

SOME ASPECTS OF THE INNER ORGANIZATION OF THE ARMENIAN SATRAPY

The problem of the institution of the satrap and the whole complex of questions connected with it are important both for the history of the Achaemenian state power as a whole and for the history of its constituent parts, countries and lands.

Their study leads us first of all to the problems of inner history, disclosing at this its broadest aspects, social, political and cultural. At the same time questions of more specific character, too, are clarified which are without doubt also interesting, viz.: the satrapal court and the system of organization of the satrapal governing, military organization of the satrapy, economic system of the satrapy, first of all its distribution, directly connected with the satrap himself.

These questions are not elucidated in an equal degree in the sources. We are well informed about a series of countries, like Babylonia, Egypt and certain countries of Asia Minor, while about others we know less. Armenia has to be included among the latter.

On account of the very fragmentary character of the informations, certain questions appearing at the first glance to be of partial character and are connected with the satrapal system in Armenia, essentially have been left out of the sphere of vision of the researchers. If, in spite of this, they can be explained, then this can only be done on the basis of the data concerning the whole Achaemenian Empire, the number of which is continuously increasing and is waiting for general interpretation.

1. Satrapal estates

The king of kings, the queen, and the members of the royal family had large estates scattered all over the empire. They are known in Northern Iran (*Plutarch*: Artaxerxes, XXV), in Babylonia, in the vicinity of Nippur¹ and

¹The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia 1904. X. n° 128. Cf. I. M. ДИАКОНОВ: Рабовладельческие имения персидских вельмож, «Вестник древней истории» 1950. № 4. 87; М. А. ДАНДАМАВ: Чужеземные рабы в хозяйствах ахеменидских царей и их вельмож (XXV International Congress of Orientalists). Moscow 1960. 2.

Opis (Xenophon: *Anabasis*, II, 4; 27), and also in a series of other places,² in Syria, at the source of river Dardanos (Xenophon: *Anabasis*, I, 4; 9), in Phoenicia, near Sidon (Diodorus Sicilianus: *Historical Library*, XVI, 41),³ in Asia Minor⁴ and in other places.⁵

Big landowners were also the heads of the districts, the Iranian satraps. As a rule, the possessions of each satrap were situated within the borders of his own satrapy, but also such cases are known, when the satrap owned landed property also in other territories. From the Aramaic letters of Arsames, satrap of Egypt, we know that he owned landed property not only in Egypt, but also in a series of other countries, in Elam, in Media (or Assyria), Babylonia and Syria.⁶

Interesting data are contained about the satrapal estates in the works of Xenophon, who mentions especially the estates of Cyrus the Younger in Sardis (Lydia) and in Kelainai (Phrygia Maior) («On economy», IV, «Anabasis» I, 2; 7), of Pharnabazos near Daskyleion (Phrygia Minor) («Greek history», IV, 1; 15, 16, 33), of Tissaphernes in Caria («Greek history», II, 12; Plutarch: *Alkibiades*, XXIV), of Belesys in Syria («Anabasis», I, 4; 10).

Estates were owned also by other aristocrats of the empire, what is shown by the same letters of Arsames, mentioning significant Iranian landowners in Egypt,⁷ by cuneiform documents, mentioning the owners of landed property in Babylonia also by name,⁸ and also by the reports of the Greek historians, among which the reports of Xenophon are especially valuable about the estates of the Persian Asidates in the western part of Asia Minor («Anabasis», VII, 8; 9, 12, 19, 21, 22).⁹

This diversified system of official and private estates in the territory of the empire permits to speak about the presence of such estates in Achaemenian Armenia. Particularly, certain data, mainly on the satrapal estates

² M. A. DANDAMAËV: *Контракты о сдаче в наем скота, принадлежавшего сатрапу Аршаму*. Сб. «Проблемы социально-экономической истории древнего мира». Moscow—Leningrad 1963. 133, note 34.

³ See CLERMONT—GANNEAU: *Le paradesios royal Achéménide de Sidon*, *Compte rendu de l'Académie d'inscriptions et de belles lettres*. 1920, 405.

⁴ W. DITTENBERGER: *Sylloge inscriptionum Graecorum*, 3 Aufl. Lipsiae 1915. I, No. 22, 20, 24; cf. M. A. DANDAMAËV: *Чужеземные рабы...*, 2.

⁵ M. A. DANDAMAËV: *Контракты...*, 133, 134. The care of the Achaemenian kings for the lands is characterized well by Xenophon: «Wherever the king lived — the historian writes —, wherever he went, he made sure that everywhere should be gardens, called «paradesios», full of everything beautiful and good, of what the earth can produce» («On economy», IV, 13; see also «*Κυροπαδεία*», VIII, 6; 12).

⁶ See G. R. DRIVER: *Aramaic Documents of the Vth Century B. C.* Oxford 1957. Cf. I. M. DIAKONOV: *op. cit.* 70—74; M. A. DANDAMAËV: *Контракты...*, 130, 131 and 137.

⁷ See I. M. DIAKONOV: *op. cit.* 73.

⁸ See M. A. DANDAMAËV: *Чужеземные рабы...*, 7; *idem*: *Контракты...*, 130; G. CARDASCIA: *Les archives de Murašû*. Paris 1951. 7; W. EILERS: *Iranische Beamtennamen in der Keilschriftlichen Überlieferung*, Teil I. Leipzig 1940. 12. On the estates belonging to court officials of Persepolis see I. M. DIAKONOV: *op. cit.*, 82.

⁹ See M. I. ROSTOVITZEFF: *Notes on the Economic Policy of Pergamen Kings*, *Anatolian Studies Presented to W. M. Ramsay*. Manchester 1923. 372—374.

