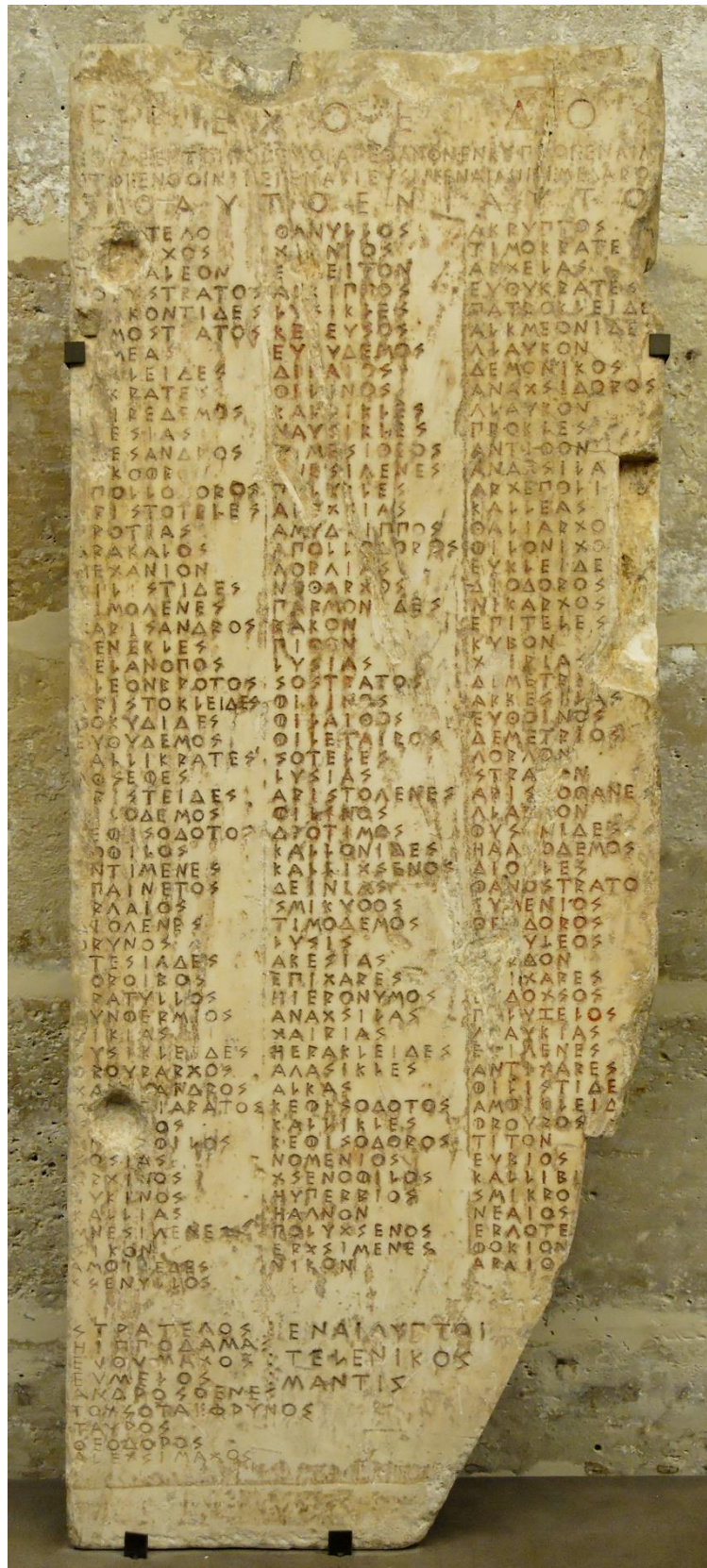
Though the historical context of the battle is unclear, some scholars have suggested that it took place near Memphis: the city might be mentioned at the beginning of the epigram's second line ([Μέμ]φιος). If the reconstruction is accepted, it is plausible that the battle should be connected to the Greek war effort in Egypt following Inaros' request for assistance.[240] This speculative interpretation gains some credibility when one looks at the second inscription from Samos. The latter is known from two marble fragments, both of which belonged to the base of a monument. The inscription on the fragments indicates that the monument honored a certain "Leokritos, son of Iphia[dos]," who had been awarded by "Inaros, son of Psammetichos, king of [the Egyptians]" for the naval assistance which Leokritos had provided him.[241] The inscription stands on a par with the demotic ostracon from Ayn Manawir discussed above, which provides us with another explicit and contemporary reference to this Libyo-Egyptian ruler.[242] It is noteworthy that the inscription identifies Inaros as the son of a certain Psamtik, a filiation which is also mentioned by Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War* 1.104 and Herodotus, *Histories* 7.7. What is more, the inscription indicates that the Samians had been one of the "allies" thataccompanied the Athenian troops to Egypt – a group which is usually left anonymous by Greek historians (see e.g. Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War* 1.104, 1.109, and Ctesias, *Persica* F14 36-38).

*2.5.2 Babylonian texts*

The satrapy of Babylonia, modern-day southern Iraq, is one of the best-documented regions of the Achaemenid Empire. Its textual corpus consists largely of cuneiform tablets, which document the activities of families, businesses, government officials, and temple institutions. In addition, a significant portion records literary texts, such as chronicles, myths, and omina.[243]

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[240] See Peek, "Ein Seegefecht," 295-302, and Meiggs and Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions*, 76-77.

[241] See Dunst, "Archaische Inschriften," 153-55 no. 24. The inscription is briefly mentioned by Huss, *Ägypten in hellenistischer Zeit*, 37 n. 45, Chauveau, "Inarôs," 45 n. 16, and Holm, "Sheikh Fadl Inscription," 207 n. 61. Despite its significance, however, the inscription is often omitted; see e.g. Kahn, "Inaros' Rebellion," 424-40, who mentions only the Athenian casualty list, Ruzicka, *Trouble in the West*, 29-33, 240-41, who mentions only the first Samian inscription, and Rottpeter, "Initiatoren und Träger," 17-23, who omits all three.

[242] See 2.4.2.1. See also section 2.4.2.2 for the reference to "[I]n[ḫ]arou" in the Arsames correspondence.

