

AN INTRODUCTION TO ARSHAMA

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What follows is an elaborated version of my presentation at the first workshop of the Arshama project on 20 November 2010 – some bits being very much more elaborated than others and almost nothing being the result of really systematic investigation. It is posted here as a slightly more permanent but still provisional introduction to the texts that provide us with access to the person of Arshama and to some of the historical questions that they poses – and as an invitation to correction, supplement and general engagement with the material.

1. DEFINING THE DOSSIER

At the heart of the present project is a set of documents conserved in the Bodleian Library. These constitute what might at least semi-technically be called the Arshama archive. But they are part of the larger set of texts that constitutes the Arshama dossier – that is, the totality of texts that certainly or possibly refer to the man. This dossier comprises 54 items drawn from three distinct contexts:

- Egypt: 38 items in three different languages
 - 35 in Aramaic: 26 form a single set from an unknown Egyptian site and 9 are from Elephantine
 - 2 in Demotic Egyptian: one is from Saqqara (Memphis), the other of unknown origin
 - 1 in Old Persian from an unknown site
- Babylonia: 13 items in Akkadian, 12 from Nippur, the other from an uncertain location.
- Greek literary tradition: three items, only one of which is of certain direct relevance.

I shall first list these items in slightly more detail, and then comment at greater length on the problems surrounding some items that are of problematic status.

EGYPT

Aramaic

Letters to or from Arshama¹

- TADE A6.3-6.16, D6.3-6.14. This is the Bodleian material and comprises 14 mostly well-preserved and 12 extremely fragmentary items. Subject: various (see below.) Date: undated.
 - A6.3: Arshama orders the punishment of eight slaves belonging to the father of his *pqyd* Psamshek
 - A6.4: Arshama orders the transfer of a land-grant to Psamshek
 - A6.5: Arshama issues an order about Kosakan (fragmentary)
 - A6.6: Arshama issues an order of obscure content (fragmentary)
 - A6.7: Arshama orders the release of thirteen Cilician slaves
 - A6.8: Arshama orders Armapiya to obey the bailiff Psamshek
 - A6.9: Arshama authorizes daily travel rations for Nakhthor and thirteen others

¹ In fact A6.14-16 are neither to nor from Arshama; but it seems senseless to separate them from the rest of the Bodleian set

- A6.10: Arshama instructs his *pqyd* Nakhthor to preserve and enhance his estate during a time of disturbance
- A6.11: Arshama authorizes assignment of a domain to Petosiri
- A6.12: Arshama authorizes rations for the sculptor Hinzani and his household personnel
- A6.13: Arshama tells his *pqyd* Nakhthor and other officials to ensure that Varuvahya's *pqyd* sends rent-income to Babylon
- A6.14: Varuvahya writes to Nakhthor and other officials on the issue dealt with in A6.13
- A6.15: Virafsha orders Nakhthor to hand over five Cilicians (in accordance with Arshama's instructions) and return misappropriated goods
- A6.16: Artahaya complains that Nakhthor has sent unwanted goods
- D6.3-6.14: these items are too fragmentary to yield continuous sense, though D6.7 is clearly related to A6.15.
- TADE A6.1. Subject: the sending of a "share" (*mnt*). Date: 6/11/427.
- TADE A6.2. Subject: boat repair. Date: 12/1/411.
- TADE A5.2. Subject: petition to anonymous "lord" (possibly but not certainly Arshama) about injustice. Date: after 416.

Documents referring to Arshama

- TADE A4.1. Subject: Passover regulations. Date: 419
- TADE A4.2. Subject: Report of conflict (of uncertain nature) and request for assistance. Date: undated.
- TADE A4.5. Subject: Petition to unknown addressee about temple-reconstruction. Date: 410 or later
- TADE A4.7 & 8. Subject: Petition to Bagohi about temple-reconstruction. Date: 25/11/407
- TADE A4.9. Subject: Memorandum of authorization of temple-reconstruction Date: after November 407
- TADE A4.10. Subject: Offer of payment in connection with temple-reconstruction, addressed to an anonymous "lord", possibly but not certainly Arshama. Date: after November 407

Demotic Egyptian

Documents referring to Arshama

- Saqqara S.H5-DP 434 [2355]. Published in Smith & Martin 2010, 31-39. Subject: Report of official or judicial proceedings of uncertain nature. Date: 24/1/435
- P.Mainz 17. Unpublished: see Vittmann 2010, 103-104. Subject: uncertain. Date: 429

Old Persian

Document referring to Arshama

- Inscribed perfume-holder lid. Published in Michaelides 1943, 96-97. The inscription reads *Ariyarša Aršamhya puça* (Ariyarša, son of Aršama). See below under *Problematic items*.

BABYLONIA

Documents referring to Arshama

- Twelve texts from the Murashu archive (Nippur)
 - (a) PBS 2/1 144-148, BE 10.130-1, (b) BE 10.132, (c) BE 9.1. Subject: leases of Arshama's livestock issued by his bailiff Enlil-suppe-muhur. Date: (a) various dates in 22/9/413-9/10/413 (8-25.6.11 Darius), (b) 24/6/411 (29.3.13 Darius), (c) 1/11/404 (28.7.1 Artaxerxes).²
 - EE 11 = Stolper 1985, 235-6 (without translation). Subject: Lease of grain-fields, including land from Arshama's estate. Date: 10/6/425 (10.3.40 Darius)
 - IMT 9 = Donbaz & Stolper 1997, 85 (without translation). Subject: Lease of property by Murashu. Date: 2/3/429 (15.12.35 Artaxerxes)
 - IMT 105 = Donbaz & Stolper 1997, 152-4. Subject: record of settlement of complaint brought by a servant of Arshama against the Murashu. Date: 20/3/423 (9.12. Acc. Darius)
- One non-Murashu text (also from Nippur)
 - TCL 13.203 = Moore 1935, 203. Subject: Division of land (Arshama mentioned in field border-definition). Date: 26/8/403-23/9/403 (x.6.2 Artaxerxes)

GREEK LITERARY TRADITION

Texts referring to Arshama

- Ctesias 688 F14(38). After the suppression of Inaros' revolt in Egypt, Megabyzus appointed (*kathistesi*) Sarsamas as satrap of Egypt. See below under *Problematic items*.
- Ctesias 688 F15(50). "Eventually Ochus got a large army and was likely to be king (*epidoxos en basileuein*). Then Arbarius (Sogdianus' *hippeon arkhon*) defected to Ochus; then Arxanes, the satrap of Egypt; then Artoxares the eunuch came from Armenia to Ochus". See below under *Problematic items*.
- Polyaeus 7.28.1. Arsames captures the city of Barca treacherously after a siege. See below under *Problematic items*.

Problematic Items

Apart from TADE 4.10 and 5.2, where an anonymous "lord" might or might not be Arshama (something about which little further comment seems possible at the moment), the items of problematic status are the Old Persian inscription from Egypt and, one way or another, *all* of the Greek literary texts.³

² Driver 1965, 89 is wrong to say that PBS 2/1 144 comes from 423 BC (1 Darius). Van Driel 1993, 247 n.66 reports that BE 10.132 may actually date from 29.2.13 Darius II, i.e. May, rather than June, 411.

³ For completeness' sake I note here that there is no reason to think that the undated but putatively pre-Ctesian "Arsames the Persian" who was born with teeth (Ctes.688 F72) has anything to do with Arshama. (The fragment is only doubtfully from Ctesias anyway.)

Ariyarša s. of Aršama

Michaelides wrongly read “Ariyarta, son of Artam”, citing the “Ariyawrata, son of Artames” in Posener 1936: nos. 27, 31, 33, 34. (The patronymic is actually *Rtamiša- [Tavernier 2007, 298] – i.e. Artamithres, not Artames.) One may suspect that Michaelides read what he wanted to see. There is certainly no doubt that the correct reading is *Ariyarša Aršamhya puça*, as Mayrhofer 1964, 87 noted (cf. Mayrhofer 1978, 33 §9.6).

For Mayrhofer, the item was plainly a valid piece of evidence about Persian onomastics, and he went on to wonder whether Ariyarša might be the son of *the* Arshama – an idea that Schmitt 2006, 80 was also happy to envisage. There certainly do not appear to be any independent dating criteria that might refute (or for that matter validate) the identification.⁴

Are there reasons to doubt the item’s authenticity? It is always a possibility with unprovenanced items; and the authenticity of a Darius alabastron published by Michaelides in the same article is questioned by Westenholz & Stolper 2002, 8 (n.10), on the grounds that the name of Darius has a superfluous word divider after it, suggesting that the inscription was created from a longer text by someone (a modern forger?) whose command of the writing system was imperfect – or who was just careless. By those standards, however, the Ariyarša inscription scores well, being composed in correct Old Persian and inscribed without obvious writing errors – worth noting, given that the name Ariyarša does not exist in, and so could not be copied from, the surviving corpus of OP documents. (“Son” and “of Aršama”, by contrast, could be lifted from e.g. the opening of DB.)⁵

More troubling is whether we should expect an Old Persian text of this sort. The discovery of an Old Persian text in the Persepolis Fortification archive (Stolper & Tavernier 2007) means it is not strictly true that written Old Persian is confined to royal contexts. But that document may still be *exceptio quae probat regulam*: whatever motivated its scribe to try out Old Persian script on an administrative text, doing it in the special and in a way private environment of a government office, may tell us little about behaviour elsewhere. The suggestion has been made that the perfume jar was a votive offering. Was that an appropriate reason for someone who *might* have been the son of an Achaemenid prince to find a suitably skilled scribe to make his Old Persian mark for him? Perhaps he was even making a point in *not* having it labelled in hieroglyphic Egyptian. Or is this all a little out of proportion for a humble perfume jar?

The fact remains that inauthenticity cannot be proved. Nor can the identity of this Aršama with the Egyptian satrap. But I suppose that one must say it is still a possibility.

⁴ By contrast Tavernier 2007 does not register Michaelides’ perfume-holder lid: it does not appear s.v. Aršama (pp. 13,44) or s.v. *Aryavrata- (p.117) or s.v. *Rtama- (p.297), and the name Ariyarša is not listed at all. But this is a consequence of the way in which Tavernier’s lexicon works (see 2007, 5-6). He is only interested in OP words/names for which a rendering survives in some language(s) other than Old Persian or Greek. That is not true of Ariyarša; and, although it is true of Aršama-, the authentic OP form of that name is supplied by a royal inscription, rendering any evidence from Michaelides’ item superfluous. (In effect royal inscriptions are treated as the sole valid source for authentic OP names and words. This arises because the corpus of potentially authentic OP texts is almost exactly coterminous with that of royal inscriptions.) Dr Tavernier has kindly confirmed his agreement with Mayrhofer’s etymological interpretation of the name Ariyarša.

⁵ Another inscribed item in Michaelides 1943, a bull with the (Akkadian) name Mi-it-ri-AD-u-a = *Miθrabua-, was thought a forgery by Zadok 2004, 116, but is defended by Tavernier 2007, 472.

Sarsamas and Arxanes, satraps of Egypt

We have two statements, both from Ctesias.

- After suppressing the revolt of Inaros, Megabyzos made Sarsamas satrap of Egypt
- During the disorders after the death of Artaxerxes I, the satrap of Egypt, Arxanes, sided with the eventual victor, Darius II

The second item belongs in 424-423, squarely in the period for which Arshama's link with Egypt is attested, and it seems plain that Arxanes must be Arshama – even though the Greek form is entirely unexpected and is one for which Schmitt 2006, 78 cannot supply an explanation.

The first item takes us, on conventional chronology, to 454 and, on the recent non-conventional view of Kahn 2008, to 458/7, and it gives us a Greek form that is recognisably close to what would be predicted for Arshama.⁶ But there are problems. One is that one of MSS of Photius (the source for the relevant Ctesias fragment) gives the name as *Sartaman*, suggesting the satrap was really called Artames.⁷ Another is that, if we read *Sarsaman* and identify the man with Arshama, the latter was Egyptian satrap for at least 47 years (454-407).⁸ A third is that, whether we read *Sarsaman* or *Sartaman*, the fact that the name is not *Arxanen* might suggest that Ctesias did not think the two individuals were the same; since *Arxanen* must be Arshama, *Sarsaman/Sartaman* must be someone else.⁹

The choice between *Sartaman* and *Sarsaman* is probably an open one: although editors have tended to take the view that, *ceteris paribus*, A is the better manuscript, it is not obvious that, where A and M offer equally good (or bad) readings, there should be any particular prejudice in favour of one or other reading. In theory we have a free choice between Artames and Arsames, and the issue has to be resolved by other means.

Any argument from dissimilarity between “Arxanes” and either Artames or Arsames probably gets us no further forward with the choice between the latter. If “Arxanes” is Arshama and the earlier satrap has to be someone different (since otherwise Ctesias would have called him Arxanes as well), that earlier satrap's name could still just as well have been (in Ctesias' view) Arsames as Artames. But does the earlier satrap have to be someone different?

The question is affected by the fact that *Arxanes* cannot be explained as a legitimate, if unusual, rendering of OP Aršama- and (apparently) admits of no explanation as the legitimate rendering of any Persian name.¹⁰ If Ctesias offered two distinct real Persian names there would be no problem in the first place. Instead his MSS offer two putatively Persian names, one

⁶ Schmitt 2006, 78 attributes the aberrant initial “s” to “Lautzuwachs [infolge falsche Worttrennung]”. Or perhaps it is straightforward textual error: a copyist's eye momentarily strayed to the start of the previous word, *satrapen*, before returning to *Arsaman*.)

⁷ This is the reading in M. *Sarsaman* is found in A.

⁸ Bigwood 1976, 9 n.30 found this improbable; in her view “Sarsamas” was Arshama, but it was not true that he became satrap as early as the 450s. The implication is that Ctesias has falsely backdated the tenure of the individual whom he knew as satrap of Egypt at the time of his direct experience of the Persian court – which arguably is odd if he really thought the name of the latter was Arxanes.

