#### THE MEDIAN VERSION OF

# THE BEHISTUN INSCRIPTION OF DARIUS HYSTASPES.

### DR. JULIUS OPPERT.

THE scientific world is greatly indebted to the manly exertions and indefatigable labours of Sir Henry Rawlinson, who copied, at the danger of his life, the three texts of Behistun, and who explained, in so masterly a manner, the Persian original and the Assyrian version. The Median text has been given after Sir Henry Rawlinson's casts by Norris in his highly valuable work entitled, *The Scythic Version of the Behistun Inscription*.

MM. Westergaard, de Saulcy, and Holtzmann did not explain the Behistun, but worked especially on the See Records of the Past, Vol. I., p. 107.

Persepolitan documents. M. Mordtmann endeavoured to decipher these texts, but with scarcely more success than his predecessor Norris.

I occupied myself some twenty years with the Median version, and I believe that I have made out the sense of many difficult passages in a definite way. The Median version being the most complete of the three documents, several of the most original parts of the text have now been satisfactorily explained.

I have also added some notes, to justify the exactness of the translation, and to point out some facts which had not been made known before.



## MEDIAN TEXT OF THE BEHISTUN INSCRIPTION.

#### COLUMN I.

- I I AM DARIUS, the great King, the King of Kings, the King of the Persians, the King of the Lords, the son of Hystaspes, the grandson of Arsames, the Achaemenian.
- 2 And Darius the King says: My father is Hystaspes, and the father of Hystaspes' father was Arsames, and Arsames' father was Ariaramnes, and Ariaramnes' father was Teispes, and Teispes' father was Achaemenes.'
- 3 And Darius the King says: On that account we called ourselves Achaemenian of race: from ancient times we have been mighty, from ancient times we have been Kings.
- Achæmenes was the last king independent of Persia, and therefore the kings after Cyrus declared that they were his descendants. He was the sixth of his race. It is highly probable that Achæmenes was superseded by Phraortes, the Median king (657-635), as it was he who first subdued the Persians; he was the great grandfather of Cyrus. As Cyrus was born 599 B.C., the chronology agrees perfectly well.

  There is the pedigree of the race.

Five unknown kings.

Achæmenes, king

Teïspes

Cambyses

Cyrus, king

Cambyses, king

Hystaspes

Darius, king

- 4 And Darius the King says: Eight Kings of my race have before me held the kingdom. I am the ninth, who hold the kingdom. Twice we have been Kings.
- 5 And Darius the King says: By the grace of Ormazd I hold the kingdom: Ormazd granted me the kingdom.
- 6 And Darius the King says: These are the countries which called themselves mine: by the grace of Ormazd I held their kingdoms: Persia and the Amardes (Susians), and the Babylonians, and the Assyrians, and the Arabs, and the Egyptians, and the maritime people, and the Sapardes, and the Ionians, and the Medes, and the Armenians, and the Cappadocians, and the Parthians, and the Sarangians, and the Arians, and the Chorasmians, and Bactria, and the Sogdians, and the Paropamisus, and the Saces, and Sattagydia, and Arachosia, in all 23 provinces.
- 7 And Darius the King says: These are the provinces which called themselves mine. By the grace of Ormazd, to me they made subjection, brought tribute to me, what was ordered by me unto them in the night time as well as in the day time, that they executed.
- 8 And Darius the King says: In these provinces, the man who was a friend, I cherished him, the man who was an enemy, I punished him thoroughly. By the grace of Ormazd, in these lands, my law was observed: what was ordered unto them by me, that they executed.
- 9 And Darius the King says: Ormazd gave to me this

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Twice, at two different epochs, once before Achæmenes, the second time beginning with Cyrus. The Persian dwitātaranam cannot be explained otherwise. Teispes, Ariaramnes, Arsames, Hystaspes, have never been kines.

kings.

<sup>2</sup> Hubirdip is the name of the Susians, the Persian Uváza, Khouz, the Semitic Elam. Norris has already compared the name of Αμαρδοι, in Strabo.

<sup>3</sup> Lycians. The word Sapard, Sepharad of Obadiah, has been conserved also in the Greek Sarpedon.