[243] For a succinct introduction to the textual corpus from Achaemenid Babylonia, see Jursa, "Babylonian Sources," 101-16. For a detailed overview of Babylonian archives, see Jursa, *Neo-Babylonian Legal and Administrative*

In terms of chronological distribution, the majority of the Babylonian texts stems from archives and libraries that cover the transition from Neo-Babylonian to Persian rule. They are part of the so-called "long sixth century," a period from the late seventh century BC to ca. 484 BC, which is exceptionally well documented.[244] As publication is on-going, a reliable estimate of the total number of texts is not available. It is telling, however, that some of the "long sixth century" archives include hundreds or even thousands of tablets that can be dated to the Persian Period alone. The Persian part of the Ebabbar temple at Sippar, for example, contains at least 2500 texts – thereby eclipsing the entire corpus of archival texts from Achaemenid Egypt.[245] A smaller number of tablets dates to the later Achaemenid period, though their number is still significant: about 1600 documents may be dated to the period from the later reign of Xerxes to Darius II; and about 400 might be dated to the fourth century BC.[246]

The contribution of the Babylonian cuneiform tablets to the study of the Egyptian rebellions is not as direct as the Greek inscription from Samos discussed above: none of the texts refer explicitly to Egyptian rebellions or to Egyptian rebel kings. Instead, the contribution of the texts is largely indirect, and touches upon three different domains. First, some of the tablets – especially those from temple archives – document the levy, equipment and payment of Babylonian soldiers. Some of these soldiers served in fortresses within Mesopotamia, while others would have participated in long-distance campaigns.[247] An example of such a campaign is Cambyses' invasion of Egypt in the early months of 526 BC. At present, tablets from the Eanna temple at Uruk, the Ebabbar temple at Sippar, and the Egibi archive from Babylon indicate that the Persian king resided in Babylonia from the middle of 528 BC onwards. In the next nine months he appears to have collected foodstuffs and to have mobilized troops while travelling from southern to northern Mesopotamia – and eventually, using the standard land

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*Documents*; for libraries, see Clancier, *Les bibliothèques en Babylonie*. Aside from cuneiform tablets, a handful of Achaemenid royal inscriptions on stone and brick exists as well; see e.g. 2.3.2.1-2.3.2.2 above.

[244] See Jursa, "Babylonian Sources," 102. For a possible explanation of the wealth and nature of this corpus, see Waerzeggers, "Babylonian Revolts against Xerxes," 150-73, and ibid., "Network of Resistance," 89-133.

[245] Jursa, "Babylonian Sources," 102-3, and compare the numbers given in 2.4.2.1-2.4.2.2. In addition, see Jursa, "Babylonian Sources," 111, for the rough estimate that 8040 texts can be dated to the early Persian Period (ca. 539 – 484 BC) in total.

[246] Jursa, "Babylonian Sources," 112.

[247] See Tolini, "La Babylonie et l'Iran," 97-117, and MacGinnis, *Arrows of the Sun*, 39-44. MacGinnis' suggestion that a tablet from the Ebabbar temple dated to year seven of Cambyses might relate to a "re-invasion of Egypt" by that king is not supported by other evidence; *pace* ibid, 43.

route, to Egypt.[248] It has been suggested that a similar campaign took place between 519 and 517 BC: several texts from the Ebabbar temple document the equipment and payment of military personnel in years three and four of Darius I. One of them records the payment of silver to horsemen who had returned from Egypt. The date suggests a connection to Darius I's invasion of the Nile Valley, which would have followed the Egyptian rebellion of 522/21 BC.[249] As the tablets bear on the latter's end date, they are further discussed in Chapter 3.

Second, several Babylonian archives document the arrival of Egyptians in Mesopotamia during the sixth and fifth centuries BC. The social position of these groups varied considerably. It is clear, however, that at least some Egyptians joined Babylonian temple institutions as forced laborers, while others were sold as slaves to private parties.[250] A particularly vivid example was mentioned in the Introduction: in December 524 BC a Babylonian man sold an enslaved woman and her three-month-old baby in Babylon. The document of sale identified the woman as an "Egyptian" from "the plunder of his bow."[251] She was probably taken captive during Cambyses' invasion of Egypt. It is possible that similar migrations of people – who were essentially war booty – followed the defeat of Egyptian rebellions. Such a context has been suggested for a tablet from Sippar, which documents the sale of an enslaved woman in January 484 BC. The woman bore an Egyptian name, and had an Egyptian text inscribed on her wrist. The date of sale may have fallen shortly after the end of the second Egyptian revolt (487/86 – 485/84 BC).[252] Texts such as this complement the Aramaic letters from Egypt discussed above: they show us a glimpse of the impact which the rebellions and the accompanying Persian invasions may have had on the Egyptian population.

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[248] See Joannès, "Conquérir l'Égypte," 201-16.

[249] See Tolini, "La Babylonie et l'Iran," 246-47.

[250] See e.g. Hackl and Jursa, "Egyptians in Babylonia," 158-61. For Egyptians of higher standing, see e.g. ibid., 162-72, and Dandamaev, "Egyptians in Babylonia," 322-24. Note that the presence of Egyptians in Babylonia was not a novel phenomenon: some groups had already been settled there in the seventh and early sixth centuries BC, in part as a result of military campaigns on Egyptian soil; see e.g. Zadok, "Egyptians in Babylonia," 139-45, Dandamaev, "Egyptians in Babylonia," 321-22, Bongenaar and Haring, "Egyptians in Neo-Babylonian Sippar," 59-72, and Hackl and Jursa, "Egyptians in Babylonia," 157-59.

[251] See Strassmaier, *Inschriften von Cambyses*, 190-91 no. 334, and Peiser, *Texte juristischen und geschäftlichen Inhalts,* 292 no. XII. The text is also known from two duplicates; see Pinches, *Inscribed Babylonian Tablets,* 73-76 no. 17.

[252] See Stolper, "Inscribed in Egyptian," 138-43. The end date of the revolt is not as clear cut as Stolper suggests (*pace* ibid., 143); for a discussion of the date, see Chapter 4.

A third and final way in which the Babylonian cuneiform corpus may contribute to the study of Egyptian rebellions relates to comparative history. As mentioned in the Introduction, some Babylonians rebelled against Persian rule during the Bisitun crisis (522 – 521 BC) and during Xerxes' second regnal year (484 BC). Like the Egyptian rebellions, the Babylonian episodes are mentioned by Greek historians (Herodotus, *Histories* 3.150-60; Ctesias, *Persica* F13 26). Our primary evidence, however, stems from Babylonian archival texts, the date formulae of which hail non-Persian kings. At present, ca. eighty-seven texts can be dated to the first two rebellions, and nineteen texts to the third and the fourth.[253] Due to the size and density of the Babylonian corpus, the rebellions can be reconstructed in more detail than their Egyptian counterparts. The tablets indicate how chaotic the political situation in 522-21 BC was, for example, as some groups in Babylonian society recognized rebel kings while others recognized Darius I.[254] They also show how the Empire responded in the rebellions' aftermath: some individuals appear to have been removed from their government and/or temple posts, while others were given the opportunity to replace them.[255] This body of material can be compared with the Egyptian rebellions, and sometimes illuminates aspects of the Egyptian revolts that would otherwise have remained in the dark.