(as we have been convinced, they are documented from a whole series of countries), permit to presume that the satraps of Armenia, particularly Orontas, governor of Armenia at the turn of the 5th and 4th centuries, B. C., also owned estates in the territory of the whole satrapy.¹⁰

It is possible that in Armenia of the Achaemenian times the district Eruandunik or Aruantunik,¹¹ in the vicinity of the town Van, mentioned in the medieval Armenian sources, was such an estate. The designation of the district, apparently, can be traced back to the names of satraps and kings of Armenia, Aruand—Eruand—Orontas. Similarly here, also two more topographic designations are fixed to be traced back to the same name, viz. : the region Eruandakans east of the city Van, at the mountain Varag, at the access to the territory of Tosp,¹² and the designation Eruandavan for the city Van,¹³ to be traced back to the late medieval manuscripts.

The district Eruandunik—Aruantunik itself, at the settlement Ordok, is lying close to the Armenian pass Hayotsdzor, which is identical with the valley of river Hoshab and is adjacent to the territory of Tosp. This permits the localization of the district more accurately east and south-east of the city Van.

The presence of three topographic designations containing the name Eruand at some distance from each other, is a quite remarkable phenomenon that could be referred to a comparatively late Hellenistic time (cf. Eruandashat, Eruandakert), if the form Aurantunik would not be preserved with the historian, the archaic appearance of which points to an earlier time of its origin, at least to the Achaemenian period. According to S. T. Eremian, the above-mentioned designation can even be connected with the activity of the ancient Armenian kings of the 6th century, B. C.¹⁴ The district-estate set close in ancient times to the environment of the city Van, was situated in one of the economically most developed territories of the state of Urartu, situated in the range of irrigation of the ancient canals, functioning also later

¹⁰ ED. MEYER expressed the verisimilar idea about the existence of nobleman's estates in Armenia belonging to satrap Vidarna and to his successors (ED. MEYER: *Geschichte des Altertums*. vol. III. Stuttgart 1901. 33). We do not know, on what data is this assumption based: most probably it originated from the general situation about the distribution of territories of landed property by the first Achaemenian rulers (Xenophon: *Kyropaideia*, VIII, 6; 4, 6; see also A. CHRISTENSEN: *Die Iranier*. München 1933. 271; M. ЕНТЕЧАМ: *L'Iran sous les Achéménides*. Fribourg 1946. 102).

¹¹ See T'OMAY VRCRUNI: *Patmut'iwn tann Vrcroneac*. K. Polis 1852. 221. U. S. ЕРЕМЯН: *Hayastane est. «Ašxarhaçoyci»*. Yerivan 1963. 52, 109; N. ADONTS: *Армения в эпоху Юстиниана*. СПб. 1908. 315, 316 and 321.

¹² See T'OMAY VRCRUNI: *Patmut'iwn*. . ., 54.

¹³ See U. S. ЕРЕМЯН: *Haykakan araĵin petakan kazmavorunnerə. «Patmabanasirakan handes»* 1968. No. 3. 106, note 73.

¹⁴ See also *ibidem* 107; *idem*: *Hayastane est. «Ašxarhaçoyci»* p. 51.

on and of other water structures, and it was one of the highest developed agricultural centres, renowned for its gardens, vineyards and wheat fields.¹⁵

About the circumstance that the satrapal or royal estates could be situated also near to the main city or the centre of the satrapy, there is a series of concrete examples (the royal estate near Sidon, the estates of Cyrus the Younger and Pharnabazos near Sardis and Daskyleion), supporting the idea about the existence of the satrapal estate in the vicinity of the centre of the Armenian satrapy, which, in all probability, was the city Van.¹⁶

An economic characteristic of similar estates is given by the same Aramaic letters of Arsames, by the cuneiform documents of Persis and Babylonia of the Achaemenian times, and by the Greek sources. They mention gardens and parks, so called *paradeisoi*, forests and game reserves full of wild animals, agricultural farms with wheat fields and vineyards, stock-breeding farms, fish-ponds and many other things. About the direct producers working on the estates it is known that they are mentioned under the designation of *grda* or *kurtaš*, working in the private as well as in the state farms. Part of them were recruited from people taken at the time of the suppression of revolts, and from people taken by force from other countries and reduced to slavery.

These *grda* did not own means of production and they had not personal freedom, but apparently they had movable property, and in Babylonia they also could own land.

They received board, as a rule, in kind and, judging from the tablets of Persepolis, in silver in the form of subsequent payment. There were also craftsmen, and even highly qualified ones among them.¹⁷

When the landowners, in the given case the satraps, lived in towns or in their residences, their estates were directed by managing officials (*paqids*), most frequently from among the local inhabitants, about whom reports have been preserved in the letters of Arsames. They were employed in the collection of poll-taxes from the estate, were in command of the slaves and the movable property.¹⁸

¹⁵ See N. V. ARUTIUNIAN: *Земледелие и скотоводство Урарту*. Erivan 1964. 16 ff., 53 ff.

¹⁶ Several examples can be mentioned, when the capitals of the subdued countries became the main centres of the satrapies, organized on the territories of these countries (Memphis in Egypt, Babylon in Babylonia, Sardis in Lydia, Ecbatana in Media, etc.). Of course, Van — capital of the state of Urartu, and thereafter of the oldest Armenian kingdom — must have become the main centre of the Armenian satrapy. At the place, on the rock of Van, Darius ordered to prepare the place for the inscription, and Xerxes had it written.

¹⁷ See I. M. DIAKONOV: *op. cit.* 75 ff.; M. A. DANDAMAЕV: *Чужеземные рабы . . .*, 1 f; *idem*: *Контракты . . .*, p. 131.

¹⁸ See I. M. DIAKONOV: *op. cit.*, 72 ff. The above-mentioned short characteristic of economy, based on the data of the most developed countries in regard to economy (Southern Asia Minor, Babylonia, Egypt), of course, cannot always adequately reflect the

In connection with the estates of the satrap of Armenia, the reports of Xenophon given in the «Anabasis» are noteworthy. Crossing river Kentris (eastern Tigris, southern boundary of Armenia), the Greeks proceeded five *parasangai* (about 25 kilometres). «The village, at which they arrived — the historian states — seemed be extensive, the palace of the satrap was in it . . .» («Anabasis» IV, 4 ; 2). Continuing their march, the Greeks came to the territory of the so-called «Southern Armenia», the governor of which was Tiribazos. Proceeding 15 *parasangai* (75 kilometres), «the Greeks arrived at the palace and the numerous villages surrounding it . . .» («Anabasis», IV, 4 ; 7).

