

Aršāma and his World

The Bodleian Letters in Context

EDITED BY
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VOLUME III
ARŠĀMA'S WORLD

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Persian in Official Documents and the Processes of Multilingual Administration

Jean Tavernier

1. INTRODUCTION

The Bodleian letters that are the focus of this publication are part of a larger dossier of Aramaic, Demotic, and Akkadian documents associated with the satrap Āršama.¹ Within that dossier they make up the lion's share of Āršama's correspondence, i.e. letters written by or to him.² None of the Bodleian letters

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¹ For a listing of the material see Tuplin iii 3–6. The Babylonian spellings of Āršama's name are ^mAr-šā-am (BE 10.130–131:2, 132:2, 5, 13, PBS 2/1 144–148:2), ^mAr-šā-am-mu (BE 9.1:6, 19, EE 109:1, IMT 9:4, TCL 13.203:8) and ^mAr-šā-mu (EE 11:4). (The claim that ^mAr-šā-ma appears in BM substance of these documents see Tuplin iii 49–52. For further comment on the date and 103541:4 (Zadok 2009: 98 no. 56) must be abandoned, since the true reading is ^mAr-ma-mil]. R. Zadok, pers. comm. 16 September 2013.) In Demotic Egyptian his name is written *ṛšm* (S.H5–DP 434 obv. i 1, 12, rev. ii 1, 9, 13, P. Mainz 17:1, PBM EA 76274–1 Ft i 6, ii 7, 10, PBM EA 76287, Bk frag. 3 ii 3; cf. Schmitt and Vitmann 2013: 40, Smith, Martin & Tuplin i 293–9). A name Āršama, spelled *Arssama*, is also attested in Lycian (Neumann 1979: 318a:1), but the date of the inscription, found at the Letoon at Xanthos, is not fully clear. What is left of the inscription, most likely a votive inscription (Laroche 1987: 239; Schmitt 1982: IV/18 no. 3), indicates that Āršama has erected (Lyc. *ḥwete*) something. Based on the occurrence of Trmml in line 2, Laroche believes that this person was a satrap of Lycia. At least from a chronological point of view, the Lycian Āršama could be identical with the Egyptian Āršama, as the earliest Lycian stone inscriptions date from the second half of the fifth century (Bryce 1986: 46). Readers should note that in this chapter personal names are given in a philologically more correct form than is the convention in this publication as a whole. (See the *Note on the Representation of Names* in Volume I.)

² The Bodleian cache includes a large number of (often very small) fragments, which may be the remnants of quite a substantial number of discrete documents: see Tuplin iii 22 n. 66. The onomastic overlap with the well-preserved letters (Pamun (D6.14), Psamšek (D6.3 and D6.6), *Rāšta- (D6.3), *Riavanta- (D6.4)) and the presence of certain formulae—'here it is well with me' (D6.4), 'my lord' (D6.6, D6.9), 'I sent [you abundant welfare and strength]' (D6.5)—make clear

is dated, but information provided by the rest of the dossier makes it safe to assume that Āršāma was satrap in Egypt in the second half of the fifth century.³

The contents of the letters are very diverse. They may concern both public and private areas, although the distinction is very difficult to see.⁴ A hierarchy is visible in the documents, in which (of course) Āršāma is the highest-placed individual, but this hierarchy cannot be used to attribute the letters to a private or public sphere. Three levels are visible (see also Table 2.1.1):

(1) A6.3–A6.7: Āršāma to a high official, named *Rāvānta-. Possibly they were family members, since the letters have greetings, but no administrative formulae (cf. (3) below). This indicates a relation of (near-)equality between both persons. To this group belong in all likelihood also D6.4 (mentioning *Rāvānta-) and D6.5 (greetings).

(2) A6.2 and A6.8–13: Āršāma to lower officials, who do not have Iranian names. Here the administrative formulae appear. As can be expected, greetings are lacking. To this group belong in all likelihood also D6.7 (from Āršāma to Nakhtōr) and D6.8 (from Āršāma to Nakhtōr and his colleagues). If the reference to *Rāšta- in D6.3 points to the presence of an administrative formula, then this text also belongs here.

(3) A6.14–A6.15: Higher officials (with Iranian names) to lower officials (Nakhtōr and his colleagues). There are no greetings and no formulae.

The letter A6.1 is not included here, since it is sent to Āršāma by a group of high officials. The greetings are therefore expected. A peculiar letter in this context is A6.16, written by *Rtaxaya- to Nakhtōr. Here the character of the letter is very friendly, with greetings and no administrative formulae. Accordingly, this letter must belong to the same hierarchic category as the one of Āršāma writing to his high officials and Nakhtōr must be of more or less the same rank as *Rtaxaya-. This implies either that Nakhtōr had been promoted or, less likely, that *Rtaxaya- is an Egyptian lower official who had adopted an Iranian name. In the latter case, we are dealing with a letter between two lower officials. In sum, the hierarchy in the letters does not make a distinction between private and public issues. As already said, this distinction is not very strict. As a result of this, one can conclude that all letters may belong to the public sphere.

that some of the fragments were from letters, and it is likely enough that all of them were. The appearance of *Rāšta is especially interesting, as he is only otherwise mentioned in the administrative formulae (see below, pp. 88, 95).

³ The oldest attestation of Āršāma is in a Demotic document (Smith and Martin 2009: 39, Smith, Martin & Tuplin i 289), dated to 435. But his period of office may go back earlier than that: see Tuplin iii 39.

⁴ This means that the strict distinction, set up by Schütze (2010), should be given up. Moreover, Schütze does not include A6.1 and A6.2, the two documents found in a regular excavation, in his divisional scheme.

⁵ This chapter deals with Aramaic texts only. Texts associated with Āršāma in Babylonian and Egyptian are not included.

The letters contain a large number of Iranian loanwords (Table 2.1.2), some of which are also attested elsewhere in Achaemenid documentary sources (in Aramaic, Babylonian, Egyptian, and Elamite). They belong to the following categories: abstract expressions (1), adjectives indicating a certain quality (6), administrative and political expressions (5), appellatives (10), architectural and technical expressions (6), economic, financial, and fiscal expressions (4), geographical expressions (2), juridical expressions (1), and military expressions (2). Most of the loanwords have an administrative character. This is not surprising, since the majority of the Āršāma letters are administrative or quasi-administrative letter-orders, sent by the satrapal administration on the one hand and by high-ranked people or Persian noblemen, such as Varvāhahya-, Vīrāša-, and Rītaxaya- on the other hand. It may thus be assumed that the loanwords belonged to the official Old Persian administrative language and that their specific meaning encouraged their adoption into Aramaic. The same

2.1 Iranian Loanwords in the Āršāma Correspondence

As all letters are written in Aramaic, one might easily assume that this language is the principal language of the correspondence. Nevertheless it is possible to see elements of other languages as well. These elements can be found on three levels: loanwords, onomastics, and translations.