⁹ Lewis 1958 was hesitant about Sarsamas being Arsames, feeling that even Ctesias ought to have stuck to one name-form, but in the end left the matter open. (For the purpose of an argument focused on events in the 410s, of course, it did not matter.)

¹⁰ I am inferring this from the silence of Schmitt 2006, 78, and the point does require further investigation.

certainly textually corrupt (and of uncertain restoration), the other partly or wholly aberrant. It may be no less likely that the two passages offer different failed attempts at the *same* name as failed attempts at different names – and the fact that the two attempts produce broadly rather similar results inevitably (if, some might say, illogically) tempts one to the former conclusion.

But, even if we decided that Ctesias' original text referred to Arsamas/Artamas and Arxanes (the latter actually representing OP Aršama-), should we assume they are actually different people? We might concede that Ctesias *thought* they were different people (or to put it less positively) did not think that they were the same person -- the point being that the names arguably came to him by different source-routes (one source about the 450s, the other about the 420s) and that he thought no further about the possibility that a single individual might be involved.¹¹ In other words, we should not be concerned with what Ctesias thought but simply find the best interpretation we can of separate bits of data for which he is merely the channel.

If so, the only remaining issue that has a bearing on the choice between *Sarsaman* and *Sartaman* is that to choose the first invites the conclusion that a single Arsames/Arshama was satrap for 47 years or more.¹² Is there any compelling reason to rule this out? Arshama is a "son of the house" (*bar bayta*) – conventionally glossed to mean royal prince -- and bears the name of Darius' grandfather¹³ and of Darius' son by his favourite wife Artystone, a figure known independently from the Fortification archive¹⁴. Another royal prince (Cyrus, son of Darius II) was appointed to a politically complex provincial position in his mid teens. Admittedly he was the actual son of the king; but perhaps Arshama was sufficiently well-connected to the core Achaemenid family to be sent to Egypt at an age which makes his survival in post until the century's final decade not too disturbing, especially as some members of the Achaemenid family did live to a ripe old age.¹⁵ The satrap of Egypt immediately before the revolt (and since the 480s) had been Xerxes' brother Achaemenes. Continuation of a close (if not *quite* so close) royal link with the post might be perfectly natural in the circumstances.¹⁶

I think, therefore, that we *can* in good conscience opt for *Sarsaman*, emend it to *Arsaman* and identify the individual with *our* Arshama. But if a dated document from the 440s

¹¹ This is in effect the reverse of Bigwood's position (cf. n.8).

¹² It does not, of course, compel the conclusion, since there *could* be more than one Egyptian satrap called Arsames/Arshama, whether immediately consecutively or not. But if one were going to believe that one might as well believe that the satrap appointed in the 450s was called Artames.

¹³ This Arsames is often identified with the father of Parnaka (PFS 16* = Garrison & Root 2001, 92-94 (no.22)), making the latter Darius' uncle.

¹⁴ PF 733, 734, 2035; also PF 309 and PFNN-0958. Aelian fr.46 (cf. Suda s.v. *theoklutesantes*) rather oddly postulates a *daughter* of Darius called Arsames. (The story concerns the resistance of Cyzicene virgins to being sent as *xenia* to this person.) – Much later one of Artaxerxes II's children was called Arsames (Plut.*Artox.*30), as was the son of his brother (and father of Darius III).

¹⁵ Darius, Artaxerxes I and II. Note also that Darius' grandfather was alive when Darius became king.

¹⁶ Ctesias is represented by Photius as saying that Megabyzus put in place (*kathistes*) Arsames (Sarsamas) as satrap. That is surely shorthand for establishing in post someone who had, of course, been selected by the King, but tells us nothing further about Arsames' age or status at the time.

were to turn up in which the Egyptian satrap was called Artames, we could not claim to be surprised.

Arsames and Barca

In Polyaeus' story Arsames is conducting a siege of Barca. He then makes a deal with Barcan ambassadors (sending his *dexia* as a token of trustworthiness) and lifts the siege. Barcan *arkhontes* come to discuss an alliance (and are lavishly entertained), while the general Barcan populace leaves the city to buy food from a specially created *agora*. A signal is then given and Arsames' troops seize the gates and loot the city, killing any who resist.

There are at least three possible views of the date of the story and the identity of "Arsames".

(1) In Herodotus 4.167,200-202 a Persian army (under Amasis and Badres) captured Barca towards the end of the 510s through a trick centring around a meeting at which oaths are sworn by Persians and Barcans. All the details are very different,¹⁷ but Persian treachery is a common feature between this and Polyaeus' story. Perhaps for this reason, Briant 1996b, 498 = 2002, 482 takes it that Polyaeus' story is an alternative version of Herodotus' and that his Arsames is identical with Herodotus' Amasis. Since Herodotus calls Amasis a Maraphian – meaning that he is apparently an Iranian – Briant takes it that we have a case of double nomination, Arsames having taken the Egyptian name Amasis, in the same way that e.g. Ariyavrata took the name Djedhor = Tachos (Posener 1936, no.33).¹⁸

(2) The prospective alliance involves *basilei koinonesai tes epi ten Hellada strateias kai pempein autoi ten ton harmaton boetheian*. The natural immediate reaction is to take this as a reference to Xerxes' expedition. One can then see trouble in Cyrenaica as a side-effect of the revolt in Egypt which was suppressed early in Xerxes' reign, and put the Barca incident in the later 480s.¹⁹ Since Achaemenes became satrap straight after the Egyptian revolt, Arsames would be operating as his subordinate commander (as Amasis and Badres were the subordinates of Aryandes in Herodotus IV). An alternative version of the same general approach would be to identify the prospective campaign as the one that Darius was planning at the end of his reign. On that view trouble in Cyrenaica was the background to, rather than a side-effect, of the Egyptian revolt, and Arsames could theoretically be satrap (since Pherendates is not attested in that role after 492) – though there would still be no necessity to suppose that that was so.

(3) Others have located the story in the period after "Sarsamas" = Arshama became satrap of Egypt: on this view, which goes back to Wachsmuth 1879, the prospective campaign against Greece is explained by reference to Persian forces with which Cimon came into conflict in the Levant in the early 440s (Diodorus 12.3): the idea is presumably that Cimon's final campaign was a pre-emptive operation against Persian preparations for a new attempt to re-enter the Aegean and undo the effects of Xerxes' defeat. Meanwhile, trouble in Cyrenaica will be (as on Chamoux's view) part of the aftermath of an Egyptian rebellion – an aftermath that in this case also included troublesome behaviour from Amyrtaeus, an Egyptian prince holed up somewhere in the Delta (or so it is normally supposed).

The advantage for the first explanation is that it ties the event to a known event involving Persians and Barcans and avoids the multiplication of entities. One would not, of

¹⁷ Wachsmuth 1879, 157: "nichts weniger als alles verschieden ist".

¹⁸ Driver 1965, 96 prefers to postulate a simple confusion of "Amasis" and "Arsames".

¹⁹ Chamoux 1953, 164-165, opting specifically for 483. Chamoux claims that this coheres with numismatic evidence. I do not know whether this has any real independent force.

course, worry so much about that multiplication except for the highly generic but still real link between the Polyaeus and Herodotus stories. Two stories about Persians capturing Barca might not be a problem. Two stories about a capture that turn on treacherous oath-swearing are somewhat more worrying. The inclination to think that this is the historiographical tradition playing with alternative versions of the same event is quite strong.

The *prima facie* disadvantage of the first explanation is the link to a putative forthcoming royal expedition against Greece, since it is not immediately obvious that such an expedition is available at the relevant juncture. A similar disadvantage affects the third explanation, since it is at the very least a matter of interpretation to turn the data in Diodorus 12.3 into *he epi ten Hellada strateia*. By contrast, this is the great advantage for the second explanation. The planned royal expedition against Greece (which is the only element in the story that might fix its relation to anything outside Barca) can be linked to known examples of the phenomenon involving Darius or Xerxes. Since planned royal campaigns against Greece are not something that we should not duplicate recklessly, this is a strong argument in favour of locating the story in the 480s.²⁰ Is it a decisive argument?

In the case of the third explanation we do at least have evidence for a major troop agglomeration. Can we rule out the possibility that some strand in the Greek historical tradition about the situation between Persia and Greece around 450 BC (a tradition now represented for us by very selective narratives in Thucydides, Diodorus and Plutarch) originally included a clear belief that Persian forces were being mobilized for a Greek campaign? One part of the historical tradition did believe that (at a somewhat earlier date) the exiled Themistocles was supposed to have been promoting preparations for a new attack; and some modern historians have believed the battle at the Eurymedon pre-empted an expedition that was already under way.

In the case of the first explanation we should need to envisage that Polyaeus drew (ultimately) on a source that believed Darius was planning a more or less immediate continuation of the advance into European Greece begun by Megabyzus' Thracian campaign; and, since that campaign was contemporary with the operations of Amasis and Badres in Cyrenaica, one might even say that it is rather neat that there should be talk of what the Barcans could do to help with the next stage of Greek operations. The problem, of course, is that the next stage of operations against Greece did not come until the Naxian campaign over a decade later. So the question is whether it is legitimate to postulate a (non-Herodotean) tradition that Darius originally planned an invasion of central/southern Greece to happen perhaps as early as 510 simply on the basis of Polyaeus 7.28.1. One view would be that the historical location of the Polyaeus passage is too uncertain for it to underpin what might look like a rather significant adjustment of historical understanding. Another view would be that our direct knowledge of non-Herodotean traditions about the later sixth century is too poor for us to rule anything out, that it is worrying that what Herodotus says about Persian interest in peninsular Greece at this stage breaks off with a highly suspect story about relations with Macedonia, and that, if there was a break in the continuity of imperial expansion (especially in the west) after c.512, the fact that it turned out to have lasted a good decade does not have to mean that it was planned from the outset

²⁰

An additional consideration pointing in the same direction might be that Polyaeus speaks specifically of the Barcaeans providing chariots for the royal campaign. That is, frankly, historically implausible in any context, but, as chariots are a feature of the Libyan contribution to Xerxes' army in Hdt.7.84,186, one might slightly suspect that Polyaeus' ultimate source thought he was dealing with that historical context.

to last that long. These considerations are perhaps powerful enough to keep the first explanation of Polyaeus 7.28.1 in play.

For the present purposes it is, of course, the status of the third explanation that matters most: if we accept it, we stand to get another piece of information about Arshama. The only additional and distinctive claim it has to acceptance is that – just as the first explanation has the advantage of linking Polyaeus with an already known event in Barca – so this third explanation has the potential advantage of linking it to an appropriately named individual already known in an Egyptian context as the holder of a position of power. But it is debatable whether the individually debatable cases of Ctesias' Sarsamas/Sartamas and Polyaeus' Arsames can be used to support one another. And it has to be noted that the association between the name Arsames and the occupation of a position of power in Egypt is not actually a unique characteristic of the Arshama in whom we are interested.

In Aeschylus *Persians* we hear of an *arkhon* of Memphis called Arsames who was in Xerxes' invasion force (37) and learn that he was one of those who died at Salamis (308). It is tempting to compare this with the fact that Darius' son Arsames (Xerxes' half-brother) appears in the Herodotean army list as commander of the Arabians and the (African) Ethiopians ("the Ethiopians above Egypt") – not an Egyptian commander, indeed, but at least one associated with Africa.²¹ Links between the named Persian commanders of the *Persae* and Herodotus are generally fairly slim.²² We might, of course, regard this one as mere (near-)coincidence. But we might alternatively take it seriously as an indication that in the 470s Athenians had reason specifically to link the name of Arsames with the Egyptian sector of the empire; and, if we did that, we might say that Aeschylus provided some indirect support to the second explanation of the Polyaeus story, which puts a prominent Arsames in Egypt in the 480s. This is not a particularly strong argument, but its existence does do a bit to undermine the second explanation. One may add that, even leaving Aeschylus aside, we might identify an Arsames in Cyrenaica in the 480s with Darius' son, especially on Chamoux's version of the second explanation: the idea that two sons of Darius and brothers of the new king (Achaemenes and Arsames) were co-operating in the ongoing task of restoring order to the empire's North African possessions has a certain charm, especially when one recalls that the King himself (yet another son of Darius) had personally participated in the original campaign of recovery.

In sum: I do not think we can exclude the possibility that the young Arshama conducted a campaign in Cyrenaica – and demonstrated himself to be a worthy successor to Amasis and Badres and predecessor of Tissaphernes. But there are plainly other possibilities that also cannot be wholly excluded.²³

²¹ Aeschylus' Arsames is regularly identified with Darius' son: see Balcer 1993, 107, 174, Broadhead 1960, 43, 318; Garvie 2009, 60–61

²² Relatively few Aeschylean names recur in Herodotus anyway. Others that recur in the army list display no geographical links: thus Ariomardus, also associated with Egypt in Aeschylus, is the name of men commanding troops from Anatolia or Iran in Herodotus.

²³ For the sake of completeness I note that the Arsames of Polyaeus 7.28.2, a rebel against the king active in Phrygia, cannot – despite what Polyaeus may have thought – reasonably be thought to have anything to do with Arshama. Driver 1965, 96 assigned the story to the context of Darius II's succession, but there really is no ground to think that those events spilled over into central Anatolia. The story is more likely to belong to the "Satraps' Revolt" era (and Wachsmuth 1879 suggested, in effect, that it was a doublet of a story about Datames).

2. THE EGYPTIAN DOSSIER: SOME FURTHER COMMENTS

The documents from Egypt form the largest sub-section of the Arshama dossier and deserve some further introductory contextualising comment.

(1) They represent, of course, a tiny proportion of the material from Egypt in Aramaic and demotic Egyptian (not to mention material in hieroglyphic Egyptian and in other non-Egyptian languages – Greek, Carian, Phoenician).