### 2.5.3 Persepolitan texts

Another sizeable text corpus from the Achaemenid Empire stems from the palace of Persepolis, one of the imperial capitals that was located in southwestern Iran. The corpus consists of two archives: the Persepolis Fortification Archive, which was found in the fortifications of the northeastern part of the Persepolis terrace, and the Persepolis Treasury Archive, which was

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[253] See Lorenz, *Nebukadnezar III/IV*, 87-88, Frahm and Jursa, *Neo-Babylonian Letters and Contracts*, 53-54, Pearce and Wunsch, *Documents of Judean Exiles*, 180-81, and Bloch, "Contribution of Babylonian Tablets," 3-4, for Babylonian texts dated to the first two rebel kings. The exact number of texts is uncertain, as it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between Nebuchadnezzer III and IV, i.e. the rebel kings, and Nebuchadnezzar II; see Lorenz, *Nebukadnezar III/IV*, 14-16, 31-35. See Waerzeggers, "Babylonian Revolts against Xerxes," 152-53, and Spar and Jursa, *Ebabbar Temple Archive*, 191-92 no. 140, for texts dated to the rebel kings of 484 BC. An additional (unpublished) tablet is part of the Böhl collection at Leiden (LB 1751).

[254] See e.g. Bloch, "Contribution of Babylonian Tablets," 11-13.

[255] See e.g. Waerzeggers, "Network of Resistance," 89-133, and Kessler, "Urukäische Familien versus babylonische Familien," 237-62.

found in the so-called Treasury building.[256] As is true of the Babylonian corpus, the publication of a large part of the Persepolitan texts is still in the making. The following numbers are therefore approximate. The Fortification Archive consists of about 20.000 – 25.000 tablets and fragments, which may represent about 15.000 – 18.000 original documents. The vast majority were written in Elamite (70% or more), a few were written in Aramaic (ca. 5%), and a handful were written in other languages. So far, about 2400 of the Elamite texts have been published.[257] The Treasury Archive is a comparatively small corpus: it consists of 746 tablets and fragments, all but one of which bear Elamite texts. 140 of them have been published.[258] At present, the contribution of these archives to the study of the Egyptian rebellions is limited. This is the natural result of both their administrative and chronological scope. The Fortification Archive largely concerns the storage and distribution of foodstuffs, for example, which supported a variety of laborers, priests, officials, and courtiers in the area around Persepolis. The vast majority of texts dates between 509 to 493 BC, with particular concentrations in 500/499 and 499/98 BC (year twenty-two and twenty-three of Darius I).[259] The later Treasury Archive is likewise focused on the area around Persepolis. It largely concerns payments in silver to workers and specialized craftsmen. The majority of texts are dated between 492 to 457 BC, with particular concentrations in 467/66 and 466/65 BC (year nineteen and twenty of

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[256] See Henkelman, "Administrative Realities," 530-34. In addition, a group of about sixty sealings was found in the so-called Mountain Fortification, directly east of the Persepolis Terrace; see ibid., 534-35. A few Elamite tablets that were found near Susa and Qandahar suggest that archives similar to those found at Persepolis existed at other centers as well; see ibid., 531, and Henkelman, "Imperial Signature," 84-86, 116-22, 151-52.

[257] See Stolper, "Elamite Sources," 92, and Azzoni, Dusinberre, Garrison, Henkelman, Jones, and Stolper, "Persepolis Administative Archives," http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/persepolis-admin-archive (accessed 17 December 2021). Note that a sizeable minority consists of sealed but uninscribed tablets (ca. 20%); see ibid. For publications of some of the non-Elamite texts, see the references in ibid., and Henkelman, "Administrative Realities," 532-33. Some of the most recent additions are two tablets (possibly) written in demotic; see Azzoni, Chandler, Daly, Garrison, Johnson, and Muhs, "A Demotic Tablet or Two," 1-31.

[258] See Stolper, "Elamite Sources," 92, and Azzoni, Dusinberre, Garrison, Henkelman, Jones, and Stolper, "Persepolis Administative Archives," http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/persepolis-admin-archive (accessed 17 December 2021).

[259] See Azzoni, Dusinberre, Garrison, Henkelman, Jones, and Stolper, "Persepolis Administative Archives," http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/persepolis-admin-archive (accessed 17 December 2021). For the handful of texts that refer or date to regnal years outside of this timespan, see Stolper, "Chronological Boundaries." The last mentioned regnal year is year thirty-five of Darius I (487/86 BC); see ibid., no. 4. The earliest is year four of Darius I (518/17 BC); see Stolper, "Investigating Irregularities," 761-62, 789-91 no. 6.

Xerxes).[260] Having said that, with the steady publication of tablets in the last few decades, it is becoming increasingly clear that the archives from Persepolis touch upon a wide variety of issues that are pertinent to the study of the Achaemenid Empire as a whole. These issues range from religion and state-financed cults, to the hierarchical position and possessions of members of the royal family.[261] At times, the texts touch upon issues that relate to rebellion as well, or on the administration of Achaemenid Egypt specifically. Both deserve a closer look.

First, a good example of a dossier that touches upon rebellion in the Achaemenid Empire consists of five Elamite tablets from the Persepolis Fortification Archive. The tablets document the distribution of flour and beer to several different men in 495 – 494 BC (year twenty-seven to twenty-eight of Darius I).[262] In two cases, the texts mention that the men carried travel authorizations from Artaphernes ("Irdapirna"). The latter is known from Greek sources as Darius I's brother and satrap of Sardis in the late sixth and early fifth century BC. The men whom he authorized to travel "went to the king," who presumably resided at or near Persepolis.[263] A third text mentions that a certain Datiya – possibly Datis, a Persian general who was involved in Darius I's later campaign against Greece – travelled from Sardis to Persepolis with an authorization from the king.[264] In the remaining two cases, men travelled from the king to Sardis.[265] Most of the people who made up these small travel parties are identified in the texts as *pirradaziš* or as travelling via *pirradaziš* service. The term is an Elamite rendering of Old Persian *\*fratačiš* ("fast messenger"). Such express messengers used the royal roads that connected the Achaemenid Empire to communicate both oral and written messages at top speed.[266] As has been recently argued, the fact that several of these express

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[260] See Azzoni, Dusinberre, Garrison, Henkelman, Jones, and Stolper, "Persepolis Administative Archives," http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/persepolis-admin-archive (accessed 17 December 2021), and Henkelman, "Administrative Realities," 534.