2. LANGUAGES IN THE ĀRŠĀMA CORRESPONDENCE

This chapter will focus on some general aspects of the language of the Āršāma correspondence, and aims to place Āršāma in a broader linguistic and administrative context.⁵

Text(s)	Sender	Addressee	Greetings	Formulae
A6.1	High officials	Āršāma	Yes	No
A6.3-A6.7, D6.4-D6.5	Āršāma	High Official	Yes	No
A6.2, A6.8-A6.13, D6.7-8	Āršāma	Low officials	No	Yes
A6.14-A6.15	High officials	Low officials	No	No
A6.16	*Rītaxaya-	Nakhthor	Yes	No

Table 2.1.1. Hierarchy in the Āršāma correspondence

Table 2.1.2. Iranian loanwords in the Aṛšāma correspondence

Ir. Form	Ar. form	Translation	Reference	Other attestations	Tavernier 2007a
*abīšavaka-	*bšwk	presser	A6.7:5	-	4.4.7.3
*ācarna-	*šrn	furniture, equipment	A6.2:5, 9, 21	Ar., Bab., EL	4.4.8.1
*advan-	*dwn	path, travel route	A6.9:5	-	4.4.12.2
*azdakara-	*zdkr	herald	A6.1:5, 7	Bab.	4.4.7.14
*bāga-	bg	estate, domain	A6.4:2, 6.5:2, 6.7:5, 6.11:5, 6.13:1, 3	Ar.	4.4.12.3
*baryakara-	brykr	artisan, artist	A6.12:2	EL	4.4.7.20
*dānya-	dny	of the house; common	A6.9:3	Ar.	4.4.2.4
*dāšna-	dšn	gift, grant	A6.4:3, 4	Ar., EL	4.4.3.1
*farnānākara-	*frnkr	foreman	A6.2:4, 8	EL	4.4.7.36
*fṛakaka-	*frk	foremost	A5.2:7	-	4.4.7.41
*ganza-	gnz	treasure	A6.2:4, 13, 6.13:5	Ar., EL	4.4.10.8
*gasta-	gst	bad, evil (word)	A6.8:3, 6.10:9	-	4.4.2.7
*gīda-	gd	domestic staff, workman	A6.10:1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 6.12:2, 6.15:8, 9, 10	Bab., EL	4.4.7.54
*hadābigava-	hd'bgw	interest included	A6.13:5	-	4.4.10.9
*hamānākara-	hmkr	accountant	A6.2:4, 23, 6.13:3	Ar., Bab.	4.4.7.57
*handāza-	hndz	garrisoned	A6.7:6	Ar.	4.4.16.3
*handarza-	hndrz	instruction, order	A6.13:3, 6.14:3	-	4.4.3.4
*handanā-	hndwn	vanish	A6.2:5, 17	EL	4.4.8.11
*kasunaθva-	kstnw	loss, decrease	A6.10:2, 6, 8	-	4.4.10.13
*nāupati-	nwpt	shipmaster	A6.2:2, 7, 8	Ar.	4.4.7.76
*nišāvana-	nšlwn	instruction	A6.1:3	-	4.4.3.8
*pāhigāma-	*pghm	message, report	A6.8:3, 6.10:9	Ar., EL	4.4.3.13
*pāhikara-	*pkr	statue	A6.12:2, 3	Ar., EL	2.4.4.3
*pāhikarakara-	*pkrkr	sculptor	A6.12:1	-	4.4.7.85
*pāhisiāva-	*pstw	praiseworthy, praised	A6.16:4	-	4.4.2.14
*piθfa-	*pfp	ration	A6.9:2, 4, 6, 6.12:1	Ar.	4.4.3.15
*spitakana-	*spkcn	whitener	A6.2:9, 22	-	4.4.7.105
*sraušyāta-	*srwšyt	chastisement	A6.3:6	-	4.4.13.5
*upačāra-	*wpšr	needs	A6.2:3, 6, 9, 22	-	4.4.8.22
*upāiti-	*pyty	necessary	A6.2:9	-	4.4.2.20
*upakīta-	*wpkrt	list of materials	A6.2:5	-	4.4.8.23
*usprna-	*sprn	in full, entire	A6.13:4	Ar., EL	4.4.2.21
*varcābāra-	*wršbr	worker	A6.5:2, 6.11:1	-	4.4.7.117
*vispazana-	wspzn	of all kinds	A6.10:3, 7	EL, OP	2.4.2.3
*yauza-	ywz	revolt, turmoil	A6.11:2, 4	Ar.	4.4.16.6
*zana-	zn	kind, sort	A6.1:3	-	4.4.1.8
*zarṇ(i)yaka-	*zrnk	arsenic	A6.2:17, 21	-	4.4.8.25
*zyāni-	zyny	loss, damage	A6.15:8	-	4.4.10.20

conclusion is also valid for the majority of the Iranian loanwords in Babylonian and Elamite texts.

The loanwords in the Āršāma correspondence do not make up an entirely distinct and self-contained category within the corpus of Iranian loanwords in non-Iranian texts from the Achaemenid era. On the contrary, some of them are also attested in other Aramaic texts from Egypt, Bactria, and elsewhere, and even in texts in other languages from other regions (Babylonian texts from Babylonia, Elamite texts from Persepolis). Moreover, the Egyptian Aramaic texts that do not belong to the Āršāma correspondence also contain administrative Old Persian loanwords not attested in the Āršāma correspondence.⁶

Especially interesting from a geographical, chronological, and institutional point of view are the many Iranian loanwords in the Aramaic texts from Bactria (ADAB), dated to the very last decades of the Achaemenid empire. These texts, edited in Naveh and Shaked 2012, include *inter alia* a number of satrapal letters that are quite reminiscent of the Āršāma correspondence. Naveh and Shaked 2012: 54–7 present a list of Aramaic loanwords in the Aramaic texts from Bactria, but as this list is not fully accurate,⁷ it needs some adaptation. A revised list is found below in Table 2.1.3.

Table 2.1.3. Iranian loanwords in ADAB

Ir. form	Ar. form	Translation	Reference	Other attestations
* <i>acina-</i>	* <i>šrn</i>	equipment, furniture	C1:20	Ar., El.
* <i>ādanga-</i>	* <i>drng</i>	guarantor	A6:4, A10:1	Ar.
* <i>ādvaša</i>	* <i>dwš</i>	affliction, trouble	A4:3	
* <i>āfrašta-</i>	* <i>pršt</i>	instructed, required	A6:10	
* <i>ākista-</i>	* <i>krt</i>	a type of garment	C6:2	
* <i>amaravya-</i>	* <i>nrwy</i>	contrariness, contravention	A5:2, A6:5, B7:3	
* <i>antar</i>	* <i>nr</i>	in the meantime	A1:4	
* <i>āšangica-</i>	* <i>šngšn</i> (pl.)	a young performer of melodies	C4:13	

(Continued)

⁶ **abigara-* 'penalty'; **ādanga-* 'guarantor'; **avadaša-* 'statement'; **azata-* 'tree'; **azda* 'known'; **brazmadana-* 'shrine'; **dašnya-* 'one who is tortured'; **databāra-* 'judge'; **duškita-* 'crime'; **dušvan-* 'ill-willed'; **fratařaka-* 'governor'; **fyapař-* 'chief of the beloved'; **gausařaka-* 'informant'; **gazara-* 'carrot'; **hamakāryağaraba-* 'joint holding'; **hamara-* 'accounting'; **hamamunna* 'in agreement with'; **hamyati-* 'government'; **hanbaga-* 'partner in reality'; **hangaba-* 'partner in chatel'; **hanpāna-* 'rooted passage'; **haptaxvapata* 'guardian of the seventh'; **janaka-* 'group'; **karařaka-* 'traveler'; **maguš* 'magus'; **manuabara-* 'respectful'; **nağrababala-* 'boat-catcher'; **nauvaza-* 'sail'; **niparta-* 'litigation'; **pascaddata-* 'after-gift'; **patifraša-* 'investigator'; **řdba-* 'artable'; **yauđana-* 'grain house'; **yāřakara-* 'assigner of rations'.
⁷ In fact, some expressions, considered to be loanwords by Naveh and Shaked, are in reality personal names: cf. Tavernier 2017a.