<sup>4</sup> Paropamisus replaces the Gandara of the Persian.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The Persian text has daustā, badly read until now agatā.

kingdom, and Ormazd was my helper until I gained this kingdom, and by the grace of Ormazd I possessed this kingdom.

TO And Darius the King says: This is, what I did, by the grace of Ormazd, when I gained the kingdom: The named Cambyses, son of Cyrus, was king here before me. This Cambyses had a brother, named Smerdis (Bardiya), they had the same mother and the same father. Afterwards, this Cambyses killed Smerdis. When Cambyses killed Smerdis, the people did not know, that Smerdis was killed. Then Cambyses went to Egypt. The people became bad, and many falsehoods grew up in the provinces, as well in Persia, as in Media, as in the other lands. And then a man, a Magian, named Gomates, from Pasargada, near the mount named Arakadris, there he arose. On the 14th day of the month Viyakhna, thus he arose: To the people he told lies, and

Murghab with its tomb cannot be possibly the Pasargada of the ancients, and the monument of Murghab is not the tomb of Cyrus. It is on the same river as Persepolis, on the Araxes, while Pasargada was situated on

the river Cyrus, which goes into the Persian Gulf.

Moreover, the monument now seen at Murghab, and named "Throne of the Mother of Suleiman," is surely the tomb of a woman. No archæologist can be uncertain on this point, as the same difference, now observed in the East, between the flat or round covers of men's sepulchres, and the covers of female tombs in form of a gable-roof, is to be found in the royal tombs of Persepolis. The modern inhabitants of Persia have not been mistaken on that subject. But the construction of the Murghab monuments is due to Cyrus, whose inscriptions exist there; it was the ancient Marrhasion. I therefore consider it as almost certain that the monument, often erroneously styled the tomb of Cyrus, although already Lassen suggested judicious remarks against that opinion, is in fact the sepulchre of Kassandana, the beloved wife of Cyrus, mother of Cambyses. Compare Her. II.

<sup>2</sup> The month of Viyakhna is the Assyrian Adar, March. On the supposition, that the Persians had a solar year, commencing with the vernal equinox, falling at the epoch of Darius, March 22 Gregorian, March 23

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Pasargada, in Persian Paisiyāuvādā, literally, Valley of Sources, a spot near Darabdjerd, in the South-east of Farsistan, where exist till now the ruins of the fortress which enclosed the tomb of Cyrus. I explained myself on this question in the *Journal Asiatique*, 1872, T. xix., p. 548. Pesiachada is not accompanied by the word hise, "named," it was therefore a very well known place.

said: "I am Smerdis, the son of Cyrus, the brother of CAMBYSES." Then all the people revolted from CAM-BYSES, went over to him, and the Persians, and the Medes, and the other nations. He seized the kingdom. On the 9th day of the month Garmapada he took the royalty from Cambyses. Then Cambyses a died, killing himself.

- II And Darius the King says: Of this my kingdom the Magian Gomates had deprived Cambyses, this kingdom had belonged to our race since the most ancient times. Now, Gomates the Magian, deprived Cambyses as well of the Persians, as of the Medians, as of the other nations, he did according to his own will, and seized the royalty over them.
- 12 And Darius the King says: There was neither a man in Persia, nor a Median, nor any one of our race who would have dispossessed Gomates the Magian of the kingdom. The people feared him utterly. He killed many people who had known the former SMERDIS. He killed many persons for the following reason, thinking: "May they not acknowledge me, that I am not Smerdis, son of CYRUS?" And nobody dared to say about Gomates the Magian, any thing whatever, until I came. And I prayed to Ormazd. Ormazd was my helper. By the grace of Ormazo, on the 10th day of the month of Bagayadis,3 then accompanied by a few men, I killed

Julian, 14th of the Viyakhna would be the 6th or the 12th of March, 522, or 9,479, in adding 10,000 years to the Christian era. I have adopted this way of computation in order to prevent the inconvenience of the negative

If Garmapada is August as it is probable, the 10th Garmapada would

coincide with the end of July.