[261] See e.g. Henkelman, "Heartland Pantheon," 1221-42, Henkelman, "'Consumed before the King,'" 667-775, and Stolper, "Atossa Re-Enters," 449-66.

[262] The dossier was identified by Hyland, "Achaemenid Messenger Service," 150-69.

[263] See ibid., 153, 157-59, 167 (Fort. 2131-101 and PF-NN 0196).

[264] See Hyland, "Achaemenid Messenger Service," 151-52, 158, 167 (PF-NN 1809), and Lewis, "Datis the Mede," 194-95.

[265] See Hyland, "Achaemenid Messenger Service," 158, 168 (Fort. 2292-101 and PF 1321).

[266] See ibid., 154-57, and Colburn, "Connectivity and Communication," 41-47. The Fortification Archive shows that such messengers travelled with a type of passport, a document that was issued by satraps and their deputies or by certain members of the royal family, which authorized them to travel from A to B, and to receive food

messengers travelled between Sardis in western Turkey and Persepolis in southwestern Iran in 495 – 494 BC suggests a connection to the Ionian revolt. The latter had begun in 499 BC at Miletos, spread to a large number of Greek city-states on the west coast, and eventually affected Sardis as well. According to Herodotus, the Empire responded in 494 BC with a large-scale military assault on Miletos (*Histories* 6.6-6.18). Though the tablets from the Fortification Archive do not explicitly refer to the rebellion, they suggest that the preparations for Artaphernes' assault against the rebels were communicated with Darius I.[267] In a similar vein, we may assume that the satraps of Achaemenid Egypt discussed their response to Egyptian rebellions with the Persian court, even if the king was not directly involved in the campaign(s). Tablets that document such communications have not been identified, but it is clear that they could have existed: at present, two texts are known that mention men who travelled from Pherendates ("Parindada"), who was satrap of Egypt during a large part of Darius I's reign, to the king. The texts are dated to March/April and April/May of 495 BC (year 27). One of the men is explicitly identified as *pirradaziš*.[268] Under ideal circumstances, the journey from Memphis to Persepolis may have taken about twelve days.[269]

Second, both the Persepolis Fortification Archive and the Persepolis Treasury Archive include tablets that document the presence of Egyptian laborers in and around Persepolis. About twenty-six attestations are presently known.[270] In most cases, the Egyptians are identified as dependent workers (*kurtaš*) or as craftsmen, such as goldsmiths, woodcarvers, and painters.

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rations at waystations; see Hyland, "Achaemenid Messenger Service," 156-57, and Henkelman, "Nakhthor in Persepolis," 199.

[267] See Hyland, "Achaemenid Messenger Service," 157-67. For a reconstruction of the Ionian revolt, see e.g. Murray, "Ionian Revolt," 480-90.

[268] See Hyland, "Achaemenid Messenger Service," 162-63, 168 (PF-NN 2472, PF-NN 1271) and Henkelman, "Nakhthor in Persepolis," 202. As mentioned above, the chronological scope of the Fortification Archive largely excludes the possibility of finding *pirradaziš* tablets that may be connected to the first two Egyptian rebellions, while the different nature of the Treasury Archive – focused as it is on laborers and craftsmen rather than people of a wide variety of professional backgrounds – largely excludes this for the second and third rebellions. As the majority of tablets are unpublished, however, it is possible that relevant texts will be identified in the future.

[269] See Colburn, "Connectivity and Communication," 46.

[270] See Henkelman, "Anhang," 273, and the journal entry cited in Henkelman, "Nakhthor in Persepolis," 201. For other possible attestations of Egyptians in southwestern Iran – some of whom may have lived there permanently – see Joannès, "Textes babyloniens de Suse," 173-80, Wasmuth, "Egyptians in Persia," 133, 136-40, Garrison and Ritner, "Seals with Egyptian Hieroglyphic Inscriptions," 1-58, Qahéri, "Premier témoignage," 1-24, Wasmuth, *Ägypto-persische Herrscher- und Herrschaftspräsentation*, 85-96, and Qahéri, *Objets égyptiens et égyptianisants*.

They were apparently transferred to southwestern Iran to work at royal building sites.[271] Some of these Egyptians travelled in relatively small groups. In month six of year twenty-four of Darius I (August/September 498 BC), seven Egyptian goldsmiths at Persepolis received 280 liters of flour as rations.[272] In year thirty-two (490/89 BC), fourteen Egyptian workers were each given three shekels of silver per month for a period of seven months. The workers were "building a palace" at Nupištaš, a palatial site that may have been located near modern-day Shiraz.[273] Other Egyptians travelled in much larger numbers. In year twenty-one of Darius I (500/501 BC), 547 Egyptian workers were travelling to Tamukkan, a palatial center on the Persian Gulf. On the way, they received 180 liters of wine.[274] In month four of year twenty-three (July/August 499 BC), 690 Egyptian stonemasons were likewise travelling to Tamukkan. They received 230 liters of wine.[275] Unlike some of the Babylonian texts discussed above, the migration of these groups of laborers cannot be directly connected to the aftermath of Persian military campaigns. Instead, they were part of a larger imperial policy, in which labor forces were drawn from all corners of the Empire – including, for example, Ionia, Cappadocia, Lycia, Arabia, Babylonia, Parthia, Bactria, and India – and redirected to the Achaemenid heartland.[276] The texts do show us a glimpse, however, of an aspect of Achaemenid rule of Egypt that is invisible in contemporary Egyptian sources. Though difficult to prove, it is conceivable that the (forced) migration which the Persepolitan archives document – provocatively called a "brain drain" by one scholar – will have contributed to animosity against Persian rule among the population of the Egyptian Delta and Nile Valley.[277]

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[271] See Henkelman, "Anhang," 273-363. At times, such groups included or consisted solely of women. See e.g. NN 1924, which mentions that twenty-three Egyptian women were escorted to Persepolis (ibid., 292-93).

[272] See ibid., 275-76 (Fort. 2293-101).

[273] See ibid., 278 l. 9, 283-84 (PT 02).

[274] See ibid., 291 (PF 1557).