Table 2.1.3. *Continued*

Ir. form	Ar. form	Translation	Reference (ADAB)	Other attestations
*aspamanga-	'spmg	horse-hemp	C7:5	
*avastaka-	'wstk	document	C10:1	
*azda	'zd	known	B1:3	Ar.
*azganda-	'zgnd	messenger	A2:2, A5:4	
*bāgaya-	bgy	offering	C1:40, 42, 44,	
*bagina-	bgn	temple, altar	C1:37	
*bānuva	bnw	splendid	D2:2	
*caraka-	srk	grazing	C1:7, 11	EL
*cistakāna-	sstkn	from Cist	C1:30	
*cāyita- / *sita-	syt	meaning uncertain	C1:5, 9	
*daba-	db	harm	A1:3	
*daina-	dyn	religion	C3:2, 18	
*dānya-	dny	homely, for home use	B2:2, C1:16, 35, 48, C3:21, 22, 38	
*dānyadatatāna-	dnydtkn	livestock attendant	C4:18	
*daušaxxavara-	dws'hwr,	provisions for the road	A2:1, 6, C1:2, 51	
	dwšhwr			
*duga-	dwg	yoghurt, sour milk	C1:29	
*frabara-	prbrn (pl.)	gift	C6:2	
*fratama-	prtm	in the best manner	A5:2, A6:6, 9,	EL
*frataraka-	prtrkh (pron. suff)	foreman, chief of workers	A5:4	Ar. (PFAT)
	pry	further	B1:6	
*frayah	gzbv' (st. det.)	treasurer	B10:2	Ar., Bab.
*garidatika- / *girdatika-	grdk	a type of animal		
*gauvarza-	gwz	cattle-breeder	C4:54	
*guftrīšta-	gpryt	deepest	B2:2	
*hancayāktia-	hnskrt	apprentice, servant	A1:2	
*handarza	hndrz	instruction, order	A2:1, A4:1, A5:2, A6:6, 9	Ar.
*haraxxavanya-	hrhwny	Arachosian wine	C1:31	
*kapautā-	kpw	(grey)-blue, pigeon-coloured	C7:2	
*kāratanuka-	krtnk	bodyguard	A2:6	
*kāsakāhna-	kskyn	green or blue	C1:17	
*maihmāna-	mytmny' (pl.)	inhabitant	C1:33	
*nihmāranitā-	nihmny	the account not registered (in the books)	A1:9, 11	
*nimita-	nmyt	assessed, measured	C4:3, 36	

It. form	Ar. form	Translation	Reference (ADAB)	Other attestations
*nišāwana-	nšwnʔ	instruction, command,	A1:10, A6:6	Ar.
*parikāna-	prknʔ (det.)	wall	A4:1, 6	EL
*pašābāra-	pšbrʔ	provisions, supplies	C3:44	EL
*paṭigāma-	pṭgmʔ	message, report	A1:4	Ar., EL
*paṭikarava-	pṭkrw	decorated with a	C6:5, C7:4	
*paṭizbāna-	pṭzbnʔ	prohibition,	A1:5, 7	
*piṭfa-	pṭpʔ, pṭwʔ	ration	B2:2, C4:10, 42,	Ar.
*piṭfakāna-	pṭpkn	ration provider	C1:47, C4:10, 25	
*raitaka-	rytkyʔ (pl.)	young servant,	C4:24, 27, 42	
*raza-ʔ?	rzbs	an edible item	C1:19	
*sāmagauana-	smgwn	black	C6:4	
*sārakara-	srkrn (pl.)	chief	C3:40	
*srausya-	srwšy	punishment	C3:41	
*sundusīa-(ʔ)	snḍst	brocade(ʔ)	C6:3	
*suxtaka-	swḥtk	burnt, burnished	C7:3	
*tauxmakanica-	ṭhmknsʔ	seed-	A6:3, 7, 10	
*upabariya-	pbr̥y	additional delivery	C1:33	
*upahimata-	pḥmt	ripe	A4:3	
*upati-	wpyty	necessity	B5:6	Ar.
*upayāta-	pʔytʔ	bye-portion, impost	A2:3, C4:6, 23,	Bab., EL
*usprna	ʔsprn	in full, entire	A6:8, 10	Ar., EL
*uštṛapāna-	ʔšṭrpnyʔ (pl.)	camel-keeper	A1:2, 5, 7, 8, 11	
*uzgāma-	ʔzgm	disbursement,	A10:11, C2:1,	
		expenditure	C3:1, C4:2	
*vacaka-	wšk	word, utterance,	B1:4, 6	
*vrduca-	wrdwš	plum	C1:18	
*xāθrakāna-	ḥškrnt	entertaining girl	C4:13, 27	
*xšvipa-	ḥšpn	agitated, trembling,	B7:2	
		swift		
*xvašnaka-	ḥšnk	splendid, fine	B4:3	
*yavada-	ywdh	barley-gift, a gift of	C4:8, 39	
*yašīta	yʔst	in the most desirable	A5:2, A6:6, 9	
*yavabara-	ywbrʔ (det.)	barley-supplier	C4:2	
*zaθra-	zwtrʔ	libation, sacrifice	C1:37	
*zyāna-	zyʔnh	damage; restitution,	B5:4, 7, 8	
		indemnity		

As in the Aramaic correspondence, the loans include what can fairly be described as administrative terms, and a number of words appear in both sets of texts. At the same time accidents of survival and content ensure that there are words peculiar to one or other set, and the overall list is substantially longer in the Bactrian case. This material provides a plain demonstration of the importance of seeing the Aramaic letters in the wider context of Achaemenid bureaucracy and its distinctive linguistic character. In that regard it is worth stressing the relatively small extent to which Iranian loanwords penetrated into Egypt. In Egypt Aramaic was a high-level administrative language and to a large extent operated in a separate environment from that of the Egyptian vernacular—a situation on which the fact that official documents drafted in Aramaic might also be translated into Egyptian (see below) seems to have had only a modest impact. It is conspicuous that most of the loanwords encountered in Bactria do not occur in Egyptian Aramaic, although some are very close, e.g. **zyānt-* which is attested as **zyant-* in Egypt. This difference may have geographical and/or chronological reasons, as the two sets of texts are relatively dispersed in terms of location and date.