The set of (putatively) Achaemenid era Aramaic texts consists of over 600 in the *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt*,²⁴ 166 in Segal 1983 that are not in *TADE*, 316 new items from the Clermont-Ganneau collection in Lozachmeur 2006, and a few other scattered pieces, e.g. six fragments from Saqqara published in Lemaire & Chauveau 2008 (which include references to judges, provincial scribes and a storehouse described with a Persian loanword), the Aramaic texts written in demotic script in P.Amherst 63 (not fully published) and a number of other unpublished texts in the lists on trismegistos.org. This material is by no means entirely epistolary or documentary, as it includes e.g. the remnants of the Aramaic version of the Behistun text (C2.1), a version of the Words of Ahikar (C1.1), a fragment from an Egyptian story (C1.2) and material from a variety of contexts/genres in *TADE* IV.

The context of other Egyptian demotic material is less easy to quantify and assess. The listing in trismegistos.org suggests that over 450 items may date to the Achaemenid era, but much of this has never been published and there is no convenient even-partial *corpus* to correspond to *TADE*. As with Aramaic texts, the material is mixed in character: alongside purely private business documents (including, among more recent discoveries, the numerous ostraca from Ain Manawir illustrating the agricultural exploitation of an oasis area in the Western Desert) there are official letters, a mixed bag of tantalising remnants from a possible administrative archive in Saqqara (this is the immediate context of the document that refers to Arshama), the immense petition of Peteesis in P.Rylands 9 (about allegedly sinister goings-on in Teuzoi stretching back from Darius' reign deep into the Saite era) and some items directly linked with Achaemenid rulers – Cambyses' decree about temple-revenues or Darius' order for the compilation of an Egyptian law book.

(2) The Egyptian dossier material is not homogeneous and can be subdivided in various ways, some fairly straightforward – provenance (Elephantine, Saqqara, unknown) or relation to Arshama (author or recipient of letters; referent within texts of other origin) – some deserving a little more preliminary comment.

Date Nine documents carry dates, with an outer range of 435-407. (The upper *terminus* has only recently been definitively pushed back to 435 by publication of the demotic Egyptian document.) By contrast none of the Bodleian documents contains any explicit dates at all.²⁵ One's initial inclination might be to respond to their (alleged) discovery together in a single bag by assigning them a relatively small time-frame. But they seem to embrace both the start and end of Psamshek's tenure as Arshama's bailiff,²⁶ so – unless he only lasted an unexpectedly short time -- the rationale of the collection is likely

²⁴ *TADE* contains 617 items, but some of these are pre- or post-Achaemenid in date. (For these purposes "Achaemenid era" embraces 525-332, i.e. includes the fourth century period of Egyptian autonomy.)

²⁵ For possibly datable references within the texts cf. below.

²⁶ Start: 6.4. In 6.3 he is not called *pqyd* but simply "servant", and Artavant's authorisation is required for the punishment of slaves ordered by Psamshek to be carried out. End: 6.9?; and certainly implied in 6.10.

to be subject-matter, not date. Certainly, whatever precise order they are printed in, the documents seem to tell a story about successive bailiffs (Psamshek: A6.3-8; also mentioned in A6.15; Nakhthor A6.9-16) and – perhaps – the contrast between them. Arguably they represent an extract from the archives of the office of *pqyd*, but who made the extract and why can only be a matter of speculation.²⁷ If the documents by reason of selection have themselves become a (sub-)archive, one might as justifiably call it Nakhthor's archive as Arshama's.

Type of content. There is, in principle, a division between what might be called public and private spheres. In the first category are the items from Elephantine and Saqqara: the Passover letter (A4.1), the letters about the destruction and rebuilding of the Elephantine Jewish Temple (A4.5, A4.7/8, A4.9-10) and other items of miscellaneous and not always very clear import (A4.2, A6.1-2; S.H5-DP 434) – among which the letter authorizing repairs to a boat (A6.2) is perhaps the most immediately appealing. These are the texts that give a glimpse of a satrap's duties; it is also here that we find references to other types of official in the local levels of the imperial system (A6.1, A6.2, A4.5, A5.5, S.H5-DP 434) – including some outside the Egyptian satrapy (Bagohi and Sanballat the governors, *phh*, of Judah and Samaria in A4.7/8). One official in A6.1 has a title, *azdakara* (herald), that is not otherwise encountered until a Hellenistic era document from Babylonia – a situation one might almost call characteristic of the whimsical survival of data about the Achaemenid imperial system. In the other category are the Bodleian documents in which the common thread is provided by Arshama's Egyptian estates and the activities of his bailiffs Ahhapi (A6.3-4), Psamshek (A6.3-8) and Nakhthor (A6.9-16). The extremely scrappy bits-and-pieces in D6.3-14 – whose contents in general terms fit nicely with those of the well-preserved items²⁸ – also include fragments of a letter from someone to his sister, one disjointed part of which contains the words “from Arshama” (D6.13). The sister's name, Eswere ('swry), is not Iranian but Egyptian (“Isis is great”).²⁹ The initial excited thought that this might be evidence for a female member of a Persian family with a Egyptian name (and thus a direct or indirect sign of inter-marriage or acculturation) should probably be resisted. Certainly one might equally well imagine that the archive of documents included a letter from one of the Egyptian *pqyds* to his sister – which would be almost equally interesting. But the public/private divide is not entirely hermetic. In A6.8 Arshama instructs Armapiya and his *hyl* (military force) to obey instructions from the *pqyd* Psamshek. Assuming (a) that *hyl* has to designate a body of *military* men and (b) that soldiers always count as part of the public sphere, this letter illuminates a cross-over between the public and private sphere – and perhaps, indeed, reveals that some individuals in the former were resistant to such cross-over. There are also in other letters some allusions to disturbance or revolt which may take

²⁷ Driver's order was 6.5, 6.4, 6.3, 6.8, 6.7, 6.9-16 – i.e. he had the Nakhthor letters just as Porten does but treated the Psamshek ones differently. Putting 6.5 first is presumably connected with Driver's idea that Kosakan was Psamshek's predecessor. 6.3 and 6.4 both refer to both Psamshek and Psamshek's father; it is perhaps an arbitrary matter which to put first. (6.6 was fragment 5 in Driver and therefore out of sequence. We now know that it relates to Nakhthor, not Psamshek: cf. TADAE IV at pp. 135, 150.) Porten presumably puts 6.7 before 6.8 because its addressee is Artavant (like 6.3-6.6), whereas 6.8 is addressed to Armapiya. Driver presumably puts 6.8 before 6.7 because 6.8 names Psamshek and 6.7 does not.

²⁸ Some of the same names recur (Psamshek, Nakhthor, Rashta, Virafsha; D6.7 is plainly related to the same issue as A6.15; and D6.8 deals with “household personnel” as does A6.11.

²⁹ Grelot 1972, 475. The name (written there as Isiwari) also occurs in A2.7 and B5.5.

into the public sphere, even if the letters in question are in the first instance about the implications of public matters for the affairs of a private estate. (On these allusions see further below.) In general terms, of course, when the “private” estate-holder is also the satrap, then (irrespective of whether he has the estate *because* he is satrap) the distinction between public and private is liable to be blurred. Something similar seems to be observable in the correspondence of Akhvamazda in Bactria.

Formal features and issues of style Various features of the way in which content is expressed in the documents are a legitimate object of interest.

Seven of the letters have formal “signatures”. In A6.2 we have “Anani the scribe is *b’l tm*, Nabuaqab wrote [sc. the document]”. In A6.8-13 we have a signature in the form “PN¹ knows this order; PN² is the scribe”. Both of these have some resemblance not only to one another but also to colophons in Aramaic letters from Bactria, a demotic Egyptian letter from Elephantine and the Elamite letters in the Fortification archive. The meaning of the Elamite colophons and their implications for bureaucratic process and linguistic interchange have been much discussed, most recently by Tavernier 2008, 64-74.³⁰ All I wish to comment on here is the fact that the presence of such signature-formulae in both an official letter about boat-repair (A6.2) and a series of letters from the estate-related archive represents another type of blurring of the private/public distinction. The process for validating instructions and giving them the written form of a letter-order (in a given language) was in some degree the same whatever the sphere to which the instructions related. The question does, of course, then arise why such signatures are absent when Arshama writes to Artavant (6.3-7) and Varuvahya, Virafsha and Artahaya write to Nakhthor (A6.14-16). Is it precluded by the facts that (a) Artavant is of relatively high status (if this is a fact) and (b) the other authors are not writing to Nakhthor as his line-manager but merely as external interested parties (albeit higher status ones)?

The varying differences of status between addressors and addressees may also in principle have what are broadly speaking stylistic implications. It is, for example, easily observed that the “greetings of welfare and strength” which Arshama extends to Artavant are absent in his letters to Nakhthor, Armapiya and the various officials in A6.9, absent when Varuvahya and Virafsha write to Nakhthor – but present when Artahaya writes to him. If Artahaya is the same man who figures as the one who “knows this order” in A6.10-13 he is certainly of a lower status than Arshama, Varuvahya and Virafsha and may feel the need or propriety of being polite to Arshama’s *pyd* more keenly than others. (The case is particularly interesting since, on Porten’s restoration of the text, Artahaya is complaining about Nakhthor’s conduct.³¹) Those who have noted the “*severité étonnante*” (Shaked 2003) with which the presumed Bactrian satrap Akhvamazda writes to Bagavant, *pht* of the city of Khulm, may wish to compare and contrast the cases of Arshama, who threatens Nakhthor with a “harsh word” in A6.10, but otherwise adopts a measured tone, or Virafsha who seems to have much to complain of in Nakhthor’s behaviour but stylistically speaking keeps his cool (A6.15). Driver 1965, 12 remarked that the style of A6.2 (the boat-repair text) was “closely similar” to that of Bodleian items of which Arshama is the author (A6.3-13), though I do not know he elaborated on this anywhere and the observation is primarily adduced as an argument for identifying to two Arshamas. Whether the judgment is

³⁰ This discussion does not fully embrace the Bactrian Aramaic material which is imperfectly available in the absence of proper publication. But available information reveals at least the following formulae: “PN knows this order”, “PN the scribe knows this order” and “PN is *b’l tm*”.

³¹ In Driver’s version he was thanking Nakhthor for doing things right.

obviously true may be debatable. It is certainly a question to which the Arshama project should devote some attention.

3. ARSHAMA: FRAGMENTS OF BIOGRAPHY

What primarily characterizes Arshama is that he was a royal prince, satrap of Egypt, and an estate-holder in both Egypt and Babylonia. (It is actually this last characteristic that generates the bulk of the items that constitute the dossier -- 39 from the total of 54.)

Arshama the “prince”

The Aramaic term rendered a “prince” is *bar bayta*, literally “son of the house”. The designation is applied to Arshama in the external address line of three letters of which he is the addressor (A6.3 A6.4, A6.7) and in the inscription on his seal (D14.6). Use of the title in documentary contexts is not standard: Arshama’s name normally appears unadorned by this or any title (unless the respectful use of “lord” counts as a title, which is arguable).³² Its confinement to the address line (not in the body of the text) of three letters sent to Artavant struck Driver as a mark of the relatively *high* status of the recipient. The nature of Artavant’s position (and therefore status) is an issue in its own right but, unlike other addressees of Arshama’s letters to individuals, he was at least a fellow-Iranian.³³ What is implied is a slightly paradoxical etiquette (or should one call it rhetoric) in which the title expressive of Arshama’s special status is *not* used when addressing foreigners of necessarily inferior standing – it is as though no justification or mitigation of alien power is deemed necessary when dealing with such people, whereas certain niceties apply within the Iranian community. But more thought is probably required about these matters.

Arshama is not the only *bar bayta* encountered in dossier: Arshama describes Varuvahya (another estate-holder in Egypt) as *bar bayta* in A6.13,³⁴ and D6.7 (as restored) gives the title to Virafsha (the author of A6.15). Nor do these Aramaic texts exhaust the record of “sons of the house” in Achaemenid historical sources.

Elsewhere in Egyptian documentation an Old Persian term of exactly similar meaning, *vis(a)puhra*, survives in Egyptian demotic form in an undated document (CG 31174) containing the phrase “house of the prince”. This must, we are told, refer literally to a house (i.e. a building) and not, as one might be tempted to think, a prince’s “estate”.³⁵ The fact that the document also refers to the “tax of Ptah”, “Ahmose the administrator of Hardai” (i.e. Cynopolis), the “house of Pharaoh” (i.e. the royal treasury) and scribes and judges associated with a nome only makes the situation more tantalising. But, of course, there is no particular reason to think that it has anything to do with Arshama.

Elsewhere in the empire the exact Akkadian equivalent of *bar bayta* (É.DUMU = *mar biti*) is used of Arshama himself in BE 9.1. It is also applied to at least 10 other individuals in the

³² It is certainly not confined to Persian grandees. For example, the anonymous writer of A4.2 employs the term when addressing Jedaniah, Mauziah and Uriah. In Demotic we find *hrj Prs* (Persian lord) used e.g. of Ariyawrata.

³³ Other letters from Arshama to Artavant in which the title does not appear are letters in which no external address line is preserved.

³⁴ Not necessarily inconsistent with the suggestion that Varuvahya was a son or other relative of Arshama (Driver 1965, 14).

³⁵ Vittmann 1991/2. The demotic word for “house” used here cannot apparently double for “estate” in the way that Aramaic *byt* or Greek *oikos* might. Further information about the document’s contents comes from a translation presented by Günter Vittmann to the third workshop.

Murashu archive (Zadok 1977: 109-111),³⁶ and perhaps to an eleventh (Bammuš = OP *Bamuš in IMT 105). Moreover, the fact that Arshama receives the title in only one of the 13 documents that name him (nine of which, moreover, are of identical transactional character) is a warning that there are probably more “sons of the house” in the Babylonian documentation than we can now recognize.³⁷ Some of the individuals to whom the title is given can, like Arshama himself, be recognised from other sources as men of satrapal or comparable status: we seem to be dealing with the imperial elite.