[275] See Henkelman, "Anhang," 280-82 (NN 0480). For Tamukkan (Greek Taoke), see Henkelman, "From Gabae to Taoce," 303-16, and Henkelman, "Imperial Signature," 135-49. It has been suggested that Egyptians arrived at Tamukkan by boat, following a route that led from the Red Sea to the Persian Gulf; see Klotz, "Darius I and the Sabaeans," 276, and Klotz, "Persian Period," 5. Though certainly possible (see 4.3.1.2), the hypothesis is not directly supported by the archives from Persepolis, which indicate the use of a land rather than a sea route; see Henkelman, "Anhang," 278, Henkelman, "Nakhthor in Persepolis," 201, and the texts just cited.

[276] See e.g. Rollinger and Henkelman, "New Observations on 'Greeks,'" 331-43, Henkelman and Stolper, "Ethnic Identity and Ethnic Labelling," 271-329, and Henkelman, "Bactrians in Persepolis," 223-55.

[277] See Klotz, "Persian Period," 5: "The mass transport of skilled artisans and advisors to Persia may have led to a minor 'brain drain' in Egypt." See also Sternberg-el Hotabi, *Ägypter und Perser*, 37-42, 59-60.

*2.5.4 Achaemenid seals*

Aside from administrative texts that document activities in the imperial heartland, the tablets from Persepolis have also yielded a large corpus of Achaemenid sealings. Such sealings consist of seal impressions on administrative texts, as well as impressions on uninscribed pieces of clay.[278] It is clear that the objects which made these impressions belonged to a wide variety of individuals: both low-ranking administrators and members of the royal family used seals to e.g. authorize, or "sign," specific texts.[279] At present, more than 4000 distinct seals are known from the Persepolis archives, attested by many more individual seal impressions.[280] The size of the corpus can yield interesting insights in Achaemenid art history. It seems, for example, that the ahistorical style which characterized Achaemenid monumental art also dominated the glyptic corpus. The most popular scene by far was the so-called heroic encounter, in which a male hero held or battled with (mythical) animals (over 600 distinct seals).[281] A second popular motif consisted of animal combat scenes, in which a (mythical) animal attacked another (mythical) animal (over 600 distinct seals).[282] Both types of scenes are known from monumental wall reliefs at Persepolis, though the latter display less iconographical variety than the glyptic images.[283] Having said that, there is also a handful of seal impressions in the Persepolis archives that portrays combat between human figures. About eleven distinct seals are currently known: ca. six from the Fortification Archive, and ca. five from the Treasury and Mountain Fortification Archives.[284] The seals are part of ca. seventy-five distinct combat seals that are

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[278] See e.g. Garrison, "Seals and Sealing," 769.

[279] See ibid., 770, 773.

[280] See ibid., 772-76. The largest number by far stems from the Fortification Archive (ca. 4059 seals); small additions stem from the Treasury Archive (ca. 77 seals), and the Mountain Fortification Archive (at least 8 seals). The finds in the Treasury and the Mountain Fortification also include a handful of actual seals; see ibid., 776, and Schmidt, *Treasury of Persepolis*, 37-43.

[281] See Garrison, *Ritual Landscape*, 78, and Garrison and Root, *Images of Heroic Encounter*, 42-43. For the motif's occurrence in other Achaemenid seal corpora, see ibid., 54-56.

[282] See Garrison, *Ritual Landscape*, 78-79.

[283] See e.g. Garrison and Root, *Images of Heroic Encounter*, 56-60, and Sathe, "Lion-Bull Motifs," 75-78.

[284] For the combat seals from the Fortification Archive, see Garrison and Henkelman, "Seal of Prince Aršāma," 83-89, 91-93, 98-101, and Tuplin, "Sigillography and Soldiers," 389-90 no. 1, 391 no. 3, 397-98 no. 12, 437-38 no. 64. An additional six seals might portray combat, but are incompletely preserved; see ibid., 98 n. 94, 100-101. For the combat seals from the Treasury and Mountain Fortification Archives, see ibid., 89-91, 93-98, and Tuplin, "Sigillography and Soldiers," 396 no. 9, 407-8 nos. 21.3 and 22.1-2. In the case of ibid., 407-8 nos. 21.3 and 22.1-2, I follow Garrison and Henkelman, "Seal of Prince Aršāma,", 97 n. 89, in identifying the different seal

known from the Achaemenid Empire as a whole.[285] Though a comparatively small corpus, the combat scenes provide us with an exceptional glimpse of Achaemenid representations of military conflict that post-date Darius I's relief at mount Bisitun.[286] As some of them include representations of Egyptians, the corpus deserves a closer look.

The corpus of ca. seventy-five Achaemenid combat seals that are known to date includes cylinder seals, stamp seals, seal impressions on uninscribed clay labels, and seal impressions on cuneiform tablets.[287] Many of the seals are without provenance. Those with a recorded provenance stem from a variety of different regions, including – aside from Iran – Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Turkey and southern Russia.[288] The handful of seals that can be dated suggest that they were made from the early to the late Achaemenid period.[289] In keeping with this broad geographical and chronological horizon, the composition of the combat scenes varies considerably. Though the vast majority portrays a victor who can be identified as "Persian" on the basis of his clothing, and who shoots an arrow at or drives a weapon in a non-Persian adversary, this core image could be extended with a variety of additional motifs. Deceased soldiers could lie horizontally in the scene, for example, horses could be present, and palm trees, religious symbols, or inscriptions could be included.[290] For our present purposes, one

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impressions as the product of one seal, which appears to have been identical with a seal from the Treasury Archive (PTS 28).

[285] This number is based on the recently published catalogue of combat seals compiled by Tuplin, "Sigillography and Soldiers," 389-440. Note that latter lists sixty-seven distinct seals. Three of these (nos. 20-22) may instead be counted as one seal (see n. 284 above). On the other hand, one may add the "nine or ten other items that show or imply combat" mentioned by Tuplin, but which are excluded from the catalogue because none of the combatants appear to be Persian (see ibid., 337). One can also add PFUTS 0802, a combat seal from the Persepolis Fortification Archive, published by Garrison and Henkelman, "Seal of Prince Aršāma," 99-100. Whether one should include the famous combat seal from the Persepolis Fortification Archive that mentions Cyrus the Anshanite can be debated as its creation is thought to be pre-date the Persian Empire; see Garrison, "Seal of 'Kuraš the Anzanite,'" 375-405, and Tuplin, "Sigillography and Soldiers," 331, who excludes the item from the catalogue.

[286] See 2.3.2 above. It is important to observe that the number of Achaemenid combat seals is small in comparison with other Achaemenid motifs (such as the heroic encounter mentioned above), but substantial in comparison with the number of combat seals that are known from other periods in ancient Near Eastern history; see Tuplin, "Sigillography and Soldiers," 330 n. 3 for further references.

