



OBJECTS OF DISPLACEMENT

THE AFFECTIVE JOURNEY OF THE CYRUS CYLINDER

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WHAT IS THE CYRUS CYLINDER





POINTS OF INTEREST









ΞΕΝΟΦΩΝΤΟΣ
ΚΥΡΙΟΥ ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑΣ
ΚΙΒΑΛΙΑ ΟΚΤΩ

XENOPHONTIS
CYRI INSTITUTIONE
LIBRI OCTO

*Inter omnes, qui cum rege persarum cives
persarum non solum alios civiles, plurimum in bono
vivimus. Vndeque et omnia virtutum, Oratio,
modestia, gravitas, animi constantia, sapientia, iustitia,
ceteraque, LIBER OCTAVUS. DE CIVIS & MILITUM
MORIBUS & consuetudinibus, Veterumque Persarum
Institutionibus, Institutionibus aliorum.*

THOMAS HUTCHINGS A.M.

OXONIAE,
F. THOMAS BODDARDIANUS, MDCCLXXVII.

CONNECTING THE DOTS

The Achaemenid Empire 550-330 BC

In 550 BC Cyrus the Great, an Iranian, established the Achaemenid dynasty. Cyrus considerably expanded his new Empire, first conquering western Anatolia, then the Neo-Babylonian Empire with its capital at Babylon in 539 BC. He took the title 'Ruler of all the world' and founded a capital at Pasargadae on the Persian plateau.

After overcoming royal legitimacy in the throne, Darius I (522-486) established his own authority. He continued and his victory on a rock relief at Behistun in western Iran. This was accompanied by a lengthy inscription in Old Persian, Elamite and Babylonian that later proved fundamental in the decipherment of the cuneiform script.

The Persian Empire now reached its greatest extent. A Royal Road was built running west from Susa to the city of Sardis in western Anatolia, and a canal was dug from the Nile to the Red Sea. Construction also began at the great royal centre of Persepolis and royal tombs were cut into the nearby cliffs.

The Achaemenid kings continued to dominate the Near East and, through diplomacy, to influence events further west until 334 BC when Alexander the Great led his troops eastward.