The comparative material promoting the correct understanding of the above-mentioned data of the historian, mainly relating to the royal palace (*basileia*), shows that the latter is linked up with the concept of the satrapal estate. Fortunately, the most valuable comparative material is contained exactly in Xenophon.

In two occasions the *basileia* is mentioned together with a park (*paradeisos*), a frequent concomitant of the estates of the Achaemenian period (park at the palace of Cyrus, satrap of Lydia, Phrygia Maior and Cappadocia, in Kelainai in Phrygia («Anabasis», I, 2 ; 7) and the park at the source of river Dardanos at the palace of Belesys, satrap of Syria («Anabasis», I, 4 ; 10). park of Cyrus in Sardis, main centre of his satrapy, where the presence of a *basileia*-palace must be added in thought, is mentioned specially («On economy», IV, 21).

Describing the residence and estate of Pharnabazos, satrap of Phrygia Minor, near Daskyleion, Xenophon in his other work, «Greek history», mentions the palace-*basileia* with villages, park and gardens around it (IV, 1 ; 15).¹⁹

The fort of Asidates, significant Persian landowner, was situated in these regions of Western Asia Minor (in Mysia). His estate is described by Xenophon, who mentions here slaves and cattle («Anabasis», VII, 8 ; 9, 12, 13).

It follows from the above-mentioned reports of Xenophon that the *basileia*-palace for the governors of the province and the fort (*τόπος*)²⁰ for the other aristocrats could be the centre of the estate, which could comprise villages, parks, slaves and cattle. But the estate could also consist only of villages. Such estates belonged to Parysatis, mother of Artaxerxes II, and one of them was situated in Syria and the other in Mesopotamia («Anabasis», I, 4 ; 9 ; II, 4 ; 27).

From everything that has been said by Xenophon about palaces-

situation prevailing in Armenia, for which the analogies from Iran proper would be more suitable (with the exception of the royal estates).

¹⁹ See M. ROSTÓVITZEFF: *op. cit.* 374.

²⁰ See *ibidem* 373, 374.

basileiai with villages around them in Armenia, one can see the residences and estates of the satrap Orontas and the hipparchos Tiribazos.²¹

We do not find, in the above passages, an answer to the questions: who worked in these estates, who were the inhabitants of the villages around them? We have already seen that in a series of estates of Iranian aristocrats the labour force consisted of slaves. For the characteristic of these estates the reports of Xenophon on the estate of the significant Persian Asidates in Mysia proved to be very important. With the historian, however, there are much more concrete reports on the villages of Parysatis, in one case with slaves in them, and in another case without them. The slaves reported from the Babylonian villages of the queen were, apparently, aliens taken prisoners by the Persians, reduced to slavery and settled in the villages.

The reports of Xenophon on the organization of the Armenian villages do not authorize us to look for slaves in them and also in the villages situated around the palaces-*basileiai*. It can be regarded as proved that the villages of Armenia in the Achaemenian period were village communities, about the existence of which there are several data also with Xenophon himself.²² According to their situation the villages in the estates of the satrap and the hipparchos in Armenia, with some reservations, resemble mostly to the villages-extates of Parysatis at river Chalos in Syria, given to the queen «as a present» («Anabasis», I, 4; 9; Ktesias: Persica, fragment 89). Here, apparently, differently from the estates of the same queen in Babylonia, free people lived, who besides the usual poll-tax to the king, were obliged to bear the expenditures on the maintenance of the various needs of the queen and her court. And the members of the peasant community in the above-mentioned estates of the satrap of Armenia, besides the tax to the king of kings, gave the major part of their income to the satrap himself. Possibly, Xenophon has in mind such a practice, usual in certain satrapal estates, when he speaks about the collecting of food-products for the satrap in one of the villages of Assyria in the vicinity of which the palace-*basileia* was situated («Anabasis», III, 4; 24, 31).

2. Court servants or slaves?

Xenophon tells that, marching through Armenia, the Greeks took the palace of Tiribazos, governor of Western Armenia, and in it a bed with silver legs, goblets and men calling themselves *distributors of bread* and *cup-bearers* («Anabasis», IV, 4; 21).

²¹ Craftsmen's workshops could also belong to the satraps of Armenia, for the preparation of artistic metal articles, about the activity of which there are several indirect data from the time concerned.

²² See S. T. ЕРЕМИАН: Основные черты общественного строя Армении эллинистической эпохи, «Известия АН Арм. ССР», обществ. Науки 1948. № 11. 37, 38.

The mentioning of the above-mentioned persons by the historian raises, of course, the question about the organization of the court of the satrap and other governors. The reports are apparently not sufficient to clarify the whole staff of the satrapal court, but the existing few data permit to state that it imitated the royal court in everything.

Xenophon shows in another work of his («Kyropaideia», VIII, 6) that the court of the satrap was organized according to the pattern of the court of the Persian king, and that the court customs of the satrap must have coincided with the customs of the great court of the king. This is shown, at the first glance, also by the comparison of the above-mentioned court offices — of the distributor of bread and of the cup-bearer — with the corresponding offices in the royal court. Contrary to the satrapal court, the offices at the court of the king of kings are elucidated by the original sources in greater detail. We know a few dozens of titles both of persons of state offices and of expressly court offices. The nature and content of these titles are subjected to a rather convincing explanation.