[287] See Tuplin, ibid., 341-42.

[288] See ibid., 340-41, and the find spots mentioned in the catalogue.

[289] See ibid., 331, and the dates mentioned in the catalogue.

[290] See ibid., 336-37, 342-59.

subcategory that should be highlighted are combat scenes that include one or more captive figures. Ca. ten examples are currently known.[291] A well-known specimen is PTS 28: the seal is attested by several impressions from the Persepolis Treasury and Mountain Fortification Archives, which are roughly dated to the reign of Xerxes, as well as from impressions of unknown provenance. Its scene depicts a standing figure in Persian court robe who drives a spear into the neck of a kneeling figure. The latter wears a plumed helmet and a round shield. Behind the Persian figure stand three captives – all with plumed helmets – , whose necks are tied together with rope. The defeated figures can be identified as Greeks on the basis of their outfits.[292] Two seals that portray Egyptians belong to this subcategory as well. Both consist of unprovenanced cylinder seals made from precious stone. They show a strong resemblance to PTS 28: the scenes include a palm tree and four captives in Egyptian dress whose hands appear to be tied behind their backs and whose necks are tied together with rope. In front of them, a figure in Persian court robe thrusts a spear into a kneeling fifth captive. The latter wears Egyptian dress and what appears to be an Egyptian double crown.[293] Another cylinder seal, allegedly found in the southeastern corner of the Crimea, shows a slightly different scene: it portrays a palm tree, three captives in Egyptian dress whose necks are tied together with rope, and a figure in Persian court robe who appears to lead them forward. The scene includes an Old Persian inscription that reads "I (am) Artaxerxes, (the) Great King."[294] As this third seal

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[291] See ibid., 345-46, 393-95 nos. 6-7, 397 no. 11, 403-11 nos. 17-25 (nos. 20-22 can be counted as one seal; see above).

[292] See ibid., 332-34, 405-8 nos. 20-22, and Garrison and Henkelman, "Seal of Prince Aršāma,", 97-98.

[293] See Stephani, "Erklärung einiger Kunstwerke," 81-82, pl. V nos. 8-9, Strelkov, "Moscow Artaxerxes Cylinder Seal," 20 fig. 3, Tuplin, "Sigillography and Soldiers," 404-5 nos. 18-19, and "Cylinder Seal and Modern Impression: Battle Scene with King, Soldiers, Enemy," Art Collection, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed December 21, 2021, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/327710 (= figure 6). Note that the Persian figure on both these seals and the seal discussed below has sometimes been identified with a Persian king, sometimes with a Persian general or hero - an identification based on whether or not one identifies their headgear as a royal crown; see e.g. Strelkov, "Moscow Artaxerxes Cylinder Seal," 17, 20, Wu, "'O Young Man,'" 249-50, and Wasmuth, *Ägypto-persische Herrscher- und Herrschaftspräsentation,* 205. However, figures with and without crowns appear to have functioned as a generic "Persian hero" in Achaemenid glyptic; see Garrison and Root, *Images of Heroic Encounter*, 56-58.

[294] See Strelkov, "Moscow Artaxerxes Cylinder Seal," 17 fig. 2, and Schmitt, *Altpersische Siegel-Inschriften*, 36-37. For an introduction to royal-name seals (which often belonged to non-royal individuals), see Garrison, "Royal-Name Seals," 67-104.

**Figure 6.** A broken cylinder seal shows a row of Egyptian prisoners, and a Persian figure spearing an Egyptian king. (Photo from https://images.metmuseum.org/CRDImages/an/original/DP-16934-022.jpg)

does not depict fighting, it is not strictly a "combat seal." It can instead be connected to seven other Achaemenid seals which focus on captives (of different ethnicities).[295] With or without combat, however, these Achaemenid "prisoner seals" are of particular interest because some of them invoke the row of bound rebel kings from the monumental relief at mount Bisitun.

In terms of interpretation, scholars of the Achaemenid Empire have sometimes connected the combat seals – as well as the non-combat prisoner seals – to specific historical events. It has been suggested that the seals were created to celebrate imperial victories in newly conquered regions, for example, and perhaps even to memorialize the specific role of a seal's owner in a successful military campaign.[296] In the case of the "Egyptian" seals, some scholars have argued that they were made in the aftermath of the Egyptian rebellion of the Bisitun crisis in the late sixth century BC, after Inaros' rebellion in the mid-fifth century BC, or after Artaxerxes III's

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[295] See Tuplin, "Sigillography and Soldiers," 331-32, 345 n. 36. See also Wu, "'O Young Man,'" 220-21, who includes such seals in her discussion of "warfare scenes," subdividing the latter into "ongoing scenes" and "aftermath scenes."

[296] For an elaborate discussion of the "historicity" of warfare images on seals, see Wu, "'O Young Man,'" 209-99.

reconquest of Egypt in the mid-fourth century BC.[297] The feasibility of such historical interpretations has recently been called into question, however. When one looks at the corpus of Achaemenid combat seals as a whole, it is clear that it is dominated by two specific groups. Aside from Persians and a few Egyptians, one finds soldiers that are portrayed in Greek attire on the one hand, and soldiers who can be connected to a variety of Central-Asian tribes on the other. Both groups lived at the (north)western and (north)eastern edges of the Achaemenid Empire. Combat seals that portray peoples from more central imperial regions – such as, for example, Babylonia – are absent.[298] As we know that Persian military activity was not restricted to the edges of their Empire, it is possible that the predominance of the periphery in Achaemenid glyptic is the result of ideology rather than political history. In the words of Christopher Tuplin, there appears to be "a deliberate message about the defense of imperial peace in the Empire's frontier-lands (…) the heartlands of the Empire are peaceful (as indeed they appear on the walls of Persepolis) and it is only at its edges that war is necessary."[299] In light of this, it is unclear whether the seals with Egyptian captives were produced in the direct aftermath of Persian victories in Egypt, or whether they were part of a more general iconographical program, which highlighted the (successful) Persian hold on regions that were considered to be imperial borderlands. Nevertheless, the fact that the violent subjection of Egyptians was a subject in Achaemenid glyptic at all remains noteworthy. At the very least, it suggests that Egypt was imagined by some inhabitants of the Achaemenid Empire as a space in which Persian military activity was necessary – and perhaps more prominent than in other satrapies. That the Egyptian rebellions of the sixth to fourth centuries BC will have played a role in that image is plausible.