<sup>a</sup> Cambyses killed himself. A suicide is evidently in the thought of Darius, and by no means an accident. His mother was Kassandana, Persian Kašandana, with the swan's neck, de kažanda, swan.

<sup>a</sup> Bagayadis must be the Nisan; the Assyrian coincidence is lost. As Garnapada, "the time of the heat," must be July—August, or Ab, the Magian reigned just seven months, as says Herodotus, who adds many

GOMATES the Magian, and with him the men who were his principal adherents. There is a fortress, named Sikhyuvatis, in the country called Nisaea, in Media; there I killed him, I dispossessed him of the royalty, by the grace of Ormazd, I had the kingly power, Ormazd gave to me the royalty.

13 And Darius the King says: The kingdom which had been robbed from our race, I restored it. I put again in its place. As it had been before me, thus I did. I reestablished the temples of the gods which Gomates the Magian had destroyed, and I reinstituted, in favour of the people, the calendar and the holy language, and I gave back to the families what Gomates the Magian had taken away. And I replaced (the) people in their ancient state, as well the Persians, as the Medians, as the other nations, just as they had been before. I restored

details, more or less credible. But the first arising of the Magian amounts still until midst of March, 14 Viyakhna, 522 B.C. 9,479.

In taking as a base the now existing commencement of the Persian year,

at the spring's equinox, we would have for the dates:

First revolt of the Magian . . 4 March 522; 9,479
Real accession to the royal power . 1 August 522; 9,479
Death of the Magian . . 2 April 521: 9,480
The name of the spot where the Magian was killed, is Cikhyuvatis

not Cikhthwatis. The character y has been taken for th. Here the statemen't of Darius proves a minor error of Herodotus, who says that the Pseudo-Smerdis was killed at Susa. But the Father of History is right, in speaking of the love that all people, except the Persian, had towards the Magian, who had retired to Media.

The revolt of the first Pseudo-Smerdis was not only the rebellion of an indignant impostor, who took only the name of Smerdis for his proper purposes. It was an attempt to restore the ancient Median dynasty and to abate the nt was an attempt to restore the ancient inequal dynasty and to abate the faith of Zoroaster, reigning since the accession of Cyrus, 560. The Magian changed the calendar, I think (gaithā the world) and the language māniya, or the faith, which Darius restored "for the sake of the people" (Persian kārahyā abićaris, Median Dassumunna nutas). Darius restored the temples of the gods which Gomates had destroyed. It was therefore a political and religious revolution.

There is a difficulty which nobody, I think, suggested. How is it possible that the son Smerdis should have abolished all that his father, Cyrus, had established? At least, the Magian borrowed the name of the son of Cyrus. It was therefore only a measure to take possession of the kingly power under a pretext, and to throw off the mask, when he believed that he could

do so without any danger.

what had been robbed. By the grace of Ormazd, thus I did; I made great efforts, until I established again our house in its state, as it had been before; and thus I made my efforts, by the grace of Ormazd, as if Gomates the Magian had never dispossessed our family.

- 14 And Darius the King says: This had been done by me, after I seized the kingdom.
- the Magian, then a Susian, named Assina, son of Umbadaranma, rose in Susiana and said: "I have the kingdom over the Susians." Then the Susians revolted from me and went over to this Assina, and he had the kingdom over the Susians. And also a man, named Nidintabel, a Babylonian, son of Ainairi, he arose in Babylon, and spoke thus to the people, lying: "I am Nebuchadnezzar, son of Nabonidus." Then all the people of the Babylonians went over to this Nidintabel. Then the Babylonians made defection, and he seized the kingly power over the Babylonians.
- 16 And Darius the King says: Then I sent an ambassador to the Susians. This Assina was taken, bound and brought to me: then I killed him.
- 17 And Darius the King says: Then I marched against Babylon, against this Nidintabel, who said: "I am Nebuchadnezzar." The army of this Nidintabel was