Among the high dignitaries of the royal court a special place is occupied by the *οἰνοχόος* of the Greek sources, the cup-bearer, mentioned, as has been seen, also among the persons surrounding Tiribazos, governor of «Western Armenia». He and the *hazarapatiš*, another high court servant, were entrusted with the security of the king. Under Cambyses this office was held by Artembares, son of the chiliarchos (*hazarapatiš*) Prexaspes (Herodotus: Histories, III, 34).²³ Under Artaxerxes I, the servant of the court Nehemiah especially stressed the circumstance that he was the cup-bearer of the king. It is also known that the all-powerful eunuchs of the court were invested with this title («Kyropaideia», VIII, 4, 2).²⁴ According to the opinion of certain researchers, cup-bearers can be discovered on two generally known reliefs from Persepolis (hundred-columned hall and treasury) in the figure standing immediately behind the king.²⁵

It is difficult to accurately define the rights and duties of the cup-bearer, and even more difficult to define his mutual relation to the chiliarchos (*hazarapatiš*). Apparently, he stood at the head of the pages and the personal servants of the king in the court. No matter how we try to clarify the essence of his duty, the original sources depict the figure of a high court and state dignitary, having the great confidence of the king of kings, and not once endeavouring to influence the course of the events of the empire.

²³ See A. CHRISTENSEN: Die Iranier. München 1933. 261.

²⁴ See F. ALTHEIM—R. STIEHL: Die aramäische Sprache unter den Achämeniden. Frankfurt am Main 1961—1962. Lieferung II. 145; P. J. JUNGE: Hazarapatis, Klio 33 (15) No. 2 (1940) 19—21 and 38; J. MARQUART: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte von Eran. Göttingen 1806. 229—232; E. MEYER: Geschichte des Altertums. Vol. III. Stuttgart 1901. 42; W. HINZ: Altiranische Funden und Forschungen (Medisches und Elamisches am Achämenidenhof). Berlin 1969.

²⁵ See E. SCHMIDT: Persepolis. I. Chicago 1953.

In the light of these data Xenophon's report, according to which «the king has numerous (thousands) cup-bearers» («Greek history», VII, 1; 38), appears to be quite unexpected. According to Altheim, the at one time important office its former significance, it lost its value and became widespread by the time of Xenophon. This is why Αἰκίαρ in the book of Tobit boasts to be ἀρχιπονοχόος, head of the cup-bearers, to distinguish himself from the mass of the other cup-bearers.²⁶

We believe, however that one should distinguish the cup-bearer, an official person, from the numerous cup-bearers of the king mentioned by Xenophon. Certain data permit the assumption that at the time of Xenophon, as well as up to the end of the existence of the empire, the cup-bearer, one of the chief advisers of the king, continued to preserve his former high position. As regards the numerous cup-bearers, one should not see in them the former official personalities that underwent a certain evolution, and appeared for the first time in such a mass and mentioned in the report of Xenophon. In all probability, cup-bearers had existed in such a large number among the numerous workers of the king also earlier, and it appears to be, they were slaves.²⁷

There can be no doubt that Tiribazos, governor of «Western Armenia», being himself an official dignitary on the side of the king — «friend of the king» and the head of the stable (in his presence no one else helped the king into the saddle) («Anabasis», IV, 4; 4), had in his court officials and servants.

It is more probable that the persons at the court called cup-bearers and distributors of bread, are no official persons,²⁸ but slaves performing household work. Such and many others — like bakers, cooks, doctors, eunuchs, shepherds, vine-growers, brewers («Greek history», VII, 1; 38) — were in plenty, and they were recruited from the representatives of the subdued peoples.²⁹ Among them there were also more privileged layers, mostly craftsmen, artists, physicians, and possibly, also household slaves, apparently such were the cup-bearers and distributors of bread at the court of Tiribazos in Armenia.

3. The question of the chancellery and scribe of the satrap

Describing the next phase of the war of the diadochoi, Diodorus writes that Eumenes contrived a letter, the content of which was to encourage the warriors to fight, before the imminent battle with Antigonos. The letter was compiled in the name of Orontas, satrap of Armenia and addressed to Peukes-

²⁶ See F. ALTHEIM—R. STIEHL: *op. cit.* 165.

²⁷ See M. A. DANDAMAJEV: Чужеземные рабы..., 10.

²⁸ See G. A. TIRATSJAN: Происхождение древнеармянского царства. «Историко-Филологический журнал» 4 (1966) 85, 86.

²⁹ See M. A. DANDAMAJEV: Чужеземные рабы..., p. 10; I. M. DIAKONOV: *op. cit.*, 85, note 63.

tes, satrap of Persis, former member of the royal regiment of Alexander. In order to give an authentic character to the letter, it was written «with Syrian characters». The letter had the desired effect, and the spirit of the army changed («Historical Library», XIX, 23).

Diodorus does not give an answer to the questions, in what language was the letter, written with Aramaic characters, compiled and, consequently, what could be the language of the official relations of the satrap of Armenia. The letter could not be written in the Aramaic language, because it is more than probable that Peukestes, the addressee, satrap of Persis, former general of Alexander, did not know it. The language of the letter could not be Persian either, at least because the first application of the Aramaic script for the rendering of the Persian language is accepted to be dated from the time beginning with the first half of the 3rd century B. C., from which the inscription from Naqš-i Rostem is dated, which is Iranian in language and Aramaic in script.³⁰ Apparently, it can be stated that the language of the false letter was Aramaic, just like the language of the letter, according to the testimony of the same Diodorus, sent about 312 by the Arabs signalling alarm to Antigonos, similarly written with Syrian, i.e. with Aramaic characters («Historical Library», XIX, 36).³¹

Nevertheless, for a more thorough understanding of the above-mentioned intimations of Diodorus we have to stop at the question of the spreading and role of the Aramaic script and language in the Achaemenian Empire and in this context to examine the question of the satrapal chancellery and scribe in Armenia.

The history of the appearance and spreading of the Aramaic language as the language of the official relations in the Near East, up to its becoming the general administrative language in the conditions of the Achaemenian state-power, has been studied fairly well.³² On account of several advantages over the cuneiform script (alphabetic character of the script, the possibility of use of the easily transportable materials, viz. the papyrus and the parchment), the Aramaic language penetrated into various spheres of life of the ancient states of the Near East. As from the 8th century the Aramaic language appeared as the diplomatic and commercial language in Assyria. This is shown by the Aramaic and bilingual — Assyro-Aramaic — inscriptions, and also by the suspended seals or bulls, remaining from the burnt papyrus docu-

³⁰ See W. B. HENNING: *Iranistik* (Handbuch der Orientalistik). Leiden 1958. 24.