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[297] See e.g. Colburn, "Spear of the Persian Man," 304-5, Strelkov, "Moscow Artaxerxes Cylinder Seal," 17-20, Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 214-15, and Wasmuth, *Ägypto-persische Herrscher- und Herrschaftspräsentation,* 205. It is important to note that the exact date of all three seals remains an open question. The uninscribed combat seals could have been made as early as the reign of Xerxes, for example (compare PTS 28 above). The non-combat seal, inscribed with the name of Artaxerxes, was evidently made during or after the reign of Artaxerxes I. Some arguments in favor of an attribution to Artaxerxes III can no longer be maintained, however. E.g. royal name seals with monolingual Old Persian inscriptions existed as early as the reign of Xerxes (see Garrison, "Royal-Name Seals," 86 n. 116, and Garrison, *Ritual Landscape*, 77, 374-75), and are not necessarily indicative of a late Achaemenid date (*pace* Strelkov, "Moscow Artaxerxes Cylinder Seal," 19, and Schmitt, *Altpersische Siegel-Inschriften*, 36-37).

[298] See Tuplin, "Sigillography and Soldiers," 336-37, 372-75, and Wu, "'O Young Man,'" 246-53.

[299] See Tuplin, "Sigillography and Soldiers," 387, and more elaborately ibid., 375-79.

## 2.6 Conclusion

The present chapter has shown that the rebellions of Achaemenid Egypt can be studied on the basis of Greco-Roman narrative texts as well as contemporary Greek inscriptions, Persian royal inscriptions, various textual and material sources from Egypt, and – more indirectly – on the basis of Achaemenid seals, and cuneiform tablets from Babylonia and Persia. As may be expected from such a diverse corpus, the information that the sources provide us with does not always overlap. It is therefore useful to summarize the main characteristics of the groups of sources outlined above. First, starting from the fifth century BC, Greco-Roman narrative texts sometimes provide us with references to Persian-Period Egyptian rebellions. According to these references, Egyptian rebellions occurred in the (early) reign of Darius I, at the end of Darius I's reign, at the beginning of Artaxerxes I's, and around the accession of Artaxerxes II (2.2.1-2.2.4). In addition, Egypt's last Saite king is said to have been executed for planning a rebellion shortly after Cambyses' conquest, and a handful of Egyptian and Libyan kings are said to have ruled parts of Egypt in the second half of the fifth century BC (2.2.1, 2.2.3). Aside from indicating when Egyptian rebellions would have occurred, Greco-Roman references also provide occasional information on the names of the (rebel) kings in question, the support they gained from Greek military forces, and how they were defeated. The sources suggest, for example, that some of the rebellions were only defeated after additional Persian military forces were sent to Egypt (2.2.1-2.2.2). At the same time, it is important to observe that Greco-Roman references to Egyptian rebellions were generally embedded in larger stories, few of which were focused on the history of Achaemenid Egypt, and most of which were written by people who lived outside of the Achaemenid Empire. In addition, many of the authors lived at a significant chronological remove from the events in question (2.1-2.2). Many of the references therefore provide us with little information on historical details, such as the origins of the rebel kings in question, or the rebellions' geographical spread in the Delta and Nile Valley. Only the stories about the Libyan rebel king Inaros of the mid-fifth century BC are a partial exception to this rule (2.2.2). Second, starting from the late sixth century BC, the royal inscriptions of Persian kings sometimes provide us with references to rebellions in and reconquests of the Empire's satrapies. In particular, the sources suggest that Egypt as well as a series of other provinces rebelled in ca. 521 BC, i.e. in the early reign of Darius I, and that a rebellion in an unidentified satrapy may have been quelled at the start of Xerxes' reign (2.3.1, 2.3.3-2.3.3.2). Inscriptions that postdate Xerxes' reign are much less forthcoming. This is in keeping with the general tendency of Persian royal inscriptions to omit references to political events (2.3.2.2). The

Bisitun inscription, which concerns rebellions at the start of Darius I's reign – including the Egyptian rebellion of ca. 521 BC – , is the most important exception to this rule: it provides us with the (throne) names of rebel kings, the geographical spread of their rebellions, when they rebelled and when they were defeated, how many soldiers were killed in battles, and even how some of the rebel kings were executed. Though the details of the Egyptian rebellion are not provided, the inscription gives us an invaluable glimpse of the way in which rebellions were dealt with according to a Persian king himself (2.3.1; see also 3.2-3.2.1.3). Third, Egyptian sources from the sixth to fourth centuries BC sometimes refer to non-Persian kings who ruled parts of Egypt, to rebels and rebellions, and to acts of violence and destruction that may have been political in nature. Based on Egyptian sources alone, it is not always easy to reconstruct the exact date of the events in question. Nevertheless, contemporary inscriptions, letters and contracts indicate that Egyptian kings ruled parts of Egypt in the early years of Persian rule, at the end of the reign of Darius I, in the mid-fifth century BC, around 400 BC, and during the short Second Persian Period in the fourth century BC. These sources not only give us the names and titles of such kings, but also allow for reconstructions of the geographical spread of their rule (2.4, 2.4.1.1-2.4.1.2, 2.4.2.1-2.4.2.2). In addition, the sources provide us with an occasional glimpse of violence that may have been connected to the rebellions, from the death of Egyptians on a Persian estate to the destruction of fortified border settlements (2.4.2.2, 2.4.3). Fourth, though generally less informative than the aforementioned groups, Greek inscriptions, cuneiform tablets from Babylonia and Persia, and Achaemenid seals occasionally provide us with additional data on the Egyptian revolts. For example, a handful of Greek inscriptions show that Inaros, leader of the Egyptian rebellion in the mid-fifth century BC, had gained military support from Athens and Samos (2.5.1). For their part, cuneiform tablets suggest that Babylonian soldiers were involved in an imperial campaign against Egypt in the early reign of Darius I (2.5.2). They also indicate that groups of Egyptian extraction were put to work in southern Iraq and southwestern Iran in the sixth to fifth centuries BC. Some of these Egyptians may have been captured as war booty, as has been suggested for an enslaved Egyptian woman who was sold in Babylonia in the early reign of Xerxes (2.5.2-2.5.3). In addition, a handful of images on Achaemenid seals show Egyptian prisoners bound with rope or speared to death. This further highlights the violence that would have occurred in Achaemenid Egypt, likely as a result of the rebellions and the (re-)invasions that followed (2.5.4).