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The name of the man is in Babylonian Asina, and is Aryanized to Athrina; his father called himself Upadar(an)ma in Persian, in Median Hum-badaranma; this is also the genuine form, and in the inscriptions of Assurbanhabal occurs the Susian name Umbadara.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Nidintabel was, according to Darius, the real name of the false Nebuchadnezzar, second son of Nabonidus. The first son, Belshazzar (Belsarusar) was probably viceroy in some other part of Chaldæa, during the reign of Cyrus, and in the same time as his father Nabonidus. He was superseded by the famous Darius the Mede, who was probably a satrap of the Persian king. Daniel says that "he was put to govern," which does not seem to indicate an independent royalty.

ranged on the river, named Tigris. It occupied the banks of the Tigris, and was massed on ships. army was divided into small groups. The one I put on camels, the other I made ride on horseback.2 Ormazd brought help to me, by the grace of Ormazo we crossed the Tigris. There I killed the army of this NIDINTABEL. On the 26th day of the month Athriyadiya, then it was that we fought the battle, then I killed a great quantity of people.

- 18 And Darius the King says: Then I went to Babylon. I had not yet arrived under (the walls) of Babylon, when, at the town named Zazana, on the bank of the Euphrates,3 NIDINTABEL who said: "I am NEBUCHADNEZZAR" went against me, with his army, in order to fight a battle. Ormazd brought help to me, by the grace of Ormazd I destroyed the army of this NIDINTABEL. It was on the second day of the month of Anamaka that we delivered thus the battle. I killed a great deal of the army of this NIDINTABEL, and I made them fly into the river; in this river they were drowned.
- 19 And Darius the King says: Then NIDINTABEL fled with a few horsemen and reached Babylon. Then I

Remark the expression, the river named Tigris, which is neither in the Persian, nor in the Assyrian text, and which denotes that the spot where

The Median text, as in many other instances, gives the real sense of the Persian original, which was misunderstood equally by the magnificent, but unprogressive, work of Kossowiz. The Persian has, aniyam usabarim akunavam, aniyahyā açam patiyānayan, alium camelo-portatum feci, alii,

akunavam, anyahya açam panyanayan, anum cameno-portatum rec., am, equum adduxi.

<sup>3</sup> The name of the Tigris is Tigra, and that of the Euphrates Uprato, the Persian Ufratu. The spot where Darius crossed the Tigris must be between Mossul and Bagdad, as he arrived from the North-east. He found on the Tigris the Babylonian troops, and it is very probable that he turned them, and crossed the river far from the positions of Niclintabel, whom he defeated on the Mesopotamian side. From thence he marched through Mesopotamia, and beat the enemies, six days afterwards, on the Euphrates. The battle of the Tigris took place, in anticipating the Gregorian calendar, 18th of December, 521; 9,480. The battle of Zazanna took

place 24th of December, 521; 9,480.

marched against Babylon. By the grace of Ormazd, I took also Babylon, as I made captive NIDINTABEL. I killed this NIDINTABEL in Babylon.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The capture of Babylon took place only twenty months afterwards, which Darius does not state. But the authority of Herodotus is splendidly corroborated by the very dates of the Behistun inscription, which we shall presently prove.

#### COLUMN II.

- 20 And Darius the King says: Whilst I was at Babylon, these provinces rebelled against me: Persia, and the Susians, and the Medes, and Assyria, and the Egyptians, and the Parthians, and the Margians, and Sattagydia, and the Saces.
- 21 And Darius the King says: A man, named Martiya, son of Issainsakris, dwelled in the town named Kugannaka, in Persia. He arose among the Susians, and lied thus to the nations, saying: "I am Immannes, King of the Susians." And I was just friendly to the Susians, and the Susians feared me, seized this Martiya, who called himself their Chief, and killed him.
- 22 And Darius the King says: A man named Phraortes, he arose among the Medes, lied to the people and said thus: "I am Sattarritta, from the offspring of Vak-istarra." Then the Median people who dwelt in houses, rebelled against me, went over to him: he exercised the kingly power over the Medians. The Persian

<sup>1</sup> The Median text states that the Egyptians revolted, the Persian and Babylonian texts are lost. The Behistun inscription in its first redaction does not mention this, neither the rebellion of the Sattagydes and the Saces. The Saces' revolt only is treated in the supplementary Persian column. There are some Median tablets at Behistun which have never been copied.