2.2 Personal Names in the Aramaic Correspondence

Languages other than Aramaic are also attested through the personal names encountered in the correspondence, which is thus a perfect reflection of the

* Iranian loanwords in Egyptian are rare. Only nine examples are known:

- (1) **Abigana-* 'penalty' (Tavernier 2007a: 442 (4.4.10.1)): *3bykrm* (Mattha 1975: 2 ii 2). Also attested in Egyptian Aramaic (TADAB B 2.9:14, 2.10:15, 2.11:10, 3.8:31, 3.9:7, 3.13:7, 5.5:6; TADAB D 2.25:5).
- (2) **Frastāvā-* 'head, chairman' (Schmitt, ap. Smith and Martin 2009: 35): *pršw* (S.H5-DP 434 = Smith and Martin 2009: no. 4 obv. 1 13, rev. ii 5).
- (3) **Htḥ-* of an uncertain etymology, possibly an erroneous writing for **haptaxva-* 'seventh': *hṯḥ* (S.H5-DP 419 = Smith and Martin 2009: no. 11 1).
- (4) **Kapīca-* 'holder, something containing' (Tavernier 2007a: 449 (4.4.14.3)): *kpd* (Scott 1986: 145 no. 79 (reading: Rittner 1996: 685)).
- (5) **Nipšīstamārya-* 'young man of writings, a kind of postman' (Vittmann, ap. Smith and Martin 2009, 57–8): [n]pššmry (S.H5-DP 202 = Smith and Martin 2009: no. 14 rev. 1).
- (6) **Patīfrāsa-* 'investigator, interrogator': *pīprs* (S.H5-DP 162 = Smith and Martin 2009: no. 2 obv. x+6).
- (7) **Vastabara-* or **vagabara-* 'chamberlain' (Tavernier 2007a: 434–5): *p3 wštr* (PBM EA 76274.1 ii 2: Smith, Martin & Tuplin i 296).
- (8) **Vis(a)puṭra-* (Med.), 'crown prince' (Tavernier 2007a: 436 (4.4.7.127)): *wyspwr* (P. Cairo CG 31174.4, 5).
- (9) **Xšābrapāna-* 'satrap' (Tavernier 2007a: 436 (4.4.7.132)): *ḥštrpn* (S.H5-450 obv. i 2; cf. Smith 1992: 295–6): *ih-štrpny* (S.75/6-7.2; cf. Smith 1988: 184–6). Also attested in Aramaic and Babylonian.

multicultural society so typical of Achaemenid Egypt.⁹ Logically the higher administration was in the hands of Iranians. Next to this top level administration, workmen of various origins ended up in Egypt to work for the Achaemenids.

Although the letters are written in Aramaic, there are only few Semitic names attested in the corpus: Ahatubast,¹⁰ Anani, Hinzani, Kosakan, Marduk, Nabu'agab, Nabudalani, Sineri, and Samasšillek (nine out of sixty-six names). Most names are of Iranian origin, which should not surprise us since one is dealing here with letters written by and for members of the Achaemenid elite. The twenty-one Iranian names are *Asmarapā- (?), *Axtizara-, *Ayaza-, *Bagadana-, *Bagafarna-, *Frādafarna-, *Haxāmaniš, *Haumadāta-,¹¹ *Miçapāta-, *Miθradāta-, *Rāsta-, *Ršāma-, *Rtāvahya-, *Rtavanta-, *Rtaxaya-, *Sāraka-, *Upastābara-, *Varavahya-, *Viratša-, and *Zatavahya. Furthermore, twenty Egyptian names occur (*Ankhhapi, Ahpepi, Esware, Harudj, Hēpubaste, Horj, Hotehpēp, Konufē, Nakhthor, Panun, Psmasineith, Pšubaste, Petēsi, Petosiri, Psamšek, Psamšekḫasi, Sasobek, Samou, Wahpremahj, Wahpremineit) and finally, twelve Anatolian names ([]mīya, Al]ma, Ammuwana, Armapiya, Ka, Kenzasirna, Muwasasirna, Piyatarunazi, Sadasbinazi, Sarmanazi, and Tandiya) are also found. The high number of Anatolian names is slightly misleading in view of the fact that most of them occur in a single enumeration of Cilician slaves (A6.7). Only Armapiya and Hēndasirna/Kēndasirna have another function as addressees of letters (Armapiya receives A6.8, whereas the other person is apparently a colleague of Nakhthor). Four names (*N' [], *NW [],¹² []nš, and []twy) cannot be affiliated because of their fragmentary state.

2.3 Translational Issues in the Aṛšama Correspondence

That language contacts may have an influence on grammar is *inter alia* visible in the Aramaic language, as it was used during the Achaemenid period. Especially when Old Persian and Aramaic came into direct contact with each other, more specifically in the administration, Aramaic adopted Persian expressions and translated them literally into Aramaic, thereby sometimes ignoring

⁹ See Vitmann iii 263–77.

¹⁰ The status of this name is not entirely certain: A6.13:3(1) n. The visible traces of this name show Hw[...], with space for one or two characters. As he is an official based at Damascus and his colleagues mostly bear Iranian names, he too had probably an Iranian name. If correct, then a restoration Hw[md]t becomes plausible, rendering *Haumadāta-. This name, written *Hwmdt*, is also attested in Aramaic texts from Persepolis (Tavernier 2007a: 198 (4.2.731)). Aramaic middle w usually denotes Iranian /au/ or /w/, not /u/.

¹² Not to be reconstructed to *Nw[šh]. Although a lexeme *nwšh* occurs in the Aramaic texts from Egypt (D 8.4:24), this is not a Semitic personal name meaning 'female person', as Kornfeld (1978: 41) believes, but a noun meaning 'household' (Porten and Yardeni 1986–99: 4. xxxix).

the Aramaic grammatical rules. It seems a reasonable assumption that administrative expressions of this sort were introduced by Iranian-speaking people who had learned some Aramaic.

Some expressions used by ʾršāma are genuine calques on the original Old Persian expressions (Briant 2002: 457), e.g. *grd mnm wšpzn* 'workers, craftsmen of all kind, which is a perfect equivalent of *kurtaš marīp mišbazana* (PT 79:4–5), itself a translation of Old Persian **grda kinuwaḳa višpazana* (cf. Old Persian *marīyā kinuwaḳa* (DSf 47) and El. RUH^{mes} *marīp* (DSf 41; DSz 44–5)). Other examples (from the Bodleian letters and in some cases elsewhere), some of which admittedly remain doubtful, are discussed below.

- (1) *ʾir* 'then, afterwards' corresponds to Old Persian *pasāva*. It is also used as ideogram for Middle Persian *pas* 'then' (Cowley 1923: 206, Menasce 1954: 162, Kutscher 1954: 241 and 1970: 388, Whitehead 1978: 134, DNWSI 39).

- (2) The Aramaic lexemes *bēʿdayin* and *ʿedayin* also correspond with Old Persian *pasāva*. This is not due to Aramaic influence on Old Persian, but rather to Old Persian influence on Aramaic (Makujina 2013).