To repeat, each group of sources that stands at our disposal provides us with a different perspective on Persian-Period Egyptian resistance. Each group also has its own merits and

limitations, which means that they are not always neatly complementary. One example is that Greco-Roman texts mention the names of several (rebel) kings who ruled in the second half of the fifth century BC (i.e. Amyrtaios I, Thannyras, Pausiris, Psamtik). Egyptian texts, on the other hand, mention the names of pharaohs who ruled in the late sixth, early to mid-fifth and fourth century BC (Petubastis IV, Psamtik IV, Khababash; compare section 2.2.3 with 2.4-2.4.2.1). The only kings whose names appear in both groups of texts are Inaros (mid-fifth century BC), and Amyrtaios II and Psamtik V (ca. 400 BC; compare 2.2.2 and 2.2.4 with 2.4.2.1-2.4.2.2). In addition, while Greco-Roman texts reveal little information about the rebellions of the late sixth and early fifth century BC, the only Persian royal inscriptions that (may) refer to revolts stem from the reigns of Darius I and Xerxes (compare 2.2.1 with 2.3.1, 2.3.3.1-2.3.3.2). Despite these differences – which can only be expected from such diverse corpora – , there are clear overlaps between the groups as well. These overlaps allow us to reconstruct the existence of Egyptian rebellions at several points in time with a high degree of probability. For example, the existence of the rebellion in the early reign of Darius I is indicated by Greco-Roman, Persian, Egyptian and Babylonian sources (2.2.1, 2.3.1, 2.3.3.1, 2.4.1.1, 2.5.2). Its historicity as well as its exact dates are more elaborately discussed in Chapter 3. The existence of the rebellion at the end of the reign of Darius I, which was defeated at the beginning of Xerxes' reign, is documented by Greek, Egyptian and possibly Babylonian sources (2.2.1, 2.4.1.2, 2.4.2.1, 2.5.2). This makes it plausible that the Daiva inscription from Xerxes' reign, which refers to unrest in an unidentified satrapy that was put down in Xerxes' early reign, may also have referred to this rebellion (2.3.3.2).[300] The rebellion is more elaborately discussed in Chapter 4. Later revolts are likewise documented by multiple source corpora: Inaros' rebellion is reflected in Greco-Roman texts, Greek inscriptions, and Egyptian sources (2.2.2, 2.5.1, 2.4.2.1-2.4.2.2); and Egypt's secession in ca. 400 BC is documented by Greco-Roman texts and Egyptian texts (2.4, 2.4.2.1-2.4.2.2). By contrast, when there is no overlap between the information in different corpora, our assessment of the events in question becomes more difficult. It is unclear, for example, whether Psamtik III's conspiracy during the reign of Cambyses – as mentioned by Herodotus – should be understood as a rebellion, and, if so, if the episode reflects historical reality (2.2.1). It is also unclear whether the kings who, according to Greco-Roman sources, ruled parts of Egypt in the second half of the fifth century BC were (all) historical figures, and whether they should be understood as the leaders of

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[300] As noted, such an interpretation does not exclude the possibility that the inscription was also read as a "timeless" statement on Xerxes' duties as king of the Persian Empire; see 2.3.3.2.

rebellions, or as (minor) kings whose rule was condoned by the Persian government (2.2.3). We likewise know little about the origins and reign of Khababash, a fourth century BC Egyptian king whose reign is only documented by Egyptian sources (2.4). It can only be hoped that future finds will solve some of the questions that these sources raise.

Putting the differences between and the uncertainties inherent in some of the sources to one side, it is important to highlight that the material as a whole suggests that the Egyptian revolts of the sixth to fourth centuries BC shared several characteristics. These can be summarized as follows. First, Greco-Roman and Egyptian texts, as well Greek inscriptions, indicate that many of the rebellions were led by or resulted in the installation of local (Libyo-)Egyptian kings (2.2.1-2.2.4, 2.4.1-2.4.2, 2.5.1). Egyptian sources show that the latter often claimed traditional Egyptian royal titles, such as pharaoh and King of Upper and Lower Egypt (2.4.1-2.4.2). This is compatible with the information provided by the Bisitun inscription and Babylonian cuneiform texts on non-Egyptian rebellions in the late sixth and early fifth centuries BC (2.3.1, 2.5.2). Second, the short periods of (partial) secession that resulted from the rebellions can be characterized in two different ways. On the one hand, hieroglyphic sources show that some of the rebel kings enjoyed sufficient stability and access to resources to create royal monuments (2.4.1). In addition, demotic texts suggest that life resumed its regular course quite quickly in some parts of the country, with the only difference being that the name in the date formulae of Egyptian contracts was changed from a Persian to an Egyptian one (2.4.2.1). On the other hand, the rebellions went hand in hand with violent conflict. Greco-Roman narratives, demotic and Aramaic texts, Greek inscriptions and Babylonian tablets indicate that there were armed clashes between people who supported the Persian Great Kings on the one hand and those who supported the local rebel kings on the other (2.2.1.-2.2.3, 2.4.2.1-2.4.2.2, 2.5.1-2.5.2). Comparable clashes are described by the Bisitun inscription (2.3.1). In addition, the Persian army was often assisted by additional imperial forces, which were sent to the rebellious province from other parts of the Empire – as suggested by Greco-Roman texts and, to a lesser extent, Babylonian tablets. The campaigns were coordinated by the Persian kings, though generally from afar (2.2.1-2.2.2, 2.5.2; compare 2.3.1). A handful of tablets from the Persepolis Fortification Archive show us a glimpse of the imperial communication network that would have facilitated such royal coordination (2.5.3). For their part, the rebel kings were sometimes assisted by forces from the Greek mainland and Aegean islands, whose leaders had an interest in destabilizing Persia's hold in the Mediterranean. This is clear from both Greco-Roman narratives and contemporary Greek inscriptions (2.2.2-2.2.3, 2.5.1). During these periods of

armed conflict, Greco-Roman narratives, Aramaic texts, Babylonian tablets and Achaemenid seals show that some inhabitants of Egypt retreated into fortresses, while others were killed or seized as war booty (2.2.2, 2.4.2.2, 2.5.2, 2.5.4). This is comparable with the descriptions of rebellions in the Bisitun inscription (2.3.1). Remains of some of the fortresses that may have served as havens for either imperial or rebel forces have been found in northeastern Egypt (2.4.3). Third and finally, though the Persians were not always successful in their attempts to reconquer Egypt, Achaemenid royal inscriptions, coins, and seals with combat imagery emphasized their continued claim to the Delta and Nile Valley, and that the Persian kings alone were the rightful pharaohs of Egypt (see 2.3.1, 2.3.3.1-2.3.3.3, 2.5.4).