³¹ See F. ALTHEIM: *Weltgeschichte Asiens im griechischen Zeitalter*. Vol. I. Halle 1947. 33.

³² See H. H. SCHAEFER: *Iranische Beiträge*, *Schriften der Königsberger Gelehrten-gesellschaft, Geisteswissenschaftliche Klasse 6 Jahr.*, II, 5, 1930 1—7; F. ALTHEIM—R. STIEHL: *op. cit.* Lieferung I, 78—82, 102, 103 (see the review by M. A. DANDAMAEV on this work, «Вестник древней истории» 1963. № 4); F. ALTHEIM: *op. cit.* 33, 156, 157, etc.; W. B. HENNING: *op. cit.* pp. 22 ff.

ments compiled in the Aramaic language and found in various centres of the Assyrian state-power. The Aramaic language, possibly, was applied also in the state of Urartu. The find of a suspended seal or bull from bitumen in Karmiblur shows that the text of the papyrus that was fixed to it was, very likely, written in the Aramaic script.³³

Several data on the spreading of the Aramaic language in the New Babylonian kingdom are documented from finds in Babylon and Sippar and in other cities, of cuneiform tablets from the times of Nabûkudurriuşur and Nabûna'id with notes and summary in Aramaic language.

After the conquest of Babylonia by the Persians the Aramaic language became wide-spread also in the Achaemenian state-power. In the books of Ezra and Esther it is mentioned that royal statutes were compiled in the period of the reign of Cyrus II. These documents were compiled in the Aramaic language. The cuneiform inscriptions from the time of Cyrus II written in Old Persian also show the degree of spreading of the Aramaic language in the state chancelleries, because they were prepared after the pattern of the Aramaic alphabet.

This, however, does not authorize us to state that the Aramaic language became the state language of the whole empire already under Cyrus II. The state chancelleries under him used the Aramaic language only in the western part of the Achaemenian Empire. The introduction of Aramaic as the administrative language of the whole empire both in its western and eastern parts is connected with the name of Darius. This phenomenon must be connected with his numerous reforms, first of all of administrative and financial character. The Aramaic language soon began to supersede the Elamite language in Persepolis. The coexistence, or more correctly the competition of the two languages in administration ended in the year 459 with the ousting of the Elamite language by Aramaic.³⁴

The vitality of the Aramaic language in the easternmost territories of the empire, and at the same time the degree of its spreading in the Achaemenian period in these distant boundaries of the state are shown by the Aramaic inscriptions of king Aśoka (middle of the 3rd century B. C.), the fifth of which was discovered quite recently in Afghanistan.³⁵

The common language of the chancellery and the official inscriptions is shown also by the fragments of the Aramaic variant of the inscription of Behistun found in the other end of the empire, in Egypt. This is shown, otherwise, also by the inscription itself, pointing to the existence of variants

³³ See B. B. РЮТОВСКИ: Кармир-блур, I. I. Erivan 1950. 75, 76.

³⁴ See the works mentioned under note 32, and also M. A. ДАНДАМАЕВ: Проблема древнеперсидской письменности. Эпиграфика Востока 15. (1963).

³⁵ See A. DUPONT-SOMMER: Une nouvelle inscription araméenne d'Asoka, trouvée dans la vallée du Lamghan (Afghanistan). Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles lettres. Paris 1970. Janv.—Mars.

written on leather, prepared, as we see, in the Aramaic language for the information of the subjects.

The especially broad spreading of the Aramaic language, the so-called Imperial Aramaic (Reichsaramäisch), was ensured by its exceptional ability for the creation of a single system of communication. Without a general administrative language, the centralized administration of the empire, the population of which consisted, as it is known, of different peoples and tribes speaking many languages and dialects, would have been impossible. The sphere of application of the Aramaic language was, of course, rather limited, not much exceeding the frames of the highest circles of power. Particularly, it was the language of correspondence between the royal court and the satraps and even more between the satraps themselves. From this point of view the letter of Eruand, satrap of Armenia, to Peukestes, satrap of Persis, could be written only in the Aramaic language.

The source further states that the letter of Eruand was ordered by Eumenes to be read before his allies. It is difficult to imagine that the letter was read in Aramaic, i.e. in the language in which it was written, because hardly anybody could have understood it. The Aramaic letter was, therefore, read before the allies of Eumenes in a language understood by them, i.e. in Persian. We have touched a very interesting phenomenon, characteristic of the chancellery practice of Achaemenian Iran, especially of the royal and satrapal courts, including also the court of Eruand, satrap of Armenia.

The role and significance of the Aramaic language in the administration of the empire — in the administrative or official relations — show that the opinion about the use of the Persian language in cuneiform in the correspondence does not correspond to reality. The correspondence was done with the help of a scribe, who wrote the letter in Aramaic, dictated to him by the king, the satrap or other aristocrats in Persian, translating the text off-hand. On receipt of the letter the opposite happened, viz. the Aramaic letter was read in Persian.

This practice of translation from a list or note of the off-hand translation is documented from Ezra, who for this mentions a special term, *mpāraš*, which means this procedure. This method, spread in the chancellery practice of the Achaemenian period, which must have been applied also in the case mentioned by Diodorus, permits to stress the special role and position of the scribe both in the royal and in the satrapal courts.

Together with the Iranian aristocracy, the caste of scribes, generally of Babylonian-Aramaic origin, paved its way to the highest spheres of state life, succeeding to ensure their special position by their indispensability. In the book of Esther (9, 2) the royal scribes appear to be in the same rank with the satraps. In order to bring some document to the knowledge of the king, in the court their inevitable mediation was necessary (Plutarch: Artaxerxes,

XXII). Ezra succeeded to rise to the highest level of the royal administration exactly in the quality of a scribe. Under Alexander, Amedines, scribe of Darius III, the last Achaemenid, was appointed governor of one of the eastern tribes. The comparison of the position of the Achaemenid scribe, a chancellery official of high standing, with the exclusive position of the *kātib* under the Abbasids or of the *dpir* in early medieval Armenia offers itself automatically.³⁶

There was a chancellery with its chief scribe and other learned personnel at the court of each satrap, including also that of Armenia. The letter of Eruand refers to this fact.