Issainsakris is a real Susian name, which the Persians Aryanized to Cincikhri, which was perhaps a nick-name, and changed in order to ridicule it. It may mean, "seller of small things." The Susian true name may signify "son of value." Issan is to be found in the Susian text of

Sutruknakhunté.

<sup>3</sup> The name of Sattarritta is the true Median one, and by no means an alteration of the Aryanization, Khsathrita, which would have been transcribed in Median, Iksatrita, as Khsayarsa becomes Iksersa, Xerxes. This form of Sattarritta is very important, because it proves also the independence of the Median names, and the true character of the dynasty of this land.

<sup>4</sup> Cyaxares, Assyrian Uvakistar, Persian Uvakhsatara. The Median words signify "lance-caster," "lance-bearer," Persian Arstibara, the

Astibaras of Ctesias.

and Median people, which was mine, was small. Then I sent an army to Media. The named Hydarnes, a Persian, my subject, I made him the Chief of these troops. I said so to them: "Go, slay the troops of the Medes, who do not call themselves my slaves." Then Hydarnes went to Media with the army. When he reached Media. there was a town, named Maru, in Media, there they fought the battle. The Chief of the Medians did not even resist a little, Ormazd brought help to me, by the grace of Ormazd my army slew a great number of the army of the rebels. It was the 27th day of the month of Anamaka when they delivered thus the battle. Then my army did nothing else; in the province named Kampanda, in Media, there it remained until I came to Media.

23 Darius the King says: The named Dadarsis, an Armenian my subject, I sent him to Armenia. Thus I said to him: "Go, the troops of the rebels do not call themselves my subjects, slay them. Then Dadarsis marched. When he reached Armenia, the rebels assembled and marched against Dadarsis. They would deliver a battle. Dadarsis fought the battle with them. There

Phraortes, or Sattarritta, was really king of Media, and the Susian revolt took place, like all the others, while Darius "was at Babylon." Hydarnes defeats the army the 27th of Anamaka, but that is evidently not 25 days after the battle of Zazanna on the Euphrates, but only a year afterwards. For it would have been impossible to have the news of the revolt of Media in the capital Rhages, at Babylon, in 25 days; moreover, Phraortes ought to have established his royal power throughout all Media in this very short time. On the contrary, there was a certain interval during which Phraortes was uncontested king of Media. And this man was mighty enough, as to hold in breath three generals of Darius, because Hydarnes was really defeated in the battle of Kampanda.

It would have been a very awkward victory, where the victors were obliged to retrograde, because Hydarnes, obliged to stay in Media, had been expelled, but in Armenia where the Median had propelled their attack. Dadarsis after three battles fought in May and June, 519, 9,482, was obliged to remain in Armenia. A third general of Darius, Omises, defeated in Assyria in December 519 B.C.; 9,482, and May 518 B.C.; 9,482, and May 518 B.C.; 9,483, and after these victories he was equally obliged to support the arrival of Darius in Media.

the arrival of Darius in Media.

is a fortress, named Zuza, in Armenia, there Ormazd brought help to me. By the grace of Ormazd my army slew a great many of the troops of the rebels. It was the 8th day of the month of Thuravahara, when they fought thus the battle. And for the second time, the rebels assembled and marched against Dadarsis, they would deliver a battle. There is a fort named Tigra, in Armenia, there they fought the battle. Ormazo brought help to me, by the grace of Ormazd my army slew a great number of the troops of the rebels; it was the 18th day of the month of Thuravahara, that they fought thus the battle. And for the third time, the rebels assembled and marched against Dadarses; they would deliver a battle. There is a fort, named Uhyama, in Armenia, there they delivered the battle. Ormazd brought help to me, by the grace of Ormazd my army slew a great number of the troops of the rebels. It was the 9th day of the month of Thaigarchis, when they fought the battle. And afterwards Dadarsis did nothing else, but waited on me, until I came to Media.