- (3) *Byn bgyʾ zyly* 'in my domains' (A6.4:2, A6.5:2, A6.6:3, A6.7:5). Normally such a phrase should be constructed with the preposition *b-* 'in, but the use of *byn*, originally meaning 'between', is inspired by Old Persian *antar* 'in' (Rosenthal 1939: 81, Driver 1954: 11 and 1965: 39, Kutscher 1954: 242, Menasce 1954: 162, Eilers 1954–6: 335, Lewy 1955: 292–3, Altheim and Stiehl 1963: 254 n. 58, Whitehead 1978: 134, DNWSI 153). This is confirmed by the fact that the precursors of Old Persian *antar*, PIE **h₁enter* and Proto-Indo-Iranian **antar*, also meant 'between' (cf. Old Indian *antar*, Lat. *inter*, Old Irish *eter*, French *entre*; Pokorny 1959: 313, Mayrhofer 1992: 76). *Byn* is also used in the same way both in the Aramaic documents from Bactria (Naveh and Shaked 2012: 51), where we find *byn šnyh* 'in his grain fields' (ADAB A8:1) and *byn ywmm 2* 'in two days' (A10:a:8), and in Abigar 40 (*byn krm*) 'in the vineyards'. The existence of this calque is further reflected in the use of *BYN* as an ideogram for *andar* 'in; among, between' in Middle Iranian texts.

- (4) *Ar. br byt* 'prince' is accepted by the scholarly community to be a calque on Old Persian **visaputhra* 'son of the (royal) house, prince, as is Babylonian *mar bīt* 'prince' (Kaufman 1974: 70, with older references, Whitehead 1978: 133–4, Stolper 1985: 21).¹³ In Egyptian the Old Persian expression was simply adopted as a loanword: *wyspwt* (P. Cairo CG 31174:4, 5) renders **visaputhra* (Vittmann 1991/92: 159, Vittmann 2004: 131, 168, Tavernier 2007a: 436 (4.4.7.127)).

¹³ See also Tuplin iii 31–8.

- (them) your own).

- (11) The Aramaic verb *šl* (A6.8:3, A6.10:9) normally means 'to ask, but in the Āršāma correspondence may mean 'to call to account' and even 'to punish, possibly as an equivalent of Old Persian *fras-* (Benveniste 1954: 304–5). This influence may, however, be indirect, as it could be transmitted via Akkadian: in the Babylonian versions of Achaemenid Royal Inscriptions the verb *ša'alu* 'to ask' may mean 'to question, to punish. One Bactrian Aramaic text contains this use of *šl* (ADAB A1:10).
- (12) Another Old Persian intrusion into Aramaic is the expression *šym t'm* 'to issue an order' (in various forms).¹⁸ Kutschera (1969: 149–51) considered it to be a *passivum majestatis*, but the expression is also attested in the active form and therefore Makujina (1997) considers the formula to have an Old Persian origin, noting, however, that it is not a servile rendering of Old Persian **frawandā(naw) nistāta-* 'a command was issued (by me)'. In many documents of the Achaemenid period, the expression 'his name is put after a person's name on the first occasion it is mentioned. This habit is attested in Aramaic (*šmh*),¹⁹ Egyptian (*rn=f*),²⁰ and Elamite (*hiše*)²¹ and is clearly a calque on a similar expression found in the Old Persian royal inscriptions (*nāma* 'by name'). In the Āršāma correspondence it occurs in A6.3, [A6.6], A6.7, and A6.11–A6.12.
- (14) *Wknwth* and his colleagues' (A6.1, A6.3, A6.7, A6.11–A6.14): this expression is also attested in other Aramaic texts,²² in two published Egyptian texts²³ (*lrm n3y=f lry.w*) and frequently in Elamite texts²⁴

¹⁸ ATNS 14:5, 15:3, TADAB A4.5:21, A6.2:22, 25, A6.7:8. It is attested in active as well as in passive constructions. For more details, see Makujina (1997: 2).

¹⁹ Aramaic *šmh* following a personal name is regularly attested in papyri from Egypt (ATNS 17, 55a, 60, 63, TADAB B2.11, B3.3, B3.6–B3.9, B8.1–B8.3, B8.5–B8.6, C3.8, C3.19, D5.39, D6.1, D6.8, D7.40) as well as from Samaria (WDSP 1:2, 3:1, 4–6:2, 7:1, 9:1, 10:2, 19:2, 36 fig. 2 and 4; cf. Groppe 2001 and Dusek 2007). Not surprisingly, the phrase is also frequently attested on the Aramaic Fortification texts from Persopolis (Azzoni 2008: 259), examples being PFAT 1, 12, 18, 20, 31, 37, 53, 184–6, 230–3, 387–9, 465, 490, etc. (These and other citations of PFAT material in this chapter have been checked against the original documents.) Remarkably, *šmh* does not occur in the Aramaic texts from Bactria.

²⁰ e.g. in S.H5-DP 162 obv. x+10 (Smith and Martin 2009: 25).

²¹ For references for Elamite *hiše*, see Cameron 1948: 205, Halloack 1969: 697, Hinz and Koch 1987: 670.

²² The Aramaic lexeme *knt* (loan from Akk. *kinattu*) is frequently attested in the form *wknwth* in Aramaic texts from the Achaemenid period, among which most of the Āršāma letters (A6.1–A6.3, A6.7, A6.11–A6.14). It is clearly an Achaemenid administrative expression, since it only occurs in Official Aramaic. More attestations can be found in ATNS 34a, 79, 97, 99, 121, TADAB B2.2, B3.8, B6.4, B7.1, B8.4–B8.6, C1.1 (Ahiqar Story), C3.8, D1.32, D3.45. It is also attested in Persopolis (e.g. PFAT 21, 64, 70, 282–3, etc.). Remarkably, *wknwth* does not occur in the Aramaic texts from Bactria.

²³ S.H5-DP 162 obv. x+4 (Smith and Martin 2009: 25); S.H5-DP 434 obv. i 4, 6 and rev. ii 7, 11, 12 (Smith and Martin 2009: 32–3, 36). Both texts are official reports written in the Persian chancery. One of them even mentions Āršāma. The formula is also found in the new British Museum papyri (Smith, Martin & Tuplin 1996).

²⁴ References can be found in Cameron 1948: 204, Halloack 1969: 665, Hinz and Koch 1987: 42–3.

(*akkaayaše*) and is a calque on the reconstructed Old Persian **haaxāya-šai* 'his colleagues'.

These calques imply that Old Persian has an important oral presence in the correspondence, even if it does not appear as a written language. This feature of the Āršāma material, which is shared by other texts from the Achaemenid era, makes it clear that Old Persian was an important administrative language, even though it is hardly directly attested as such. The calques also confirm that the Aramaic texts from Egypt and those from Bactria, despite their being dated about sixty years later, originate from a similar administrative context, which was certainly one aspect of the Achaemenid imperial signature. It must, however, be noted that most of the calques appear in the Āršāma correspondence, and this is not surprising, of course, given the purely administrative/satrapal character of this set of texts.

3. ADMINISTRATION AND LANGUAGE IN THE ĀRŠĀMA CORRESPONDENCE

The Āršāma dossier is part of the satrapal administration of Persian Egypt. It deals with various issues, such as rations for officials travelling to Egypt, Āršāma's estates in Egypt, the activities of a sculptor, the repair of a boat, etc. The administrative character also explains the use of a formal, official language, which was, as has been demonstrated, peppered with Iranian loanwords, most of them also belonging to the realm of administration. The administrative character is further enhanced by the formulae that appear at the end of various letters (see Table 2.1.4). The word *septnu*, the Akkadian equivalent of Aramaic *spr*, indicates a scribe who was able to write in alphabetic (i.e. Aramaic) writing. It can be equated with El. *teppir* (Tavernier 2008: 61, 64), an important official already attested from the Old Elamite period onwards,²⁵ and is clearly distinguished from the class of scribes who used the local writing systems (cuneiform, Demotic), whose members were called *tupšarwu* in Akkadian and *šh* in Egyptian.