Moving on to the imperial heartland, the Persepolis Fortification archive provides an anonymous groups of “sons of the house” (*mispušašpe*, an Elamite version of OP *vis(a)puthra*) in PF 1793 (“the horses and mules of the King and of the princes at Karakušan”), as well as use of the word as a proper name (PF 1197; PFNN 0669). But named individuals whom we can recognize as members of the royal family characteristically appear without any title expressive of that relationship – at least if they are male. Royal women are occasionally designated as *dukšiš* = OP **duxčiš* or “king’s daughter”³⁸

“Son of the house” is, therefore, well-established a term of art for certain very high status Persians, attested in a range of different places and in Old Persian, Elamite, Akkadian, Aramaic and demotic Egyptian forms. It stands to reason that the “house” in question is the royal one, and this is actually explicit in at least one Babylonian text, in which Manuštanu (Menostanes) is described as *mar biti šarri*, “son of the King’s house” (BE 9.84 = TuM 2/3 202). It is a natural, and perhaps correct, assumption that “sons of the (royal) house” are members of the royal family. But there is a little more to be said before we affirm that conclusion – and then start debating how close a relative of the King one had to be to be a “son of the house”.

For the fact is that the Aramaic and Akkadian forms of the term also have a wider application. In the witness lists in four Elephantine documents (B3.11-13, B4.6) we find *bar bayta* used of a man called Nahum. He is plainly nothing to do with the Achaemenid royal family, though there is no contextual evidence to establish his precise status.³⁹ More helpfully the Murashu archive contains many allusions to at least thirteen different men who are labelled as the *mar biti* of another named individual. The bearers of the title (who may have either Iranian or Babylonian names) clearly function as important agents of the

³⁶ Ah’banuš (*Haxibanuš), Artahšar (*Rtaxšara; Artoxares), Arbareme / Armareme (*Arbareva; Arbarios), Arrišitu (*Ršita; Arsites), Artareme (*Rtareva), Dadaršu (*Dadarši), Ipradatu (*Fradata), Manuštanu (*Manuššana; Menostanes), Neba’mardu (*Nebavarda), Situnu (*Stuna). I have excluded Dundana’ (*Davantana) from the list drawn up by Zadok, since he was actually simply the *mar biti* of Tattannu (this is clear in BE 10.89, though in BE 10.82 “of Tattammu” seems to be omitted). At least once we find *mar biti šarri* (“son of the royal house”: BE 9.84 = TuM 2/3 202, of Manuštanu). Dandamaev 1992, 158 describes one Amisri as a princess, but the presumed identification with Amestris is doubtful (Stolper 1985, 66; Tavernier 2007, 104) and she is never given any title that establishes her royal status. The anonymous “woman of the palace” whose property is mentioned in BE 9.28,50 perhaps did have that status.

³⁷ A similar phenomenon applies to those of the other eleven who are mentioned more than once.

³⁸ *Dukšiš*: PF 823, 1795, PFa 31, PFNN 812, Fort.6764. King’s daughter: PFa 5 (the wife of Mardonius).

³⁹ Kraeling 1953, 255-256 suggests we are dealing with a adopted house-born slave. (He lacks a patronym.) Porten 1968, 230 doubts a slave would witness a document and sees him as “some official whose function eludes us”—while noting the important *mar biti* of the Murašu documents discussed immediately below.

individuals whose *mar biti* they are said to be – individuals who themselves may have Iranian or Babylonian names and who sometimes have significant titles of their own (*mašennu*; *ustabaru*). There are also documents which imply that important individuals (one of the Murashu in three cases;⁴⁰ Persians in two others⁴¹) characteristically have an entourage of *mar bitis*, servants and commissioned agents – people who can be accused of the violent misappropriation of other people's property. In this body of material, then, *mar biti* designates individuals of privileged status in the environment of men who wield significant economic and social power but are certainly not kings and do not even have to be Iranians.

The *mar biti* as putative “prince” thus simply represents a special case of the phenomenon, one in which the household happens to be that of the king. Further questions then arise. First, which type of case has priority? Is talk of the *mar biti* of a non-royal individual a secondary imitation of the royal environment or was a terminology for close associates of the king transferred from originally less august surroundings? If it is true that *mar biti* terminology has no relevant earlier history in Babylonia (and it appears to be absent even in earlier Achaemenid period texts),⁴² the natural presumption must be that it enters Akkadian under Persian influence; and the role played by *vis* (“house”) in Persian royal inscriptions would certainly be consistent with the idea that “son of the *vis*” was an established Persian term of art.⁴³ If so, the model of the King and his “sons of the house” was extended to the entourages of (necessarily) less powerful men – an extension that was presumably conscious and evidently attracted no adverse reaction from the royal establishment. Secondly, what type of personal relationship is entailed by *mar biti*? In the extended use of the term there is no obvious reason to postulate a genetic relationship between *mar biti* and principal and it is natural to take “son of the house” as meaning little more than “member of the household”, “son” being a metaphorical indication of privilege.⁴⁴ Could that be the case with a royal **vis(a)puthra* or *mar biti* or *bar bayta*?

One's natural inclination is probably to think not, but I am not sure that it is easy to prove the point. I make five observations.

(1) Of the individuals designated *mar biti*, Artarius (Artareme) and Menostanes (Manuštanu) were respectively brother and nephew of Artaxerxes I (and so perhaps son and grandson of Xerxes⁴⁵). But Arsites (Arrišittu) is probably not Darius II's brother,⁴⁶ the

⁴⁰ BE 9.69, BE 10.9, IMT 105 (Enlil-šum-iddin). See further below, p.31.

⁴¹ BE 10.9 (Bagadata), TuM 2.3 204 (Artareme – who is a *mar biti* in the other sense).

⁴² *Mar biti* is used as the designation of a deity, the first born son of a temple god (and can be the theophoric element in personal names). CAD cites little evidence about this: Dar.378, YOS 3.62 and TCL 9.117 are all late Babylonian (and might all be Achaemenid) but the text in Weidner 1933/34, 98-100 is of Neo-Assyrian date. The phenomenon needs further investigation.

⁴³ Perhaps its mutation into a personal name could be pleaded in support of this as well.

⁴⁴ Other *mar* + noun terms display a metaphorical use of “son”: *mar bani* = citizen, free man; *mar damqa* (of uncertain meaning); **mar damqi* = soldier; *mar ekalli* = courtier (“son of the palace”, rather like *bar bayta* if one thinks of *bayta* as a building, but not if one thinks of it as a family) ; *mar sipri* = messenger; *mar ikkari* = farmer; *mar ištari* = worshipper of a goddess

⁴⁵ Theoretically, of course, Artarius and Artaxerxes might only have shared a mother. -- A distinct OP term did exist for a king's son, **vas(a)puthra*, attested only in the Akkadian calque of its adjectival form (*umasupitru*) twice used in the title of an estate in Nippur otherwise written with the sumerogram DUMU.LUGAL = *mar šarri*. This is

identification of Ahiabanuš as a Haxamaniš (Achaemenes) and so bearer of a name appropriate to the royal family is uncertain (*Haxiyabanuš / *Haxibanuš is an available alternative (Tavernier 2007, 200), and of the other six (including, of course, Arshama) we have no direct and relevant information,⁴⁷ except that Artoxares was allegedly a Paphlagonian eunuch: that is hardly consonant with membership of the royal family and may come close to proving that the status of *mar biti* can be conferred on those who are not the king's real relatives.

(2) The metaphorical use of “son” (*mari*) to designate members of a group that is not (solely) genetically defined has parallels in Akkadian. But if the stimulus for *mar biti* is Persian the question is whether such metaphorical use is characteristic of that language, a question that I do not currently know how to answer. But since our primary interest is in **vis(a)puhra* much will also depend on the force of *vis*. Considering that question will also require consideration of the fact that Greeks evidently believed the “house (*oikos*) of the king” to be a significant Achaemenid Persian concept.

(3) The case of Artoxares immediately makes one think of claims that Greco-Roman sources use the terms *sungenes* or *cognatus* to designate as “relatives” of the king privileged people who were in origin nothing of the sort. So that is a phenomenon that requires investigation.

(4) If there was nothing to call a royal son who not the eldest and/or the heir apparent except “son of the house”, perhaps that points to that term being at any rate firmly genetically limited. But in a polygamous environment that can still be a rather large pool of only rather distantly mutually related individuals. Perhaps, indeed, the reason for a distinctive word for the crown prince (n.45) is precisely that there are so many princes – and so many that introduction into the class of others who are not related to the royal lineage at all is unproblematic.

(5) Apart from individual “sons of the house”, the Arshama dossier includes an interesting anonymous use of the term. In A4.7 the writer expresses the wish that Bagohi should enjoy a thousand-fold increase in favour before “King Darius and the sons of the house”. The implication that a specially designated collective group around the king played a role in the individual Jewish subject's understanding of Achaemenid power is quite striking. For one thing there is the dilution of the King's special position. We are very ready to succumb to the influence of Greek constructions of the King as the only free man in a world of slaves or the King's own construction of himself as a uniquely larger-than-life beneficiary of divine favour. The resulting picture of the King as isolated source of power is undoubtedly one strand of the truth, but it is not the only one. But for the present purposes the interest is different. When we do acknowledge that the King worked amidst and through an elite class, we are prone to view that elite primarily as Persian rather than as royal, and this despite, for example, the high proportion of military commanders in the Herodotean Army List who are

conventionally rendered “crown prince” (presumably with an implied reference to the putative heir apparent) because of the force of the cognate MP *vaspuhr*. What other sons of the king would have been called (apart from “son of the house”, which must have applied to them too, if not very distinctively) we do not know.

⁴⁶ To believe otherwise would require some complex special explanations of a Ctesian narrative that implies he had rebelled and been eliminated long before 417 BC when he was still alive according to TuM 2/3 190, PBS 2/1 137).

⁴⁷ If Ahiabanuš is an Achaemenes and of royal status, then his son Ipradata (Phradates) will, of course, share that status. Of Arbarius (Arbareme) we know that he was Sogdianus' cavalry commander and defected to Darius. But that says nothing of his family relationships.

relatives of the king -- a telling fact, whatever the precise status of that text. This is probably because, taken as a whole, the Greek tradition does not routinely categorize top men in the imperial system simply as close members the king's family. So the question is whether the phrasing of A4.7 should be understood as speaking of the "King and the royal princes" and constitutes a corrective to that impression⁴⁸ or whether it is not, after all, so very different from speaking of the king and his court.

To return to Arshama: the normal response to *bar bayta* ("prince") makes him a relative of the king whereas the alternative (perhaps "privileged courtier") neither precludes nor demands such a supposition. If the nexus of arguments around Sarsamas, Arxanes and Arshama rehearsed above is resolved in favour of a half-century tenure of the Egyptian satrapy, that will be a powerful incentive in favour positing royal status – and perhaps a place in the stemma quite close to the heart of the family. It is theoretically possible that he was the papponymically named grandson of Arsames, the son of Darius and Artystone. Since Arsames was probably born no earlier than c. 520,⁴⁹ he can only have a grandson born in 475 or earlier if both he and his own son or daughter produced children relatively young, but we have no evidence about elite Persian marital or sexual behaviour that makes that particularly implausible. On that scenario, if Arshama really became satrap of Egypt after the mid-century revolt, a son of Darius (Achaemenes – killed at the start of the revolt) was succeeded by a great-grandson of Darius. But this is plainly mere speculation.⁵⁰

Arshama the satrap

One thing that Arshama is never called is "satrap". He is "Arshama who is in Egypt" (A6.1, A6.2) or (extremely tantalisingly) "Arsames who is in Egypt as [...]" (P.Mainz 17)⁵¹ or "lord" or (as we have seen) "son of the house". This is unremarkable. The term "satrap" is far from omnipresent even in Greek sources and decidedly rare in Persian and the other non-Greek languages of the empire. (It does not occur, for example, in the Bactrian Aramaic letters, leaving us strictly speaking unsure of the status of Akhvamazda.) In Egypt a demotic version of the word appears on a Saqqara ostrakon (S.75/6-7:2), apparently in reference to the Petisis of Arrian 3.5.2,⁵² and in the text on the *verso* of the Demotic Chronicle that recounts Darius'

⁴⁸ Ezra 7.23, where it is said that it is necessary to behave in the right way to the God of heaven "lest there be wrath against the king and his sons" may point in this direction.

⁴⁹ This is on the assumption that Darius acquired Artystone, Cyrus' daughter, as wife as part of the legitimization process following his accession.

⁵⁰ Driver 1965, 93 suggested that Arshama might have been the *son* (not grandson) of the son of Darius and Artystone. But, whereas the argument from papponymy provides a reason for speculatively connecting Arshama with Darius' homonymous son, Driver's suggestion is, by comparison, an arbitrary speculation. The same goes for his other suggestion, that Arshama was the son of Achaemenes. – I note in passing that it has been suggested that the Achaemenes who *may* appear in Murashu texts might be grandson of the satrap of Egypt.

⁵¹ It is preceded by a regnal date (year 36 of, presumably, Artaxerxes I), producing an effect resembling the Mylasan inscription SIG³ 167 = Tod 138, the Lydian (funerary?) text in Gusmani & Akkan 2004 (starting with the 17th year of Artaxerxes and the satrap Rhosaces) and the Aramaic version of the Xanthos trilingual (FX vi 136; the Greek and Lycian versions omit the regnal date).

⁵² The belief that it occurs in S.H5-450 (cf. Tavernier 2007, 436) must be abandoned: cf. Smith & Martin 2010, 51-53. The correct reading is Hšsry (? = OP *Xšačariya, a personal name).

commissioning of a collection of Egyptian laws, but otherwise (apparent) holders of the office are referred to as “to whom Egypt is entrusted” (P.Berlin 13539-13540) or “lord of Egypt” (P.Rylands IX 2.17) or (perhaps) “the great one who ruled Egypt”.⁵³ The low incidence of official use of the title might have some bearing on the sparseness of its use in Greek sources before the fourth century.