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ISNA/PHOTO: SAMAN AGHVAMI



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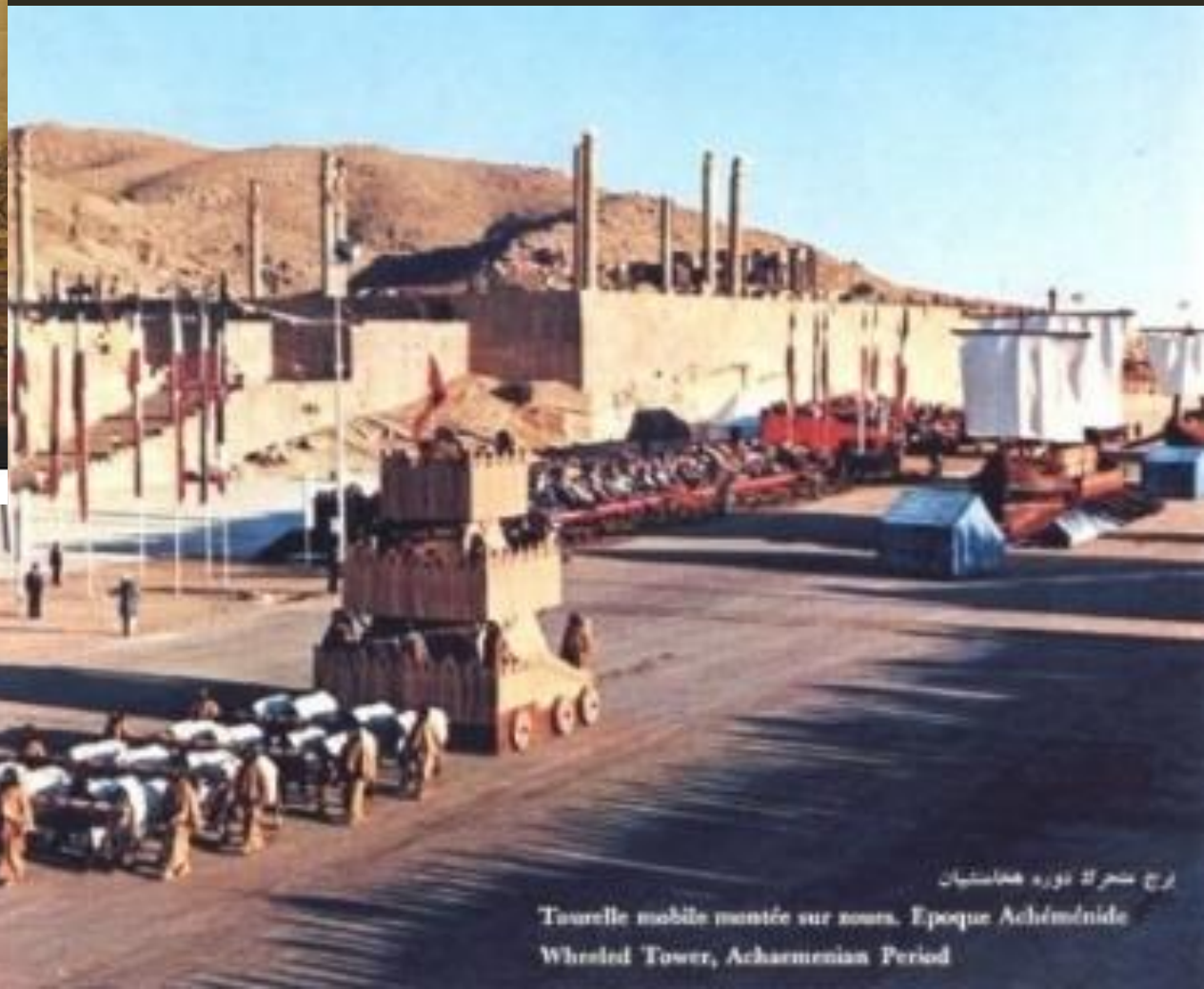






ISNA

ISNA/PHOTO:SAMAN AGHVAMI



برج متحرک دوره هخامنشیان

Taurelle mobile montée sur roues. Epoque Achéménide

Wheeled Tower, Achaemenian Period



The Cyrus Cylinder

This dates from the reign of Cyrus the Great who ruled Iran between 550 and 530 BC. It describes this king's peaceful capture of Babylon in the year 539 BC and how he rebuilt the main temple there. The text, written in a script called cuneiform, claims that Cyrus restored temples in neighbouring cities and returned deported people to their homes. With reference to his just and peaceful rule, this object has been referred to as an early 'charter of human rights'.

Mid 6th century BC, Babylon, Iraq
ME 1380.10617.1041

What does the Cyrus Cylinder say?

I am Cyrus, king of the world, great king, legitimate king, king of Babylon, king of Sumir and Akkad, king of the four rims (of the earth), son of Cambyses, great king, king of Anshan, descendant of Teispes, great king, king of Anshan, of a family (which) always (exercised) kingship. [Extract from the Cyrus Cylinder]

The Cyrus Cylinder is one of the most famous historical documents of the Achaemenid Empire. It was written by a Babylonian scribe in cuneiform script, in the 6th century BC. The cylinder records Cyrus' peaceful capture of Babylon in 539 BC.

and how he rebuilt the main temple of the city god Marduk. Cyrus claimed he had restored temples and cults in neighbouring cities and returned their deported people and gods. He strengthened Babylon's fortifications by repaving the city moat and installing doors of cedar clad with bronze at the city gates. The cylinder was placed in the foundations of Babylon's city wall.

For a full translation of the text, visit www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk



THANK YOU