Table 2.1.4. Aramaic administrative formulae

Aramaic	Translation
(1) PN ₁ <i>ydt' m' znh</i> (A6.8-13)	(1) PN ₁ is cognizant of this order
(2) PN ₁ <i>bt' m</i> (A6.2)	(2) PN ₁ is the master of the order
PN ₂ <i>spr</i> (A6.8-13)	PN ₂ is the <i>septnu</i>
PN ₃ <i>ktb</i> (A6.2)	PN ₃ wrote (cf. below)

²⁵ See Tavernier (2007b) for more information on this official.

The people involved in these formulae are *Rtavahyah-²⁶ who is three times the master of the order, *Bagasravah-²⁷ who plays the same role twice, *Rtaxaya-²⁸ once the master of the order, *Rāsta-²⁹ who acted as *sepinu* five times, and Ahpepi-³⁰ who was the *sepinu* on one occasion.

These phrases offer us an interesting insight into the production process of an administrative order. Based on the information provided by the Āršama correspondence it seems that the following phases were inherent to this process:

- (1) Āršama, satrap of Egypt, gives an order in Old Persian to one of his officials (PN₁). This official is the one who is cognizant of the order.

- (2) A *sepinu* apparently writes an Aramaic version of the order, as he is the one who is able to write in Aramaic script.

All texts have the same formulae, except for A6.2, an authorization for a boat repair, which is slightly different, both in wording and in content: *ny spr b' i'm nbw'qb kit* 'Anani³¹ the *sepinu* is the master of the order. Nabu'aqab³² has written. In addition, there is also an Egyptian formula *šh S3-sbk* 'Sasobek³³ has written. The last remark confirms that a Demotic version of this text, written by Sasobek, also existed. Unfortunately, it has not yet been recovered. In addition, it seems that phases one and two are being executed by a single person, Anani, whereas the final Aramaic version of the order was written by Nabu'aqab. The Egyptian remark was probably added for filing purposes and it is possible that the Egyptian copy had an Aramaic remark, saying that Nabu'aqab wrote the Aramaic version.

The reference to Sasobek is not the only Demotic subscript found in the Āršama correspondence. A6.2 also has *t3 byry* 'the boat', while A6.11 has *r-tb3¹ n3 3h(w) n P3-lmn r.ty(=y) (n) P3-ty-Wsir* 'about the fields of Paman which I have given to Petosiri'. Of peculiar interest are some names in Demotic on the documents A6.12 (Htp-ḥp), A6.13 (Htp-ḥp), and D6.11 (Htpubaste).³⁴ As the two first ones are written on an official document with administrative formulae, Htpet-ḥep might very well be the scribe of the Demotic copy of these

- ²⁶ Iranian name meaning 'better through Artā' (Tavernier 2007a: 302 (4.2.1518)).
- ²⁷ Iranian name meaning 'Bagas' fame. It is also attested in the Babylonian and Elamite *Nebenüberlieferungen* (Tavernier 2007a: 138–9 (4.2.284)).
- ²⁸ Iranian name, two-stem hypocoristic of *Ārtaxšaça- or *Rtaxraθ/tu-. It is also attested in the Elamite *Nebenüberlieferung* (Tavernier 2007a: 302 (4.2.1532)).
- ²⁹ Iranian-Median name meaning 'right. Its Old Persian counterpart *Rāsta- is attested in the Elamite *Nebenüberlieferung* (Tavernier 2007a: 282 (4.2.1369)).
- ³⁰ Egyptian name meaning 'Pepi is magnificent' (Grelot 1972: 463, Kornfeld 1978: 77).
- ³¹ Hypocoristic of 'Ananyah, a Hebrew name meaning 'Yah has appeared' (Grelot 1972: 465–6; Kornfeld 1978: 67).
- ³² Aramaic name meaning 'Nabū has guarded' (Grelot 1972: 480, Kornfeld 1978: 61).
- ³³ Egyptian name meaning 'Son of Sobek' (Ranke 1935: 284).
- ³⁴ Or Hētpese.

texts, just as Sasobek is the scribe of the Demotic copy of A6.2. If this is true, then D6.11, possibly written by Hctpubaste, may also belong to this type of letter. Concerning the formulae in general, it should also be noted that the ethnic affiliation of the personal names is informative to some degree (Tavernier 2008: 67–9; see Table 2.1.5). The people cognizant of the orders, except 'Anani, have Iranian names. The two *sepru*s have an Iranian and an Egyptian name. In this context it should not be forgotten that non-Iranian people could adopt Iranian names to enhance their career opportunities. The two scribes, Nabu'aqab and Sasobek, have names corresponding to the language in which they wrote (Aramaic and Egyptian).

The formulae corroborate the existence of a translational process, but they do not give much information on who was responsible for translating the Old Persian order into Aramaic. Several possibilities come into mind, at least theoretically:

(1) The satrap himself dictated the order in Aramaic. This seems highly implausible.

(2) The satrap dictated in Old Persian to his official, the one cognizant of the order. This person translated it into Aramaic and passed it to the *sepru*, who wrote an Aramaic version of it. This theory is not likely. Two circumstances can be imagined: (1) The one cognizant of the order wrote an Aramaic version; (2) the one cognizant of the order dictated the Aramaic version to the *sepru* who wrote it down. In both cases, problems emerge. The first suggestion leaves one wondering why it was necessary to have a second written Aramaic version: calligraphic concerns may be excluded, since calligraphy was not the main issue in this kind of documents. The second suggestion implies that the one cognizant of the order could speak, but not write Aramaic, which is improbable.

(3) The official cognizant of the order passed the Old Persian copy of the order to the *sepru*, perhaps after officially authorizing it. The *sepru* translated it into Aramaic and produced a written Aramaic version of the order.

Table 2.1.5. Names in the Aramaic administrative formulae

Function	Name	Affiliation
Cognizant of the order (<i>ydt 'm' znh</i>) / Master of the order	*Bagasravah-	Iranian
	*Rtavahyah-	Iranian
	*Rtaxaya-	Iranian
	'Anani	Semitic
<i>Sepru</i> (<i>spr</i>)	*Rāsta-	Iranian
	Ahpēpi	Egyptian
	'Anani	Semitic
Scribe (<i>kib</i>)	Nabu'aqab	Semitic
	Sasobek	Egyptian

Scenario (3) therefore seems preferable, and the implications of this conclusion can be pursued in other sets of documents, both in Egypt and in other parts of the Achaemenid empire.