As we have seen the date of his appointment as satrap is only known (as some date in the 450s) if we make the appropriate decision about *Sarsaman* in Ctesias 688 F14(38) – as I think that in the present state of the evidence we legitimately can. The latest date at which we know him to have been satrap is 407. Persian control of Egypt collapsed not long after that date (Persian regnal dates continue at Elephantine and Ain Manawir until 402 or 401; Manethonic calculations implied a somewhat earlier start from the XXVIIIth dynasty). The precise circumstances elude us, as does identity of the satrap at the time – though the economical assumption is that it was still Arshama. If so, he held the office for some half-century, right in the middle of the Persian imperial era, but right at the end of the first and, as it would prove, longer period of continuous Persian rule over Egypt: for the autonomy recovered at the end of the fifth century lasted for some six decades until 343, and the second Persian domination would then last a mere decade – and even then be marred, if not entirely broken, by the rule of Chababash in the early 330s.

The absent satrap

Direct documentary reflection of Arshama’s activity *as satrap* is confined to the letters and memorandum about the temple affray in Elephantine and four or five other disconnected items. I shall say a little bit more about some of this material later on. First, we should confront a different aspect of his tenure of the satrapy, viz. his absence from Egypt.

We know from A4.5 and A4.7-8 that he left Egypt between 17/4/410 (the start of Darius’ 14th regnal year) and July 410 (the date of the incident in Elephantine). He was certainly back in Egypt by the time of A4.9, but that still leaves some room for uncertainty.

A4.9 is the memorandum of a decision by Bagohi for which the *terminus ante quem non* is 25/11/407, the date on which a letter was sent to Bagohi requesting his intervention. But we cannot tell how long elapsed between November 407 and the taking of that decision, and it quite likely that A4.9 only establishes that Arshama was in his satrapy by some date in 406.⁵⁴

Nor is this the only uncertainty. It seems generally to be assumed that the writing of A4.7-8 presupposes that the satrap is absent, that being why Jedaniah and his colleagues address themselves to the governor of Judah and the sons of the governor of Samaria. But is that necessarily so?

The normal view is in part dependent on the final sentence of the letter: Arshama “did not know about this which was done to us at all” (A4.7) or “did not know [about this], any (of it) which was done to us” (A4.8). The immediate reaction that this implies that Arshama was completely out of the picture (and therefore not in Egypt) is understandable. But the situation does seem odd. Wherever Arshama was now or had been since early summer 410, one would naturally assume that Jedaniah and his colleagues had sought to inform him of what had happened. (By this stage they had had over three years to do so.) One infers, therefore, *either* that, contrary to the natural assumption, they really had made

⁵³ Such, at least, is Menu’s understanding of this phrase in one of its occurrences in the Wn-nfr = Onnophris stela: cf. Menu 2008, 157.

⁵⁴ Driver 1965, 9 said that this document “implies, even if it does not prove, that [Arshama] is back in Egypt”. But the co-presence of the words “in Egypt” and “before Arshama” seem to make the situation clear.

no effort to contact the satrap or that the sentence is a polite way of saying that, although Arshama did actually know about the temple issue, he had shown no interest in intervening.⁵⁵ The latter possibility has no really compelling implications for Arshama's whereabouts: he could ignore Jewish letters wherever he was, and to assume that he more likely to do so when absent from Egypt is to beg the question. The former possibility only has implications if one believes the Jews treated Arshama's absence from Egypt as an unarguably cogent reason for not even attempting a (written) appeal for intervention. Why they might take that view is hard to say. We know nothing independently of the reasons for Arshama's departure.⁵⁶ Both in A4.5 and A4.7 we are told not just that he left Egypt but that he "went to the King". Nothing special *has* to be read into that: on the face of it "the King" is simply a destination, substituted for a geographical name because the King did, after all, move from place to place.⁵⁷ Of course, if the letter's authors knew that there was something special about the nature of Arshama's summons to court – something that might preclude interest in a local issue affecting the garrison in Elephantine – they might well not allude to it here: "when Arshama went to the King" *might* be loaded with overtones. But, if we wish to feel at all sure that Arshama was still outside Egypt on or around 25/11/407, we shall need to formulate some thoughts about what those overtones might be. Can "go to the king" be tantamount to ceasing temporarily to be satrap of Egypt? But, if so, the Jews should have petitioned whoever had temporarily taken over the position – something there is no positive ground for supposing they had done.⁵⁸

It should also be stressed that the mere fact that Jedaniah's letter is addressed to authorities outside Egypt and suggests that a letter from Bagohi is all that is needed to authorize the rebuilding actually gets us no further with the current problem: the Jews can be petitioning the authorities in Judah and Samaria either because Arshama is in fact totally out of the picture or because he has chosen not to respond to petitions addressed to him. The outcome of the present petition was that the support of Bagohi and Delaiah for a rebuild was to be reported before Arshama (A4.9). The conventional view presumably has it that he chanced to reappear in Egypt in the interim and therefore had to come back into the frame. But perhaps he had been there all along (or at any rate was already back by late 407), and the point of the petition to Judah/Samaria was simply to find a way to get his attention. It is, after all, a little hard to see how the goodwill of governors in Judah and Samaria could ever by itself have resulted in a new state of affairs in Elephantine. Jedaniah and his colleagues may flatter Bagohi by suggesting otherwise, but a letter saying the temple should be re-built (or a memorandum for someone to announce this opinion) could only turn into an official authorisation with the intervention of some version of the satrapal administration – intervention from the satrap himself or someone in Egypt authorized to act on his behalf.

Some doubt remains, then, about the length of the trip "to the king" that began in early summer 410. But it is certain that Arshama was away from Egypt for some period of

⁵⁵ A4.7:17-19 notes that earlier letters to Bagohi and others had received no reply. The same might be true of letters to Arshama.

⁵⁶ There will be some further speculative comment later about the possible context.

⁵⁷ It recalls the terminology of Q-texts in the Persepolis Fortification archive, where we read of travellers that they "carried a sealed document of so-and-so and went to the King (*sunkikka paraš*)". But the terminology can be used in relation to other destination figures, of course, including Parnaka, Ziššawiš, Irdubama, Karkiš, Bakabana, Irtuppiya, Mišmina and Mašana.

⁵⁸ A4.7/8 refers to earlier unanswered letters to people in Judah but not to a petition to a temporary Egyptian satrap.

time. What other signs are there in the dossier of absence, whether on this or other occasions?

In the case of A4.1 (419), A4.2 (undated) and the two demotic texts (435 and 429 respectively) – documents that simply refer to Arshama -- and A6.1 (427), A6.2 (411) – letters written respectively to and by Arshama -- there is no obvious reason to suppose that the satrap is anywhere but in Egypt. In the case of the letters in particular addressor(s) and addressee(s) are plausibly in different parts of Egypt. A6.2 is written by Arshama to an Egyptian boatman who is most naturally assumed to be in Elephantine. In A6.1 a large group of officials, including some who are scribes of provinces (presumably sub-divisions of Egypt) write to Arshama. Both letters would make sense if Arshama was in e.g. Memphis at the time. Admittedly we probably cannot prove that he was. In both letters the address-line includes a description of Arshama as “who is in Egypt”. But that would still be consistent with his being outside the satrapy if the phrase were construed as a title, virtually equivalent to “to whom Egypt is entrusted” or (as we might say) “satrap of Egypt”; and it may be that such an understanding makes good sense even if Arshama is *not* outside the satrapy, particularly in A6.1, where people are writing to him from elsewhere inside Egypt and the phrase might seem superfluous if regarded just as (so to say) a postal address. So Arshama’s whereabouts are strictly speaking a matter of speculation. But, to re-iterate, nothing in these documents invites the supposition that he is away from the satrapy, and I do not think that anyone has ever suggested otherwise.

But the question has been raised arise with the Bodleian documents. One has to be careful here. All letters entail some distance between writer and recipient, and (as has just been noted) letters can be sent between different places in the satrapy. So there have to be plain additional indications of a substantial distance separating Arshama from Egypt, and Driver’s reliance upon the address-lines of letters written by Arshama to recipients who are “in (Lower) Egypt” as proof of the satrap’s absence from the satrapy may be questionable.

There are two documents that do locate Arshama in Babylon. In A6.13 it is fairly certain that both Arshama and Varuvahya were in Babylon when Arshama wrote to Nakhthor instructing him to assist in recovering dues owed to Varuvahya from his Egyptian estates.⁵⁹ (The companion letters, A6.14, confirms that Varuvahya was in Babylon, but adds nothing about Arshama). A6.15 also places Arshama in Babylon but this time we cannot strictly speaking be sure that he was still there when Virafsha wrote thence to Nakhthor.

Both A6.13 and A6.15 have external address-lines which describe the letter’s recipient(s) as “in Egypt”. In these cases, then, that description does match (as it happens) a substantive geographical distance between addressor and addressee. Can we extrapolate from this to other formally parallel cases?

A6.13 is one of three letters from “Arshama to Nakhthor the *pqyd*, Kenzasirma and his colleagues the accountants who are in Egypt”. In A6.11 there is nothing else to indicate Arshama’s whereabouts.⁶⁰ In A6.12 things are rather more complicated. The letter orders

⁵⁹ This case, incidentally, establishes that the presence of a demotic annotation (the name Hotephep) does not guarantee composition in Egypt. Such annotations also appear on A6.11 (“about the fields of Pamun which I have given to Petosiri”) and A6.12 (“Hotephep”).

⁶⁰ Whitehead 1975, 81 claimed that *bgw* (literally “within”; translated as “therein” in Porten & Yardeni) in A6.11:2 indicates that Arshama was outside Egypt. His ground for saying this is that the logical antecedent of the word *bgw* is “Egypt” (in the phrase “when there was unrest in Egypt...”). But, even if that be so, it is not entirely clear that anything follows about Arshama’s whereabouts, since this part of the

the disbursement of rations to Hinzani the “sculptor”. Previously Hinzani had been in Susa (whither he had been brought by Bagasrava, a subordinate of Arshama’s attested in a different role in A6.8 and A6.9),⁶¹ but that trip is now evidently over and he is back in Egypt, since that is where the rations are to be disbursed. An instruction is also issued that the statue of horse-and-rider and the other statues that Hinzani is to make should be brought to Arshama as soon as possible. Arshama is therefore somewhere remote from wherever Hinzani lives and works in Egypt. Many readers assume that he is in Susa, but it is not a certain inference. Arshama may have been there when Hinzani was brought to the city. But Hinzani is now back in Egypt and Arshama might have gone any number of places in the meantime; and, especially if we insist that “whom Bagasrava brought to Susa, that one” is there for identification purposes (to pick Hinzani out from the other artist-*grd* in Arshama’s employ), those places could theoretically include Egypt. Such a conclusion is only ruled out if we start by assuming that an address to officials “who are in Egypt” implies that the addressor is in another part of the world. As with “Arshama who is in Egypt” the alternative, of course, is to ascribe the phrase a primarily titular, not topographic, force.

In A6.15 Virafsha wrote from Babylon to “Nakhthor the *pqyd* who is in Egypt”. This evokes two types of parallel case.

In A6.10 Arshama writes to Nakhthor “the *pqyd* who is in Lower Egypt” and some contrast is implied between what Arshama has heard at his current location (“here”) and the situation of “officials who are in Lower Egypt” (which is what he has been hearing about). This certainly implies Arshama is not actually on his Lower Egyptian estates (wherever they may have been) but requires no other conclusion about his whereabouts: he could in theory be in the satrapal residence in Memphis.

The other parallel does not involve Nakhthor, *Lower Egypt* or an explicit title. This comes from two letters sent by “Arshama, son of the house, to Artavant who is in Egypt” (A6.3, A6.7) -- part of a set of five to the same recipient (spelled Artahant on one occasion), of which the others are less well preserved and lack surviving address lines. The substance of these letters (as distinct from the address-line) contains little that pushes towards any particular conclusion as to Arshama’s whereabouts. All we can tell is that Arshama and Artavant are remote enough from one another for letters to be necessary, that (in A6.3) Arshama’s *pqyd* Psamshek has recently travelled to Arshama and then back to the vicinity of Artavant (perhaps carrying the letter in question), and that the involvement of Artavant was necessary to execute orders from Arshama involving the punishment of slaves (explicitly [6.3] or implicitly [6.7]) and the assignment of domains (6.4).⁶²

What we make of the situation is very much tied up with what we make of the status of Artavant.

One argument might run like this. Artavant has no title (such as *pqyd* or accountant). This makes it harder to use the titular explanation of “who is in Egypt” in order to justify a scenario in which Arshama is *not* absent from Egypt. To be more precise: the description “who is in Egypt” might serve as a quasi-title for the satrap (as we have already seen), but Artavant is not (on the face of it) the satrap. So *either* the description

letter is actually quoting Pamun’s message to Arshama. When the substance of that message is repeated in Arshama’s voice (prefacing a statement of his decision on the matter) in A6.11:4-5 *bgw* is absent.

⁶¹ Seals in use in the Persepolis region that combine Persepolitan style with Egyptian hieroglyphic inscription (Garrison & Ritner 2010) in a way mirror the combination of Egypt and heartland sites represented by Hinzani’s journey – if one thinks (as many have) that Hinzani the “sculptor” was actually a seal-cutter.

⁶² A.6.5-6 are about domains too, but too fragmentary for a clear narrative to emerge.

marks the distinctive geographical fact that he is in Egypt, whereas the addressor (Arshama) is not or it is quasi-titular after all, indicates that Artavant is (so to say) “acting satrap” and therefore surely entails the same conclusion – that Arshama is somewhere outside Egypt.