4. Military organization of the satrapy

The reports of the sources permit to speak about the categories of troops of the satrapy, about the relationship of the civilian and military power in the satrapy, about the military sector of the empire, to which also the Armenian satrapy belonged.

It is known that at the time of war the Achaemenian army was gathered and composed according to ethnic principles. At the time of the Greek invasion the army of Xerxes was composed according to this criterion (Herodotus: Histories, VII, 60) and troops of Darius III were also arranged similarly before the battle at Arbela (Arrian: The military expedition of Alexander, III, 8). Xenophon also reports about the royal army divided according to nationalities when he describes the battle at Cunaxa («Anabasis», I, 8; 9).

Consequently, it is a matter of course that the Armenian troop participating in all these military measures, similarly to the troops of the other peoples of the Achaemenian Empire, appeared as a separate ethnic unit, what is, otherwise, unanimously mentioned by the above ancient authors (Herodotus: Histories, VII, 73; Arrian: The military expedition of Alexander, III, 8, 5; III, 11, 7; Xenophon: Anabasis, II, 4; 8; III, 4; 1, 3). These were troops recruited from the local population, forming the satrapal cadres of the subjects liable to military service. At the time of war they formed the basic military force of the satrapy.³⁷

Besides the enlisted troops, in each satrapy there were also *regular forces*, performing permanent military service. Apparently, this category was kept in mind by Xenophon, when he said: «Each governor of each people has to maintain a certain force of troops.» According to the statement of Xenophon, the duty of these permanent troops was to defend the satrapy from the different inroads and invasions, and also to govern the population («On economy», IV, 5).

³⁶ See F. ALTHEIM: Weltgeschichte. 156, 157; V. S. NALRANDYAN; Mesrop Maštoçi kyank'ë iv gorcë. «Mesrop Maštoç», hodvacnerë žolovacu. Yerivan 1963.

³⁷ See ED. MEYER: *op. cit.* 68.

They formed the permanent military force of the satrapy, and Xenophon possibly kept this in mind, when he mentioned Tiribazos, governor of «Western Armenia», appearing «with his troop» (*δύναμις*) («Anabasis», IV, 4; 18).³⁸

Those Armenians can be included into this category, who according to the «Anabasis» (IV, 3; 4), together with the Mardi and Chaldean mercenaries, blocked the way of the Greeks to the satrapy. According to the opinion of Hübschman and Krkiasharian, under the mercenaries *μισθοφόροι* in the above-mentioned passage Xenophon understood Chaldeans,³⁹ what cannot be doubted and is supported by other data. Markwart⁴⁰ and Manandian⁴¹ regard both the Mardi and the Chaldeans as mercenaries, and Maximova, publishing the translation of the «Anabasis», counts even the Armenians to them.⁴²

Since grammatically the designation «mercenaries» undoubtedly relates to the Chaldeans, but can also be referred to the Mardi and to the Armenians, therefore for the correct interpretation of the passage concerned we have also to take into consideration the above-mentioned data, from which one can see that besides the basic military force of the satrapy consisting of enlisted men, participating, as has been seen, in the battle of Cunaxa, also regular troops could exist consisting of Armenians, who together with the mercenaries performed one of their principle duties, the defence of the boundaries.

Besides the parts performing permanent service in the satrapy itself, there were also such forces of the same regular satrapal troops, which were ordered to other satrapies, where they performed garrison service. According to certain authors, in a series of collectives the aliens, documented from

³⁸ The interpretation of the report concerned of Xenophon depends in many respects on the question, whether Tiribazos participated in the battle of Cunaxa or not. If we believe Plutarch («Artaxerxes», X), Tiribazos was there. Then it is difficult to understand, how he could get to his hipparchia before the Greeks, who, as it is known, separated from the Persians persecuting them and marched ahead. Otherwise, Orontas was also among the persecutors, who, as a matter of fact, returned to his satrapy, but did not reach there before the Greeks. Consequently, it must be presumed that Tiribazos succeeded to return home immediately after the end of the battle, or that he did not participate at all in the war just started. In this case it is possible that under his military force we must understand regular troops providing for the defence of the province entrusted to him. We know several examples, which show that besides the satraps, the *hipparchoi* also had the right to maintain troops, of which they freely disposed in their own territories (ED. MEYER: *op. cit.* 73, 74). If we believe, however that Tiribazos just returned from Cunaxa, than in this case we must presume that he was accompanied by the main force of the hipparchia at the time of war, i.e. by the enlisted troops. This is exactly what Xenophon has in mind, when he mentions the troop of Orontas returning from war.

³⁹ M. H. HÜBSCHMANN: *Die Altarmenischen Ortsnamen*. Strassburg, pp. 190, 207. See K'senop'on, *Anabasis*. T'argm. S. KRKYASARYANI. Erivan 1970. 259.

⁴⁰ J. MARKWART: *Die Entstehung und Wiederherstellung der armenischen Nation*. Berlin 1919. 24.

⁴¹ H. H. MANADYAN: *K'nakan tesut'yun hay zolovrdi patmut'yan*. Yerivan 1944. 68.

⁴² See Xenophon: *Anabasis*. Translated by M. I. MAXIMOVA. Moscow—Leningrad 1951. 102.

cuneiform records in Babylonia, can be regarded as soldiers. Among them people coming from the Armenian satrapy — *uraštai* — are mentioned, under whom one must understand Armenians performing military service in the garrison troops stationed in the Babylonian satrapy.⁴³

The *mercenaries* formed a special, characteristic category of troops of the empire. The possibility is not excluded that Armenian mercenaries also existed, similarly to the mercenaries from other peoples and tribes subordinated to the Achaemenids. In the troops of Orontas, satrap of Armenia and in those of Tiribazos, hipparchos of «Western Armenia», Mardi, Chaldeans, Chalybes and Taochi served as mercenaries. These were more or less independent tribes living in the Armenian highlands and coming into the most different connections with the royal power, with the satrap and the other high dignitaries.