4. THE ARŠAMA CORRESPONDENCE IN ITS EGYPTIAN SATRAPAL CONTEXT

The Bodleian letters and the Aršama-related texts from Elephantine and Saqqara are not the only documents from Egypt linked to a satrap. There is also the correspondence of the satrap Farnadāta, which contains two Egyptian letters³⁵ dealing with the appointment of a *lesōnīs* priest in the temple of Khnum in Elephantine. Despite its small size this archive is very interesting in the present context, because the administrative formulae discussed above also occur here. The first letter (P.Berl.Dem.13540) was written by Farnadāta, the satrap of Egypt, on 22 April 492 to the priests of the temple of Khnum. The second letter (P. Berl.Dem.13539) dates from 25 December 492 and was written by the priests to Farnadāta. The administrative formulae only appear in the first text. Although both letters are written in Egyptian, there is a big linguistic difference between them. While P.Berl.Dem.13539 (EPB C1), written by the priests, is composed in good idiomatic Egyptian, P.Berl.Dem.13540 (EPB C2), written by the satrap, uses a language which regularly conflicts with Egyptian grammar. This awkward circumstance can easily be explained. The letter written by the satrap is a literal translation of an original Aramaic draft, in which the scribe translated phrase by phrase from Aramaic (Hughes 1984: 77, Depauw 2006: 152, 295). Unfortunately the Aramaic original is lost, but one can still reconstruct it partially and see that the Egyptian letter nicely follows Aramaic epistolographic formulae:

(1) The introduction of the letter can be considered 'un-Egyptian': $PN_1 \ddot{a}d n PN_2 n t3y hty$ 'A says to B at this moment'³⁶ is most likely a direct translation from Aramaic $mn PN_1 ? PN_2 (w)k't$ 'From PN_1 to PN_2 . (And) now, with the addition of a verb, as the Egyptian language prefers (Hughes 1984: 79, Depauw 2006: 152). In Aramaic letters, $(w)k't$ is frequently used as the introduction of the body of the letter or of new paragraphs within it (Porten 1968: 25).

³⁵ Hughes 1984: 75–7 has demonstrated that PLoeb. 1 was not written to Farnadāta, but to the commander of the fortress of Aswan Farnavā (on the name, see Tavernier 2007a: 178 (4.2.569)). This formula is attested only twice in Egyptian. The other occurrence is in P.Berl.Dem.23584, a letter dated to 493/2 (Depauw 2006: 152). Interestingly this letter is also written by the satrapal administrator, as it was sent by the satrap Raukāya- (Tavernier 2007a: 285 (4.2.1386)) to a person named *Ns-ḥm-p3-mtr*. The name of the sender is also written in Aramaic on the address on the obverse of the document (Lüddekecks and Zauzich 1971: 119–20), which is a sign that here too we are in a bilingual administrative environment.

- (2) *PN p3 nty ḏd* 'PN is he who says' is certainly related to Aramaic *PN kn mr* 'PN says thus' (Hughes 1984: 79; cf. A6.3:6, 6.6:4, 6.8:2, 6.11:3, 6.13:4, 6.15:3).³⁷

- (3) *Trjwš pr-3* 'Darius the pharaoh' instead of the regular Egyptian order 'Pharaoh Darius' (Hughes 1984: 82). This 'mistake' is also attested in S. H5-DP 162 obv. x+7 (Smith and Martin 2009: 27).

- (4) *Mj ḥprf'w s rḥ.t n.tn* 'Let it happen that it be known to you' is a nearly exact translation of Aramaic *kn ydy' yhw/h/yhwy lk* 'Thus let it be known to you' (Hughes 1984: 82).

Alongside these features, the Farnadāta letter also contains the same administrative formulae as the letters of ʾĀršāma. This allows us to reconstruct the production process of Farnadāta's command. According to Hughes (1984: 82, also Depauw 2006: 164), Šḥr (PN₁) decided what the contents of the letter should be and perhaps drafted the Aramaic version. Peftuneith (PN₂) drafted the Egyptian version or translated the Aramaic into Egyptian. Finally, Apries (Wahibre) (PN₃) wrote the present copy in Egyptian (see Table 2.1.6). These formulae can easily be paralleled to the Aramaic ones of the ʾĀršāma correspondence, which gives the result shown in Table 2.1.7.

A reflection of these formulae is also encountered in another Demotic papyrus (S.H5-DP 434 rev. ii 3), which reads: *PN rḥ p3y 'w3ḥ* '[] 'PN knows this order'. According to Smith and Martin (2009: 37) this is a translation from

Table 2.1.6. Egyptian administrative formulae

Egyptian	English
<i>PN₁ i.rḥ p3y w3ḥ</i>	PN ₁ knows this order
<i>PN₂ p3r i.ir sš i3y sš.t</i>	PN ₂ is he who wrote this letter
<i>sš PN₃</i>	PN ₃ wrote

Table 2.1.7. Aramaic–Egyptian administrative formulae

Aramaic	Egyptian	Translation
(1) <i>PN₁ yd' t'm znḥ</i>	<i>PN₁ i.rḥ p3y w3ḥ</i>	PN ₁ knows this command
(2) <i>PN₁ bḏ i'm</i>		
<i>PN₂ spr'</i>	<i>PN₂ p3r i.ir sš i3y sš.t</i>	PN ₂ is the <i>sepinu</i> / PN ₂ is he who wrote this letter
(<i>PN₃ kib</i>)	<i>sš PN₃</i>	PN ₃ wrote

³⁷ It should be noted that the letters containing this formula all have the same structure. First another person is cited (*kn mr* 'he says thus'), following which ʾĀršāma gives his reply and instructions, introduced by the formula under discussion. The structure of P.Berl.Dem.13540 (EPE C2) is slightly different: here the person cited is the satrap himself.

Aramaic, and their view is corroborated by three further features that show that Demotic papyri written in the Persian chancellery were actually translations of Aramaic *Vorlage*, sometimes itself influenced by the Old Persian administrative language (cf. above):

- (1) *st ḏd=f my rḥ=w* 's lḥ' let them know it;
- (2) *trm n3y=f try.w* and his colleagues;
- (3) *PN rn=f* 'PN, his name;

Further examples of this phenomenon are now found in the new British Museum papyri (Smith, Martin & Tuplin i 297-8), and PBM EA 76274.1 i 2 indicates explicitly that the Demotic letters it contains were originally composed in Aramaic.

5. THE ʾRŠĀMA CORRESPONDENCE IN A BROADER ACHAEMENID CONTEXT

The letter-orders of ʾRšāma are comparable with other letter-orders found in Bactria and in Persopolis. The Aramaic letters from Bactria, dated from 353 to 324, also contain these formulae, albeit in a slightly different form (see Table 2.1.8). They appear in an archive of eight letters from *Axxamazda-, who was most likely the satrap of Bactria (Shaked 2004: 14, Naveh and Shaked 2012: 22-3). Accordingly they correspond with the pattern already described above. The close connection between the two sets is also corroborated by the loan-words and calques attested in them.

By contrast with these letters, the letters from the Persopolis Fortification archive (Hallock's category 'I') are pure letter-orders and do not contain other information. Nevertheless, they belong to an administrative system similar to the ʾRšāma correspondence. Most of the letter-orders (158 of the 219 letters; Tavernier 2017b: 362-3) are written by superiors to subordinates. Fifty-one letters were addressed by lower officials to other lower officials and an example of a letter of a lower official to a higher official is provided by PF 1857, which is thus comparable to A6.1. One might also particularly compare Pfa 27 with A6.12 (letter to accountants; cf. Briant 2002: 457), PF 1792 with A6.3 and D6.13

Table 2.1.8. Aramaic administrative formulae from Bactria

Aramaic	Translation
PN spr' yd' i'(m' znh PN spr' wPN ₂ b' i'm [PN b'] i'm	PN the <i>sepru</i> is in charge of the command PN is the <i>sepru</i> and PN ₂ is in charge of the command PN is the master of the command

(reaction to a complaint), and PF 1796 with A6.9 (issuing of rations). In any case, the Persopolis letters fit perfectly in the framework of the Achaemenid satrapal administration.