The only way to evade that conclusion would be to identify a regular role for Artavant as authoritative intermediary between an Arshama resident in Memphis and the business of his landed estates in Upper and Lower Egypt (i.e. throughout the satrapy) and to maintain that by extension he might be accorded a quasi-satrapal description. I do think that one can perhaps imagine such a role: one might even in Babylonian terms describe Artavant as a *mar biti* of Arshama – a rather grander example, perhaps, than the ones that one sees in Nippur, but appropriately so since Arshama is, after all, the satrap. And one might then deploy Driver’s view about the respectful character of Arshama’s use of the denomination *bar bayta* in the address-lines of his letters to Artavant and suggest that he is also being respectful in marking the addressee as the one “who is in Egypt”.

The degree of Arshama’s absenteeism or (what is not quite the same) the regularity with which it is actually reflected in his correspondence and other Egyptian documents thus remains hard to assess. The default assumption will probably remain that it is quite a prominent feature of the record and what some will see as the special pleading of some of the arguments just rehearsed may in the end serve to validate that default default assumption. Meanwhile one final observation is required about a bit of the dossier outside the Egyptian documentation. Ctesias represents Arshama’s support for the cause of the future Darius II as an important element in the latter’s success – at least it seems reasonable that that is the implication of his support being picked out in the narrative sufficiently for Photius to note it. Do we assume that when Arshama declared his support he was in Babylon – or wherever we assume Darius’ elevation to the throne to have occurred? It seems likely. Did he travel east from Egypt post-haste as the succession-crisis developed? Had he been at or near the imperial heartland from well before the latter part of 424? Does the phrasing of Ctesias 15(50) actually imply he had originally expressed allegiance to Sogdianus and then defected (as Arbarius did) or had he managed to bide his time, whether in Egypt or Babylon or wherever, before picking Ochus as the one to back? I do not at the moment think there is any way of answering these questions.

Arshama the estate-holder

Arshama’s status as estate-holder is apparent from both Egyptian and Babylonian documents. Taken together they show him to have had a claim on property in Nippur (the Akkadian dossier),⁶³ in various other parts of Babylonia, Assyria and Syria (A6.9) and in Upper and Lower Egypt (the Bodleian archive).

The estates of A6.9

Of the estates in the provinces named in A6.9 little more can be said than that they were available as a resource from which Nakhthor and his travel party could draw daily subsistence. That they sufficed to cover *all* his requirements when travelling through the relevant regions is not explicitly stated and should not be inferred: he could, after all, have been carrying other documents to afford him access to other types of resource. But this is a question that certainly requires further thought – and may carry with it further thought about the nature of the “provinces” of which the letter speaks. The broad parallel between

⁶³ Van Driel 1993, 223 does note that the livestock to which many of the documents relate might not actually have been in Nippur, even if the contractual arrangements were made there.

A6.9, the travel-ration documents of the Persepolis Fortification archive and comparable allusions in the Bactrian Aramaic letters is clear; similarities and differences in detail may still need to be carefully defined.

The estates in Babylonia

In the case of the estates in Nippur the Akkadian documents provide us with nine transactionally identical items (leases of livestock),⁶⁴ two leases of arable land involving property belonging to Arshama,⁶⁵ one (non-Murašu) document in which his land is part of a boundary-definition (but otherwise has no relevance to the transaction being recorded) and one rather more unusual document about the resolution of a dispute involving Arshama's servant and the Murašu firm. Taken globally the documents prove that Arshama owned land and livestock in Babylonia and that management of the latter at least was in the hands of a Babylonian *paqdu*. I comment for the moment just on two points.

(a) The livestock leases are of particular interest not only for what they say about livestock management⁶⁶ as for two other facts: they are the latest dated documents in the entire Murašu archive and the lessor (and Arshama's *paqdu*) is one Enlil-suppe-muhur – a man who is attested earlier as a servant (*ardu*) or *paqdu* of the Murašu firm. Putting these two facts together, Stolper 1985, 23 speculates that Arshama effectively expropriated the Murašu family at some date in or after c.414 and that that is why Enlil-suppe-muhur had passed from their service into his. If this is correct, it presumably puts Arshama's economic engagement with the landscape of southern Babylonia onto a whole new level. The circumstances of the change and its ongoing implications seem to lie beyond our gaze, but, since the Murašu could hardly have assembled their business in the first place without the blessing of the royal administration, one may at least observe that its termination at the hands of the likes of Arshama is entirely appropriate.

(b) IMT 105 records a complaint brought by a servant of Arshama (Šita) against Enlil-šum-iddin, son of Murašu (Stolper 1985, 65). The complaint is that Enlil-šum-iddin, members of his household, servants and commissioned agents have taken some of Šita's property. The complaint is first brought before Bammuš, "[son of the] house" ([LU

⁶⁴ Driver 1965, 88 was wrong to suggest that in BE 9.1 the animals are "in the charge of" Belittanu, judge of the Sin-canal. Belittanu only appears as the person in whose presence the transaction was concluded (which is the role characteristically fulfilled by judges of the Sin Canal: cf. Cardascia 1951, 20, Stolper 1985, 41). In the other texts no such figure appears, but the overseer of Arshama's animals, Šabahtani, is mentioned as the person in charge of the particular livestock being leased (except apparently in PBS 2/1 145, for which the *index nominum* has no corresponding entry). Meanwhile two slaves and an *ustarbar*-official of Queen Parysatis are among the witnesses in these documents (by Dandamaev 1992, 166.)

⁶⁵ In EE 11 Enlil-šum-Iddin leases out grain fields, including land of Arshama's estate, crown-land (*uzbarra*) by the Sin-magir canal, as well as a canal and 40 oxen with their harness and other land. He does so for an annual payment of 1300 kur of barley, 100 kur of wheat, 100 kur of spelt and some other products. The text confirms directly that Arshama owned real estate in Babylonia (Stolper 1985, 65, Dandamaev 1992, 33). I lack precise detail about IMT 9, of which no translation has been published. The specific reference to Arshama is to ŠE.NUMUN ša Šamaš-ibni (UTU-DÙ) ša É Aršammu. The document also mentions mentions *nakandu* ša šarri.

⁶⁶ Their place in the evidence about Babylonian sheelp and goats is fully discussed in Van Driel 1993. The basic rent (the leaseholder must return two thirds of the live-births of the flock) is attested at Persepolis as well: cf. Henkelman 2005, 157.

DUMU].É(?)) and some other notables, and then referred to a panel of citizens of Nippur. Enlil-šum-iddin paid an indemnity of 500 kur of barley (which Dandamaev 1992, 34 regards as a high sum) and received guarantees against further litigation which were validated by an oath sworn by gods and the king. This incident is interesting for various reasons.

In the first place it can be compared with what is found in BE 9.69 and BE 10.9. In BE 9.69 Udarna, son of Rahimi-El, claims before a Nippur assembly that the same range of associates of Enlil-šum-iddin (together with some of his own – Udarna's – relatives) had taken utensils and other property from his house. Enlil-šum-iddin questioned the accused, recovered the property and returned it. In BE 10.9 Bagadata the *ustarbar*-official, son of Bel-iddina, claimed that Enlil-šum-iddin and his associates had destroyed two places called Rabija and Hazatu and removed silver, gold, livestock and other property thence. This time Enlil-šum-iddin denied the charge – but paid a huge indemnity in return for guarantee against future prosecution. The indemnity is much larger than that in IMT 105, but the essential situation sounds rather similar. This is particularly striking because, whereas the incident in BE 9.69 occurred at the end of Artaxerxes I's 39th year (in early spring 425), BE 10.9 was written on 16.1.1 Darius = 26 April 423, only a little more than a month after IMT 105 (9.12.accession of Darius = 20 March 423): in other words, the two most similar cases are almost exactly contemporaneous. Moreover these documents belong very early in Darius reign (the first one just over two months after the earliest example of his claim to be king being recognized in the dating formulae of Babylonian documents, on 10 January 423) and at time at which, on conventional reconstructions of the events following Artaxerxes' death Darius had not yet disposed of Sogdianus. Could the actions of Enlil-šum-iddin and his entourage be a side-effect of troubled times? Or should the fact that a similar well-grounded accusation could be made already two years earlier warn against any such specific inference?

Secondly, there is a pattern connecting the complainants. The first two are men with Iranian names but Babylonian patronymics. That suggests families that have chosen (to put it crudely) to side with the foreign imperial power. The third is the servant of Arshama, another collaborator with and (I take it) positive beneficiary of Achaemenid rule – for there is no reason to doubt that the property was Šita's (not simply property belonging to Arshama for which he had administrative responsibility) and reasonably substantial.

Thirdly, prosopographical details are provided in IMT 105 about the process for dispute-resolution, something that does not happen in the two other texts. These details show not only that there was an *ustarbar*-official among the empanelled citizens of Nippur but more strikingly that those who received the initial complaint alongside the "son of the house" Bammuš included a "satrap" (whose name is unfortunately lost) and one Ispitammu, son of Patešu. As König 1972: 78 noted, these names call to mind Ctesias 688 F1(42), where Petisas and his son Spitamenes go as emissaries to Megabyzus (along with Artarius, Amytis and Artoxares) to settle latter's revolt. The identification is supported by Stolper (and extended to the Ispitammu of PBS 2/1 27 and 29 and the Patešu of BE 10.33 & 37). Altogether the events of IMT 105 are drawing in some very high-status people, and one might even wonder if "satrap" here designates *the* satrap – though this is probably not necessary. Does the special level of high-rank Iranian concern with this case reflect the status of Šita as a servant and protégé of Arshama – something putting him in a different league from Bagadata (himself an *ustarbar*) and Udarna?

The estates in Egypt

Arshama has estates in Upper and Lower Egypt (A6.7; cf. A6.4 A6.10). Psamshek seems to be described as *pqyd* for domains in both areas in A6.4 (the text is restored, but the restoration is

surely plausible), whereas Nakhthor in A6.10 (address line) is *pqyd* in Lower Egypt. How substantive a distinction this is I am not sure. On the one hand, the fact that A6.7 can describe a group of thirteen slaves as “appointed in my domains which are in Upper and Lower Egypt” even though they must in practice have been located at some particular place in one or the other region suggests that “my domains which are in Upper and Lower Egypt” is purely formulaic (i.e. that the specification “Upper and Lower” is not adding anything very substantive); and on the other hand the substance of A6.10 relates specifically to Lower Egypt (unless we follow Lewis 1958 and restore “Upper Egypt” in line 4), so the formulation of Nakhthor’s title in that document might have been adjusted accordingly. One could maintain, then, that both men might have been described as “*pqyd* in my domains in Upper and Lower Egypt” – but also as “*pqyd* in Egypt” or (if the situation made it specially fitting) “*pqyd* in Lower Egypt” or “*pqyd* in Upper Egypt”. This leaves it hard to tell how many *pqyds* Arshama might have had at once in Egypt and whether, as a matter of fact, the remit of Nakhthor or Psamshek was actually confined to one part of the country.⁶⁷

Driver (1965, 15) was inclined to think the *pqyd* a very senior official, perhaps the highest position beneath the satrap in the administration of Egypt. In this he was evidently influenced by the politeness of Artahay to Nakhthor in A6.16 and by an assumption that the *pqyds* of A6.9 were state-officials. But consideration of the role of Babylonian *paqds* in the Murašû archive suggests that the *pqyds* of the Arshama dossier should primarily be associated with the estate environment in which the texts *prima facie* locate them. I do not think that the existence of a “*pqyd* of Thebes” in A5.5 or the possibility that Virafsha’s *pqyd* Misapata (Mithrapates) (A6.15) recurs (without that title) in S.H5 DP-434 poses any fundamental challenge to this view. The very fact that Virafsha (A6.15), Varuvahya (A6.13) and other anonymous “lords” (A6.10) have *pqyds* in Egypt re-inforces the point, and our view of A6.9 and of Artahay’s attitude to Nakhthor will have to be adjusted accordingly – which there is no real difficulty in doing.

Stolper 1985, 65-6 describes the Egyptian situation thus (I have added some references):

“[Arshama’s] extensive estate was managed by ... men entitled ‘bailiff, comptroller’ (*pqyd*). It included small farms, designated ‘allotments’ (*bg*), held by the owner’s personal subordinates.⁶⁸ The farms were required to pay tax or services (*hlk*) to the

⁶⁷ The only closer geographical specification for an estate in the Bodleian documents is the possible naming of Papremis in reference to the estate of Virafsha in A6.15. What is said there might imply that Arshama also had land in the same region (hence Nakhthor could purloin wine that allegedly really belonged to Virafsha).

⁶⁸ A6.11, held by Pamun and potentially Petosiri. But the term is also used in A6.5, A6.6 of Arshama’s domains in Egypt and in A6.13 of those of Varuvahya. (The reference in D6.12e is unknown.) For occurrences in Egypt outside the Arshama dossier see C3.6: 8 (first half 5th c.), a fragmentary document whose second column has a list of names (variously Egyptian, Babylonian (a patronym), Aramaean or Hebrew) each against the heading “non-domain” (*l’ bg*), D3.39b (context obscure, but including persons of various origins and one who is part of the Elephantine garrison), Segal 41 (where it appears in a slightly strange list of commodities (?), adjacent to a putative but unexplained personal name WSK) and Segal 47 (another obscure document: l.5 reads “and spread produce for the estates of”; the *hayla* is mentioned earlier). Outside Egypt Teixidor found it in the Xanthos Trilingual (1978, 182), where others read *byt*, and it occurs in the Kemaliye inscription (Lemaire & Kwasman 2002, Studel 2010).

estate (*l byt*) [A6.11]; in the same way Labaši, for example, collected the *ilku* due from bow lands within the crown prince's estate. Aršam's Egyptian bailiffs held property within the estate, once termed a 'grant' (*dšn*), conferred by Aršam and king [A 6.4]; similarly, Parysatis' bailiff held a fief within her estate, and agents of crown collaborated with the bailiffs in control of personnel on the crown prince's estate. In short the structure of Aršam's Egyptian estate corresponds in broad outline and in terminological particulars to the structure inferred for the estates of other members of the royal family in Babylonia"

This assessment holds good, but one should not, of course, hastily infer that the parallel extends to Egyptian estates being composed of *hatrus* or bow-fiefs. We do not know how the Egyptian estate of Arshama or Virafsha or Varuvahya came to be defined (Varuvahya's domain was given to him by Arshama, but this says nothing of its original formation: A6.13), but the configuration of land-holding within the estates may have developed on the basis of the native Egyptian set-up, just as that in Nippur had Babylonian roots. The ultimate authorisation for the holding of land is doubtless royal – something perhaps reflected in the way that Ahhapi's land-grant (*dšn*'), received as *pqyd* and presumably located within Arshama's estate, is described as having been given to him by the king and Arshama.