The recruiting of mercenaries belonged among the rights of the governors of provinces and they were maintained by the state.

The role of the mercenaries, especially of the Greek mercenaries, in the life of the empire is well-known. We know also about Assyrian and Hyrcanian mercenaries («Anabasis», VII, 8, 15).

The Persian warrior mentioned in the troop of Tiribazos also corresponds to our conception about the organization of military affairs in the whole empire. It is not excluded that we have to do with one of the *body-guards* of Tiribazos. The body-guards of the satrap and the other governors were generally recruited from the ranks of Persians.⁴⁴

Besides the basic military forces of the satrapy, the enlisted and permanent forces of the army, the Mardi, Taochi, Chaldeans or Chalybes, mercenaries, and Persian body-guards, there must have been also special troops performing garrison service in the main centres and fortresses of the satrapy.⁴⁵ We know about the presence of such troops also from the reports of Xenophon («On economy», IV, 6).

In the known passage on the defence by cavalry-men and foot-soldiers of the southern boundaries of the satrapy against the Greeks attacking, beside the satrap Orontas, another personality, Artuches is mentioned. It is difficult to state, what office was held by him. Artuches could be a «state eye» — one of the important dignitaries of the empire, who was frequently sent out by the king to supervise the affairs in the certain satrapies. In these supervising journeys he was frequently accompanied by a troop («Kyropaideia», VIII, 6 ; 16). It must be noted that this assumption is not very likely already because exactly from this time Artasuras is known as the «royal eye» of the

⁴³ E. UNGER: *Babylon die heilige Stadt nach der Beschreibung der Babylonier*. Berlin 1931. 39, 40, note 6 ; G. CARDASCIA: *Les archives de Murašû*. 7 ; I. M. DIAKONOV: *op. cit.* 88.

⁴⁴ P. J. JUNGE: *Hazarapatîs*. 33, note 4.

⁴⁵ In the period examined, there were several such troops in Armenia, as this is shown by the written sources and by the archaeological data.

empire, whom Plutarch mentions among the aristocrats surrounding king Artaxerxes II («Artaxerxes», XII). As is seen thereafter from the corresponding passage of the «Kyropaideia», these journeys were meant for short duration and, usually, took place secretly.

The circumstance that Artuches is mentioned together with a troop in the given case blocking the access of the Greeks to Armenia, shows that he had direct relation to the military affairs of the satrapy and could be the commander-in-chief of the satrapal troops.

The question of the division of power in the subordinate countries, of the separation of the military force from the civilian power, was apparently raised after the suppression of the great revolts in the beginning of the reign of Darius. Before that, under Cyrus II, Cambyses, and even in the beginning of the reign of Darius, the satraps strongly held the military force in their hands. The description by Herodotus of the march of the Achaemenian army to the west shows that under Xerxes the division of the duties in the satrapies remained in force («Histories», VII, 61 ff.). As a rule, the satraps were not the commanders of the satrapal troops, although each people had its own commander (Herodotus: Histories, VII, 79). The Armenians and Phrygians marched under the commandship of Artochmes, son-in-law of Darius, who was not the satrap of either of these peoples. This office in Armenia was, apparently, held by the Hydarnids, the first governors of Achaemenian Armenia.

The reports, however, which we have at our disposal for the second half and the end of the 5th century, show that all duties, both civilian and military, were concentrated in the hands of the governor-satrap. It is difficult, e.g., to presume that the great uprisings of satraps beginning under Artaxerxes I could have taken place at all, if the military command had not been in the hand of the satraps.

This is eloquently shown by the description of the march of the «10 000» and of all military affairs connected with it, from which it becomes clear that the commanders-in-chief of the satrapal troops were the satraps themselves (see the corresponding passages of the «Anabasis»).⁴⁶

This is seen on the example of the Armenian satrapy, the satrap of which, Orontas, «with his», i.e. satrapal, troop participated in the battle of Cunaxa («Anabasis», II, 4, 8, 9; III, 4; 13). This situation did not change

⁴⁶ See ED. MEYER: *op. cit.* 71—73. In fact, in two of his other works Xenophon speaks quite definitely about the division of the power between the governor-satrap and the commander of the troops (see «Kyropaideia», VIII, 6; 1—3; «On economy», IV, 9, 10). According to the opinion of Xenophon, these reports relate to the years of the reign of Cyrus II, the founder of the Achaemenian state, but in fact they reflect a later period but not contemporary with him, when, as we have already seen, such a division of power could really take place. Therefore, the conclusion of ED. MEYER about the concentration of the power, both civilian and military, in the hands of the satrap alone in the whole period of the history of Achaemenian Iran seems to be too categorical.

even later on, as it is shown by the data on the whole empire⁴⁷ and by the reports relating to Armenia. In the battle at Gaugamela, the Armenians participated under the commandship of their governors, Orontas and Mithraystos (Arrian: The military expedition of Alexander, III, 8; 5; III, 11; 7).

Returning to the question about the office of Artuches, most likely of military character, it has to be said that even in the case of the unique power of the satrap different generals could exist in the given satrapy (see Xenophon: On economy, IV, 7). One of them was the *phrurarchos*, commander of the fortress garrisons, subordinated to the satrap, but taking charge of the guarding of the fortresses and helping him in the defence of the country from hostile attacks and various inroads.⁴⁸

This seems to be also the office of Artuches.

The satrapies with the above-mentioned categories of troops were included into military sectors, into which the Achaemenian empire was divided. At the time of war commanders-in-chief are mentioned, commanding large groups of troops, which usually consisted of the troops of several satrapies. At the time of the military expedition of Xerxes against the Greeks (480 B. C.) there were six such commanders-in-chief of the imperial infantry (Herodotus: Histories, VII, 82), at the time of Artaxerxes II, more accurately in connection with the military expedition of Cyrus the Younger, four commanders-in-chief of the royal army are mentioned («Anabasis», I, 7; 11). We do not know, in which military sector were the troops of the XIII and XVIII satrapies exactly included at the time of the military expedition of Xerxes to the west. On the basis of the data of more recent times about them one can make only assumptions. As regards the reports of Xenophon, there exists a possibility to determine this question more concretely.