Persian, my subject, I sent him to Armenia, and I said so to him: "Go, the troops of the rebels do not obey me, slay them." Then Omises marched. When he reached Armenia, the rebels assembled and marched against Omises. They would deliver a battle. There is a town, named Issidus in Assyria, there they fought the battle. Ormazd brought help to me, by the grace of Ormazd my army slew a great number of the troops of the rebels. It was the 9th day of the month of Anamaka, when they fought the battle. And for the second time, the rebels

I I am not aware of the quotation in Assyrian monuments of Issidus. But why was the battle fought in Assyria? Because, very likely, the royal troops, after a not-mentioned disaster in Armenia, had been pushed backwards to Assyria.

assembled and marched against Omises, they would deliver a battle. Then in a locality, named Autiyarus, there they fought the battle. Ormazd brought help to me, by the grace of Ormazd my army slew a great number of the troops of the rebels. It was on the end of the month of Thuravahara, when they fought the battle. Afterwards Omises remained in Armenia, until I went to Media.

went to Media. When I reached Media, there is a town, named Kundurrus, there arrived this Phraortes who said: "I exercise the kingly power over the Medians," in order to fight a battle. Then we fought the battle. Ormazd brought help to me, by the grace of Ormazd I slew a great number of the troops of this Phraortes. It was on the 25th day of the month of Adukanis, that we fought the battle. Then this Phraortes fled with a few horsemen, and went to Rhagae: then I sent there my troops. Here he was seized and brought before me. I cut off his nose, his tongue and his ears, and I stung out his eyes. He was held chained in my court. All the people saw him. And afterwards I put him on the cross at Ecbatana. And the men who had been his principal

<sup>2</sup> Probably the Tammuz, or June July.
<sup>3</sup> This atrocious treatment is only applied to two captives, both guilty to have revived the remembrance of the Median Dynasty, to which Cithrantakhma may have belonged. The translation, "I stung out his eyes," is proved by the Persian éakhsma avazam, and the execution of the Median chiefs is related with more circumstances in the Median text.

It is known that the name of Rhagae is accompanied in the other versions by the words "a country in Media," which is wanting in the Median text. This is one of the evidences for attributing the second system's language

to the inhabitants of Media.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Darius left Babylon after the defeats of three of his generals. He put into pieces the army of Phraortes, in the month of Adukannas, probably the Tammuz or June-July, 518 B.C.; 9,483. He could therefore dispose about his person only two years and more after the battle of Zazanna: therefore Herodotus is quite exact in mentioning the long siege of Babylon, and Darius, although he does not state this fact expressly, is unable to deny the consequences of his own record.

<sup>2</sup> Probably the Tammuz. or Iune-Iuly.

adherents, I cut off their heads in the citadel of Ecbatana, and I hung them up within.

- 26 And Darius the King says: A man named CITHRA-TAKHMA, a Sagartian, revolted against me, and spoke thus to the people, lying: "I exercise the kingly power, I descend from the race of VAK-ISTARRA." Then I dispatched my Persian and Median troops. A Mede, named TAKMASPADA, my subject, I appointed him Chief, and I spoke thus: "The troops of the rebels do not obey me, slay them utterly." Then TAKHMASPADA marched with the army, to fight a battle with this CITHRATAKHMA. ORMAZD brought help to me: by the grace of ORMAZD my army slew a great number of the troops of the rebels, and this CITHRATAKHMA was taken, and brought before me. I cut off his nose, and his ears, and stung out his eyes. He was held chained in my palace, all the people saw him. Afterwards I put him on the cross in the city named Arbela.
- 27 And Darius the King said: This is what I did in Media.
- 28 And Darius the King says: The Parthians and Hyrcanians revolted against me, and called themselves subjects of Phraortes. Hystaspes my father was in Parthia, and the troops abandoned him and revolted. And then Hystaspes went out with the army. There is a town, Hyspaozatis, in Parthia, there he fought a battle with the rebels. Ormazd brought help to me, by the grace of Ormazd the army of Hystaspes slew a great number of the troops of the rebels. It was on the 22nd day of the month of Viyakhna, when they fought the battle.
- 29 And Darius the King says: Then I sent my Persian army from Rhagae to Hystaspes. When these troops

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