I add a few further preliminary observations about the Egyptian estates of Arshama and his fellow Persians.

(1) The *pqyd*'s duty is not merely to manage but to enhance the estate: that at least is the contention of A6.10. Admittedly, however, this is provoked by Arshama's belief that Nakhthor is not even maintaining the *status quo* during a time of disturbance.

(2) The estate owed *mndt*' to its owner, and this was actually carried from Egypt to the absentee landlord. We learn this from A6.13, where Arshama instructs Nakhthor and the accountants to assist in ensuring that Varuvahya's *pqyd* Hatubasti releases the *mndt*' and the "accrued increment" (interest?) and ensures its transport to Babylon,⁶⁹ and A6.14, which is Varuvahya's letter to Nakhthor on the same subject.⁷⁰ TADE translates *mndt*' as "rent", while indicating an element of uncertainty. The word occurs in various other, mostly obscure, contexts in Egyptian Aramaic documents. The question of its meaning and its relation to e.g. the *hlk*' owed in A6.11 may need re-examination.

(3) The person due to pay *hlk*' in A6.11 is described as having the property which generates the obligation as a "hereditary possession". The technical terminology used here recurs in other Aramaic documentation from Egypt and has been elucidated by Szubin & Porten 1982. The essence of their discussion seems to be that to claim to be a "hereditary possessor" (*mhšn*) is to insist that one's title is good (even in the absence of a full and demonstrable pedigree of ownership) and that one can transmit possession to an heir. They did not, so far as I can see, consider the bearing of this conclusion upon A6.11, and that will perhaps deserve further thought. The letter concerns the request of Petosiri to be given a domain (*bg*) which once belonged to his father Pamun but had been abandoned when Pamun died during a period of "unrest". How far Petosiris' request turns specifically on the

⁶⁹ An interesting detail is that the transport of the rent to Babylon might be carried out not by Hatubasti but by his son or brother (A6.14). I do not know how strong a piece of evidence this is that the functions of a *pqyd* might be shared with his family. But one recalls that Psamshek's father had been Arshama's *pqyd*.

⁷⁰ That an Egyptian estate-manager might travel to the heart of empire (something also evident in A6.9, of course) may be compared with the suggestion that the seal PFATS 424, inscribed "chief of Pe and overseer of (royal) mansions", found at Persepolis belonged to a supervisor of royal estates in Egypt (Garrison & Ritner 2010).

fact that Pamun had been a “hereditary possessor” is not clear: Arshama’s response certainly suggests that, had someone else now been occupying the domain, that person would not necessarily have been ejected in favour of Petosiris, so Pamun’s title seems in practice somewhat tenuous. But in general terms the situation does conform with the Szubin & Porten model in the sense that the bestowal of property upon favoured individuals would characteristically be creating property-holders who did not have documentary proof of possession way back into the past, and the choice to give the property on the basis of “hereditary possession” so that, *ceteris paribus*, it could be transmitted to an heir, was a real formal choice that might not have been made.

This category of ownership recurs in another document in the Arshama dossier, A6.2. Here the object of ownership is a boat. The boat is in need of repair, and Arshama authorizes the expenditure required to effect that repair. So, although the boat is in the “hereditary possession” of two Carians, the fabric of the boat remains a charge upon the state. If the same principle applied to the landed property in A6.11, it would mean that Arshama was responsible for what one might call infrastructure expenses on the land (tools? buildings?), while Pamun and Petosiris were beneficiaries from its profits; but it may be that the mere fact that the type of possession in each case is “hereditary” creates no presumption that there are other parallels. In any event, A6.2 does pose the question why the boat is state-property and what the current hereditary possessors are using it for. Perhaps they can ordinarily use it for their own commercial purposes but are obliged, when necessary, to carry out tasks imposed upon them by the civil or military authorities in Elephantine. Scholars have debated, rather inconclusively, whether “hereditary possession” appears in the records of members of the Jewish garrison because it was structurally characteristic of a garrison community – a type of holding proper to people who are getting land in return for service. It is plain that the same question could arise with the Carian boat-holders. And it also has a resonance with Pamun, Petosiris and the land in A6.11 – for it is that piece of property that owes *hlk’* to Arshama’s estate, and *ilku*, the Akkadian equivalent of *hlk’*, is in origin and essence a service tax.

(4) Various other human aspects of the estate (in addition to the *pqyd* who manages it) deserve note – and perhaps further investigation.

Kenzasirma and his colleagues the accountants (an Iranian title, **hamarakara*-) appear several times as co-addressees with Nakhthor (A6.11-14). A6.2 (a document from Arshama’s administrative life as satrap) refers to “treasury accountants” (also Iranian: **hamarakara*- of the **ganza*), who play a role in the resourcing of boat-repairs, but Kenzasirma and his colleagues on the face of it are something separate and belong purely to the estate-environment. They appear in letters that relate to the assignment of a domain within the estate, the disbursement of rations to Hinzani the sculptor and the payment and transport of “rent”. One may suspect that the processes of ration-provision to which A6.9 would have given rise involved similar estate-accountants in places outside Egypt.

We encounter an *wršbr* (A6.5, A6.11), another Iranian term most recently interpreted as **varčabara* = “worker” or “worker-supervisor”, but previously variously said to mean “forester”, “mounted officer”, “shield-bearer” and “quarter-master”. Petosiri, the man petitioning to recover his father’s land-grant, has the title (A6.11), but one can deduce nothing about its practical content from his petition – save that (as a potential land-holder) he is more likely to be a “worker-supervisor” than mere “worker”.

At a lower level there are workers designated as *grd* = Iranian **garda*. This is the word used generically (in Elamite form: *kurtas*) for workers in the Persepolis Fortification archive and it can embrace various types of activity. In A6.10 they are glossed as “craftsmen”, in A6.12 as “artists” – this latter in the text where we encounter what is in some respects Arshama’s most remarkable employee, Hinzani the sculptor or image-maker. We note also in A6.15 that

grd (not here further qualified) can belong to a woman – conceivably, in context, Virafsha’s wife. (She is referred to as “my lady” by Virafsha’s *pqyd*.) This, of course, recalls the Persepolis environment as well, and one may legitimately wonder whether Virafsha’s wife or whoever the “lady” may be was an estate holder in her own right.

Another employee-category is *nšy byt* = household personnel (a loan from Akkadian: *niše bitī*), attested in A6.11, A6.12 and D6.8. In A6.11 and A6.12 the phrase seems to refer to people associated with (respectively) Pamun (the deceased hereditary-leaseholder) and Hinzani the sculptor. In D6.8 some unknown people address Arshama and refer to “our household personnel”; so here too the phrase is apparently not used in immediate reference to Arshama’s personnel. Pamun was the father of someone who is now a “worker-supervisor”, so having “household personnel” is presumably characteristic of people who are not on the bottom level of the system. The significance of the term being an Akkadian loan is a tantalising question.

At the bottom of the system are “slaves”, encountered in the shape of the slaves of Psamshek’s father Ahhapi, who are to be punished (A6.3)⁷¹ and the Cilician slaves of Arshama, who bear the OP loanword label *’bšk* = **abišavaka-*, allegedly meaning “presser”,⁷² and who are *not* to be mistreated (A6.7).⁷³ Both groups of slaves are listed by name. But the distinction between “slaves” and *grd* is perhaps hardly watertight. In A6.10 Arshama tells Nakhtor he must seek additional craftsman-*grd*, bring them to his court, brand them and hand them over to the estate. The victims of such treatment are hardly straightforwardly “free” individuals. Once again there is a resonance with Persepolis, where the status of *kurtaš* is a matter of debate and later Greek sources speak of branded foreigners in the neighbouring countryside.

The reference to the “court” in this text is interesting in its own right. The word used is *trbš*, a word also found in a number of other texts,⁷⁴ where it refers to a literal courtyard (part of the description of a house).⁷⁵ Driver believed the reference was to the “court” of satrap as representative of the King; but since the Akkadian equivalent can mean stable or stall, and since the place for branded *grd* is arguably the “economic” not political aspect of Arshama’s world, one must surely be uneasy about this suggestion, at least put in those terms. But it may not be entirely off the mark. What Arshama says is that the new *grd* should be brought to his courtyard, branded and made over to his estate. A “courtyard” does seem the right sort of place for the formal act of appropriation in both its physical and bureaucratic dimensions. But how exactly are we to envisage it? Is there a single such place serving all of Arshama’s estate(s)? Or is it really only a virtual place – might there be several actual locations in different parts of Lower or Upper Egypt to which prospective Arshama-estate *garda* could be taken? In either event we are perhaps not so very far after

⁷¹ D6.3 fr.a may conceivably refer to the same context. It is interesting that Psamshek requires the authorisation of Artavant for punishment of the slaves (who had stolen property and attempted to flee) to be carried out. It appears that, even if Ahhapi is now dead (which is not certain), Psamshek has not inherited full title to his slaves. Perhaps Ahhapi had them in virtue of his role as *pqyd* and the slaves in some sense really belong to Arshama’s estate.

⁷² So Tavernier 2007, 415 (after Shaked). Earlier suggestions included “previously mentioned”, “deserter” and “returner”.

⁷³ The situation seems to be that they had temporarily disappeared but turned out not to have been attempting flight but simply to have been innocently caught up in confusion occasioned by an Egyptian rebellion.

⁷⁴ B3.7:4, B3.10:4,7,14,15 B3.4:4, B3.11:3.

⁷⁵ Some texts say that in Egyptian the thing is called *hyt*. The Aramaic term derives from Akkadian *tarbašu* = “stall” (Muraoka & Porten 2003, 350).

all from talk of people going (or being taken) to a king's or dignitary's "gates".⁷⁶ It is also worth noting we are somewhere close to the way that Greek *aule* – once a word for a cattle-stall -- became a term of royal discourse. In the end the domestic, economic and (let us say) political spheres do have a tendency to interact and intersect.

One final aspect of the estate's human environment is multi-ethnicity. Arshama's attested *pqyds* are Egyptian, but Varuvahya's may have a Babylonian name (alternatively it is mixed Aramaic-Egyptian) and Virafsha's certainly has an Iranian one. The chief accountant Kenzasirma (addressee of several letters along with Nakhthor) has what may be an Anatolian name. There are also several references to Cilicians: the thirteen slave "pressers" of A6.7 (who are listed by name); two members of Nakhthor's travel party (A6.9) (described as servants of Arshama); and ten individuals (uncategorised but presumably slaves) who were to be given by Arshama to Virafsha (A6.15; cf. D6.7), five of whom were duly delivered in Babylon, while the rest remain an object of contention between Virafsha and Nakhthor. The general run of evidence about the Achaemenid empire or about Egypt in particular does not otherwise, I think, prepare one for this strong showing by Cilicians in the environment of an Egyptian satrap.⁷⁷ Another interesting thing about them is that, although most of the thirteen individuals in A6.7 seem to have Anatolian names, two have Iranian ones (Saraka and Bagafarna).⁷⁸ Mismatches between personal name and apparent ethnicity, including cases involving Iranian names, are not rare in the Achaemenid empire (this is the world of e.g. Spitaka the Greek, attested in the celebrated Customs Account document: C3.7KV2:16), but Iranian-named slaves are perhaps less expected -- though not unexampled: compare Bagabarta, son of Eli[...] in Wadi Daliyeh 10.⁷⁹ More generally, of course, the multi-ethnicity of estate personnel has analogues elsewhere in the Arshama dossier:⁸⁰ the *azdakara* (Iranian term for "herald") of A6.1 has an Akkadian name; A6.2 provides Carians with Egyptian names (members of a well-established Caro-Egyptian community) and Phoenician-named shipwrights; the names of scribes do not always linguistically match the Aramaic in which they are presumably writing (the Egyptian-named Ahpepi in A6.8 and Iranian-named Rašta in A6.9-13);⁸¹ and occasional demotic Egyptian annotations on Aramaic letters (A6.11-13, D6.11) leave a trace of a parallel bureaucracy which is, of course, directly represented by Saqqara S.H5-DP 434 and P.Mainz 17. The intrusion of linguistic Iranica into the non-Iranian languages of the dossier is hardly surprising.⁸² It is immediately interesting to note (and may even match certain prejudices) that they include terms for "reprimand" (A6.8, A6.10) and "punishment" (A6.3),

⁷⁶ "Gates" terminology occurs in D6.7.

⁷⁷ I find no comment in Casabonne 2004. (He mentions A6.7 at 66, 93.)

⁷⁸ Two more might do as well: [...]miya and A[.]m are marked as "Anatolian/Persian" in Porten & Lund 2002.

⁷⁹ Note also Nanaia-Silim, a slave variously called Bactrian and Gandharan in BM 64240 (Sippar: 512/1 BC) and Darius 379 (an Egibi document from 508/7) – an Iranian who has been given a Mesopotamian name?

⁸⁰ As it does in the rest of the written evidence about Achaemenid-era Egypt – and indeed about other parts of the empire.