Xenophon states: «There were four commanders of the royal army (Abrakomas, Tissaphernes, Gobryas and Artakes) and there were 300,000 soldiers» under each commander («Anabasis, I, 7; 11). According to Ed. Meyer, examining this statement, Abrakomas commanded the troops of the Minor Asian military sector, Tissaphernes the troops of the Syrian and Euphrates district military sector, Gobryas and Artakes the troops of the Armenian and Iranian military sectors up to India.⁴⁹

Apparently, there is a possibility to interpret the report of Xenophon also otherwise. We have all reasons to think e.g. that the Minor Asian military

⁴⁷ See W. W. TARN: Alexander the Great. I. Cambridge 1951. 29.

⁴⁸ See M. L. CHAUMONT: Recherches sur les institutions de l'Iran ancien et de l'Arménie. Journal Asiatique 250 (1962) 17, 18 (Le titre et la fonction d'Argapat et de Dizpat).

⁴⁹ See ED. MEYER: *op. cit.* 75.

forces were commanded by Tissaphernes and that the troops of the Armenian satrapy were included exactly into the Minor Asian military sector.

In the Minor Asian possessions of the king of kings the main role was always played by the satrap of Lydia. It is true that at the same time the brother of Cyrus the Younger was the satrap of Lydia, Phrygia and Cappadocia. It must be thought, however, that under the existing circumstances Tissaphernes commanded the Minor Asian troops remaining loyal to the king of kings and also the Armenian troops. After all, before the appointment of Cyrus in Asia Minor, Tissaphernes was the satrap of Lydia, Caria and the Ionian cities (413—405 B. C.). It is interesting to remark that after the death of Cyrus, the Minor Asian provinces, including also Lydia, returned to Tissaphernes (400—395 B. C.).

The close connections of Tissaphernes with the Minor Asian affairs permit the assertion that exactly he was the commander-in-chief of the Minor Asian troops and, consequently, the *toparchos* (commander) of the military sector of Asia Minor. The other military sectors were commanded, respectively: by Abrakomas (Syrian), Gobryas (Babylonian) and Artakes (Iranian up to India).

The circumstance that Orontas was subjected to Tissaphernes and that, consequently, the troop of the Armenian satrapy was included into the Minor Asian military sector, can be seen from a series of reports of Xenophon. «At that time — Xenophon says — Tissaphernes arrived with his troop, apparently intending to go home, and similarly Orontas with his military force. From here they marched on, while Tissaphernes commanded, and he granted possibility to the troops to buy provisions» («Anabasis», II, 4; 8, 9). The historian laid down here the moment of the return of certain troops of the royal army after the battle of Cunaxa, having, as it is known, a favourable exit for them. We find Orontas together with one of the four commanders-in-chief of the royal army, with the commander of the Minor Asian troops.

In the following passage Xenophon state also clearly: «Tissaphernes appeared at this passage. He had with him his own cavalry, the troop of Orontas, who was married to the daughter of the king» etc. («Anabasis», III, 4; 13).

Not only the fact is noteworthy that Orontas and Tissaphernes are mentioned together, but also that the special position of Tissaphernes can clearly be felt, commanding not only his own troop but also the troops of Orontas.

Together with Orontas and Tissaphernes, Xenophon mentions also another general, Arieios and his troop, what again shows the connection of Orontas and even more of Tissaphernes with Asia Minor. Arieios was the friend of Cyrus and commander of his barbarian troop. In Cunaxa he went over to the king and joined Tissaphernes. In the second passage of those

mentioned above the troops of Arieios were among the returning troops of Tissaphernes. After some time Arieios became satrap of Phrygia.

This Minor Asian surrounding of Orontas, satrap of Armenia, is a very interesting phenomenon, supported by a series of data relating to the military organization of the satrapy, from which it can be seen that in all major military measures of the empire, the Armenians participated together with the peoples of Asia Minor.

At the time of the military expedition of the Achaemenian army against Greece, the Armenians marched together with the Phrygians (Herodotus: Histories, VII, 73). From the description of the arrangement of the imperial troops before the battle at Gaugamela, it can be seen that the Armenians stood together with the Cappadocians (Arrian: The military expedition of Alexander, III, 8; 5; III, 11, 7). Finally, judging from the data of the cuneiform documents, the warriors, and it is possible, only the rural workers, of the Armenian satrapy were mentioned in Babylonia together with the Melitenians (*Milduaia*), i.e. with the inhabitants of Malatia.⁵⁰

All these data can be explained, if we presume that the Armenian satrapy belonged to the Minor Asian military toparchia in the course of almost the whole existence of the Achaemenian Empire. It is not excluded that in the beginning of the reign of Darius, at the time of the great uprisings of the peoples of the empire against the Achaemenian rule, the apparent alliance between Armenia and Media was the main reason, inspiring the Achemenids to include Armenia into the Minor Asian system of military organization of the empire, separating it by this from Media.

The discussed questions of the inner organization of the satrapal power in Armenia, examined in the all-imperial context of the similar phenomena, receive some special meaning and are suitable, if not to clarify, but at least to support the facts and data, general for the whole Achaemenian Empire.

On the other hand, they permit to complete the already drawn picture of the social development of Armenia of Achaemenian times, with its basic forms of economy, its rural community, the problem of the pre-Hellenistic city, commerce and craftsmanship to a certain extent.

Finally, the special significance of the questions examined here consists in the existing connections between the Armenian satrapy and the subsequent Armenian kingdoms (of the Eruandids, Artashesids, and even of the Arsacids) inheriting several definite features of the satrapal administration (the organization of the court and the chancellery, the use of the Aramaic language), known according to the Achaemenian traditions in ancient Armenia.

Yerevan.

⁵⁰ See E. UNGER: *op. cit.* 39, 40, note 6.