⁸¹ cf. RWHSN (*Rauxšna-), scribe of B3.9, and (perhaps) Magava s. of Mithrabara in P.Mainz 17 (with Vittmann 2007)

⁸² There are 23 Iranica in the Bodleian letters, and 25 (mostly different) ones in the other Aramaic documents of the dossier. (This is a quick count based on Muraoka & Porten 2003, 342-5 and Tavernier 2007.)

but a fuller analysis of what sorts of words retain an Iranian character in the Aramaic or demotic Egyptian linguistic environment is a task for the future.⁸³

Arshama and the politico-military history of his times

As we have already noted, Greek sources allow us to say that Arshama probably became satrap of Egypt in the aftermath of the revolt of the 450s, certainly played a role in the succession of Darius II, though the details elude us, and may conceivably have mounted (but probably did not) a successful, if treacherous, attack on the city of Barca. What does the non-Greek parts of the dossier have to say about Arshama's involvement in the politico-military narrative of Achaemenid history – matters with wider potential impact than the state of repair of a single boat on the sand in front of the Elephantine fort or whatever issue underlies the battered remnants of Saqqara S.H5-DP 434?

One strand of modern study has tended to stress complaisance towards the Persian *status quo* and to reject “collaborationist” interpretations of it. Perhaps that is a fair response to over-simple attitudes, but it is indubitably true that Egypt did rebel from time to time and with a degree of seriousness that ensured the disorder caught the attention of the outside world and cannot reasonably be sidelined as just a bit of local difficulty. Neither the Arshama dossier nor the wider Egyptian documentation can, I think, produce quite the cumulative impression of an explanatory background to rejection of imperial rule that has been claimed for Babylonia in the 55 years from original conquest to the troubles of 484 or, perhaps more particularly, the 38 years from the accession of Darius to 484. The documentation is simply too different in character and much smaller in quantity. The spectacle of Iranian ownership of Egyptian land and control (perhaps violent) of the means to exploit it dimly visible through the window of the Arshama letters is one that may be consequential upon re-conquest as much as conquest and might contribute to developments that would call for further re-conquest; the way Arshama responds to “troubles” by telling Nakhthor to find more people to be branded and assigned to his “court” is striking. But all this remains anecdotal and unquantified. Reading an episode such as the demolition of the Jewish temple in Elephantine as usable evidence about larger issues around the relations between rulers and ruled in a multicultural setting is very difficult, as Pierre Briant has reminded us (Briant 1996a) – though I cannot escape a feeling that his strictly legalistic understanding of the event probably suppresses some interesting dimensions. But I should end by noting that some of the Arshama texts actually speak of rebellion or disturbances and that an argument can be advanced for seeing these as a point at which the contents of a leather bag touch the world of high politics.

The starting point is A6.7, where we read that the Egyptians rebelled (*mrdt*) and that, as a consequence, the *hayla* was “garrisoned” which is taken to mean that it retired to the protection of a fortress. It is the consequences for thirteen Cilician slaves that is the subject of the letter and *ceteris paribus* one would not think the events in question are very distant in the past. *Mrd* is the word used persistently in DB (Aramaic) to mean “rebel” (in reference to major political and military disturbances), and it recurs in A6.10, which contrasts “formerly when the Egyptians rebelled” (*mrdw*) (when Psamshek was *pqyd* and behaved well) and more current “troubles” in which Nakhthor is not doing what he should. Here the word is *šwzy* – a *hapax legomenon* translated “rioting” in Porten & Lund 2002 and considered possibly Iranian, though with no etymology suggested either there or in Muraoka & Porten 2003, 345. (The word is not recognized as Iranian in Tavernier 2007.) Next, in A6.11:2,4 we have a third word, *ywz*, used of

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The word for punishment is also found in the Aramaic documents from Bactria. Among other Iranica shared between the Arshama dossier and Bactria are **ništavana* (order, rescript), **frataraka* (governor), **pithfa* (ration) and **handarza* (instruction).

the “unrest” during which Pamun perished. We are in the Nakhthor era again – at least for dealing with the consequences of Pamun’s demise and the abandonment of his domain. Tavernier 2007 recognizes *this* as Iranian: **yauza-* (Median), “revolt, turmoil, rebellion”. (Compare Av. *yaoza-* = “excitement”, OP *yaud-* “to be in turmoil”.) It is the word used in XPh §4 (the famously tantalizing reference to an unnamed land that was in turmoil at the time of Xerxes’ accession to the throne), and it recurs in its Aramaic guise in D6.12g, though in a hopelessly broken context.

All of the texts just mentioned are part of the Bodleian archive and are therefore quite undatable. Outside that archive A5.5 has *mrđy* (“rebellious”: the same word again as that used in DB[Aramaic]) at the end of an equally undated document that also alludes to soldiers (*hyl*), a *degel* (a sub-unit), chiefs of centuries, killing, and a fortress. But no continuously sensible narrative survives, so there is not a lot to be got from the text. A4.5 is more helpful: this refers to Egyptians “rebellious”, yet again using the same word (*mrđw*). Here the reference is to an occasion when *degelin* (military sub-units) of Egyptians “rebelled” but the Jews did not leave their posts or do anything bad. They mention this as a *Priamel* to reference to the events around the destruction of temple in mid-410. So it happened before that date. But how long before? The authors of A4.5 also refer to what did *not* happen as long ago as 525 BC (the temple’s survival at the time of Cambyses’ conquest of Egypt), and this non-event recurs in the memorandum reporting the view of Bagohi and Delaiah that re-building should be permitted (A4.9) – rather remarkably given the succinctness of that document. So both the Jews of Elephantine and the representatives of the imperial power were apt to see things in very long perspective, and the Egyptian “rebellion” might also not be a very recent occurrence. On the other hand it could also theoretically be part of the same context as the Egyptian rebellion of A6.7 and A6.10; and in that case the event would be no longer before the 410 horizon of A4.5 than the period within which Psamshek might have held the office of *pqyd*.

So the situation is this. There are four references to rebellion: two are in letters by Arshama (A6.7, A6.10),⁸⁴ the third is in a letter by Jedaniah and his colleagues (A4.5) and the fourth in a letter whose author is not certainly identifiable but may well be one Mithradates (A5.5). The letters by Arshama are from the same (Bodleian) archive, while the other two letters represent two further different archival backgrounds. In addition to these references to rebellion there are also single references to troubles (A6.10) and to unrest (A6.11), both in letters from the Bodleian archive. The troubles and the rebellion are certainly different events, since they are both mentioned in the same letter (A6.10) and an explicit contrast is drawn between them. The only indication of date is that Jedaniah’s references to rebellion is in a letter written not earlier than July 410.

The simplest way of dealing with this material is certainly to hold that all references to “rebellion” concern the same event and that this event is also what was meant by “unrest” in A6.11. The argument in favour of this last point (apart from the wish to keep things simple and not to multiply entities) would be that any suggestion of substantive difference created by the use of a different word (by the same author, Arshama⁸⁵) is mitigated and perhaps negated by the fact that the different word in question is Iranian – so that we may be faced by what is merely a stylistic or indeed an arbitrary choice between what the writer regarded as synonyms in two different languages.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Admittedly we cannot be sure that the same Aramaic scribe wrote both, as there is no identifying scribal signature in A6.7. A6.10 was written by Rašta.

⁸⁵ And indeed the same scribe, at least as between A6.10 and A6.11.

⁸⁶ It is slightly ironic that the Iranian term is actually put in the mouth of the Egyptian Pamun; but since the letter is already making him speak in Aramaic there is no real problem here.

This simplest solution was espoused by Lewis 1958 who then took an important further step and identified the “rebellion” and “unrest” with the situation in 411 alluded to by Diodorus 13.46.6, who speaks of the Arabian and Egyptian kings plotting against *ta peri ten Phoiniken pragmata*. As an economical use of all the sources (Aramaic and Greek) this still looks like a good argument. It could only be wholly undermined either by questioning Diodorus’ authority (so that there is no ground to believing in a significant disturbance to Persian rule of Egypt in 411) or by claiming that the Aramaic word translated “rebellion” need not connote events big enough to register outside the most local of radars (so there is no ground for attaching any of the Aramaic evidence to Diodorus’ 411 event). But both approaches do look a little contrarian and the latter, in particular, simply begs too many questions.

There is one, however, one further observation to be made that may complicate matters. Egypt rebelled rather often while under Achaemenid rule and showed a consistent tendency to do so at or fairly soon after the transition of power from one Great King to another (522; 486; c. 460; c.404; the rebellion of Chababash in the 330s may fit this pattern too). The only pertinent occasion on which the sources seemingly record *no* rebellion is the transition from Artaxerxes I to Darius II in 424-3 – a transition so chaotic that it seems to cry out for an Egyptian reaction. There are two ways in which the evidence could be re-configured to allow for this. (1) One is to detach Diodorus from the Aramaic evidence. Diodorus’ report only requires us to postulate trouble in the Delta region and among the adjacent Arabs of North Sinai and the southern Levant. Jedaniah’s letter strictly speaking only refers to Elephantine and the same can be true of ?Mithridates’ letter, while the geographical location of the “rebellion” in Arshama’s letters is (again strictly speaking) uncertain.⁸⁷ So one could maintain that the Aramaic evidence hangs together but relates to a situation earlier than 411, for example in or shortly after 424/3 – there being nothing to prevent us putting the Bodleian archive wherever we wish chronologically speaking. (2) The other is to detach the “rebellion” of the Bodleian letters (A6.7 and A6.10) from that of letters of Jedaniah (A4.5) and ?Mithradates (A5.5), on the grounds that the difference in archival origin between the two sets of documents diminishes the force of the assumption that all things called “rebellion” are the same event. On this view Jedaniah and ?Mithradates are referring to Diodorus’ 411 upheaval (which this time must be seen as part of an Egypt-wide disturbance), but the Bodleian letters still belong in an earlier chronological horizon and allude to a situation in or shortly after 424/3.

Both of these solutions yield two attested periods of significant disturbance in the twenty years before the more definitive recovery of independence in or after 404. The problem, of course, is that, although this is more tidy in terms of long-term trends, it is undeniably less tidy as a way of reconciling a set of sources. But it is worth stressing that the only alternative (if we revert to Lewis’s solution but still, as I think we should, keep our eye on long-term trends) is to suppose that the control exercised over Egypt by Arshama at and after the time he sided with Ochus against Sogdianus in 424/3 was particularly tight and proved good enough to keep a lid on any Egyptian reaction for over a decade. We have seen (above p. 21) that it is possible that Arshama was actually outside the satrapy during some of the succession-crisis, but it is perhaps conceivable that he was able to be back in Memphis sufficiently quickly to pre-empt trouble. So adopting Lewis’s solution may turn out to tell us something about the efficacy of Arshama’s regime in Egypt, though it will also leave us wondering what brought about the eventual breakdown of order in 411 – a breakdown which (on this view) involved trouble both in Lower Egypt (a pharaonic pretender plotting with an Arab ruler) and in distant Elephantine. The alternative approach, by contrast, implies that

⁸⁷ Given Nakhthor’s association with Lower Egypt, the unrest of A6.11 may be in that part of the country, as were the troubles of A6.10.

Arshama was not able to prevent some manifestation of disorder relatively soon after the upheaval at the heart of the empire or (indeed) the Egypto-Arabian plotting of 411, the former perhaps precisely because he had been away in 424/3 and did not return quickly enough.

But Arshama's possible absence from Egypt in 424/3 is not the only absence relevant to this story of rebellion. Whether we adopt the Lewis solution or allow ourselves to postulate an additional period of trouble shortly after 424/3, the uprising in 411 was, it seems, sufficiently under control by early summer 410 for Arshama to leave the satrapy. Moreover on a conventional view he then remained away for well over three years. Does that seem plausible? One may feel that the problem is smaller if the disturbance was confined to the Delta rather than spreading to all parts of Egypt (i.e. if one adopts a reading of the sources that detaches Diodorus from any texts suggesting rebellion in Elephantine).⁸⁸ Arshama had, after all, experienced something similar earlier in his tenure, when there was a dissident king Amyrtaeus in the Delta marshlands, whose existence does not appear to have profoundly disturbed Persian control of Egypt – though (on the one hand) there is no suggestion in that case of co-operation with the Arabs and (on the other hand) we do not actually know that Amyrtaeus did not have a significantly, if locally, disruptive effect. But the problem would be undoubtedly smaller if we chose not to believe in the first place that Arshama was continuously absent for over three years. I certainly do think that we can casually dismiss the problem by deciding that the way Achaemenid imperial rule worked meant that it did not really matter where the satrap was: the general run of evidence does not suggest that it was normal for a satrap to be away from his province for long periods of time.

One final thought: if there was some disturbance of Persian authority in Egypt in 411 (and especially if it *did* extend to Elephantine), one wonders whether there might actually have been some sort of connection between the subsequent mood of the country in 410 and the strange alliance between the provincial governor of southern Egypt, the garrison-commander of Elephantine and the local Egyptians against the Jewish community and their temple. But that is probably a speculation too far, and with it I shall stop.

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For those whose default assumption is that the Bodleian letters were written while Arshama was outside Egypt there is a corresponding question about the troubles alluded to in the letter in which Arshama contrasts Psamshek's handling of things during the rebellion with Nakhthor's response to current difficulties (A6.10). Is Arshama again away from his post while the Egyptians are in rebellious mood? But this time we are perhaps at liberty to say that this was just a little local difficulty – and even that Arshama is advancing an *a fortiori* argument (Psamshek behaved well during an actual rebellion; Nakhthor is failing during a minor disturbance), so there may be no real problem. And A6.10 is in any case one of those letters that do not on internal evidence have to have been written from outside Egypt (see above p.20).

ABBREVIATIONS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

- BE 9 = A.T.Clay & H.V.Hilprecht, *Business Documents of Murashu Sons of Nippur dated in the reign of Artaxerxes I* (Philadelphia 1898).
- BE 10 = A.T.Clay, *Business Documents of Murashu Sons of Nippur dated in the reign of Darius II* (Philadelphia 1904).
- EE = texts in Stolper 1985.
- IMT = texts in Donbaz & Stolper 1997.
- PBS 2/1 = A.T.Clay, *Business Documents of Murashu Sons of Nippur dated in the reign of Darius II* (Philadelphia 1912).
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