Perhaps the most remarkable similarity between the Âršama correspondence and the Elamite administrative texts from Persopolis are the administrative formulae already discussed with regard to the material from Egypt. Three of these formulae, designated T, R, and D after their principal Elamite words,³⁸ can easily be placed next to the Aramaic and Egyptian formulae, as seen in Table 2.1.9 (with translation in Table 2.1.10). Note, however, that two of them are not translations of the Aramaic formulae and presumably had a different Old Persian source phrase. Only formula T is exactly the same in all three languages. The Elamite formulae have been discussed more thoroughly elsewhere (Tavernier 2008: 65–70; Tavernier 2017b), and the details do not need to be repeated. It suffices to note some general points of interest:

- (1) The names of the masters of the command are almost all Old Iranian. Once a Hebrew name is attested (ʾAnani), twice an Akkadian (Ribaya), once an Elamite (Humpānunū).
- (2) Nearly all the names of the persons responsible for the *dumme* or of those who are called the *septnu* are West Semitic or Iranian.
- (3) The scribe's names are Egyptian (in the case of the Demotic text) but otherwise mostly Old Iranian: fifty-three Old Iranian names against

Table 2.1.9. Aramaic–Egyptian–Elamite administrative formulae

Aramaic	Egyptian	Elamite
(1) PN ₁ yd' i'm znh (2) PN ₁ b' i'm PN ₂ spr' (PN ₃ kib)	PN ₁ i.rh p3y w3h PN ₂ p3r i.r s3 i3y s'.t s3 PN ₃	(1) hi tupaka PN ₁ turnaš (2) *patigāma PN ₁ lišia (P) PN ₃ dumme PN ₂ -mar tušia (D) PN ₃ talliš(ia) (T)

Table 2.1.10. Aramaic–Egyptian–Elamite administrative formulae in English translation

Aramaic	Egyptian	Elamite
(1) PN ₁ knows this command (2) PN ₁ is the master of the command PN ₂ is the <i>septnu</i> (PN ₃ wrote)	PN ₁ knows this command PN ₂ is he who wrote this letter PN ₃ wrote	(1) PN ₁ knew about this command (2) PN ₁ delivered the command PN ₃ received the draft from PN ₂ PN ₃ wrote

³⁸ In Tavernier 2017b: 361 they are labelled respectively **tallir*, *bel tēmi*, and *septnu/teppir*.

nine Elamite ones. As a consequence of this, they were certainly comfortable with the indigenous writing systems of the region: Demotic for the Egyptian text, Elamite cuneiform for the Elamite texts.

(4) Only if a non-Aramaic text is involved (i.e. an Egyptian or Elamite document) is a third formula (the scribe) added. This means that Aramaic functions perfectly as the central administrative language.

What one can see here is that mostly the formulae P and D (first two rows of Table 2.1.9) are executed by one individual. This is a development of which the first traces appear already in the Fortification Texts. There a certain Ribaya is twice³⁹ the one in charge of the command, whereas fourteen times⁴⁰ he appears as *sepru-teppir*. Remarkable is that of those fourteen texts, where Ribaya appears in formula D, eight belong to the category H (Receipts by Officials) and six to the category T (letter-orders), the category mostly connected with the formulae. One may compare the way in which Anani combines both functions in A6.2.

6. CONCLUSION

As has been demonstrated, the administrative formulae are attested throughout the Achaemenid Empire, both geographically and chronologically.

- Geographical: Egypt, Bactria, Persia proper.
- Chronological: from the reign of Darius I to the reign of Darius III.

This means that they were part of a genuinely imperial system for the production of administrative commands and orders, one deliberately created by the Achaemenid administration for use across the empire.⁴¹ Various reconstructions of that system can be proposed, but in my opinion, there is one that surpasses the rest in plausibility:

- (1) A high official (e.g. a satrap or even the king)⁴² passes a command orally in Old Persian to one of his officials. This person is the one who is called 'cognizant of the order' or 'master of the order'.
- (2) This official transmits the command (**patigama*-) to the *sepru-teppir* in Old Persian. This is equivalent to formula P in the Elamite texts.
- (3) The *sepru-teppir* notes it down in Aramaic.

³⁹ NN 0698, 2425. Both texts are dated to the 15th year of Darius I (507-506).
⁴⁰ PF 0670, 0671, 0673, 0678, 1796, 1801, 1828; NN 0049, 0947, 1730, 1775, 1999, 2004, 3061. The dates range from the 17th to the 25th year of Darius I (505-504 to 497-496).
⁴¹ For a broader discussion of the signs of a uniform empire-wide administrative system see Henkelman 2017a.
⁴² A nice reference to a direct order from the king to Arsāma can be seen in the so-called Passover Letter (A 4.1).

(4) If necessary, the *sepru-teppir* also makes a translation into Egyptian or Elamite.

(5) He passes this translation (El. *dumme*) to an indigenous scribe (formula D).

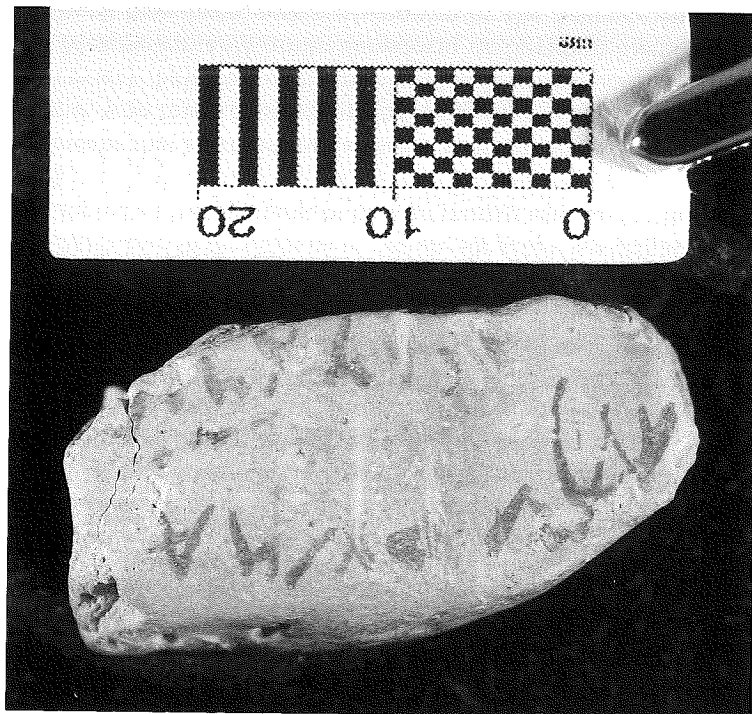
(6) This scribe writes an additional copy in the local vernacular, the copy that has come to us (formula T). This implies automatically that the Demotic fragments mentioning Āršama, if they belonged to that administrative level, must have had Aramaic originals.

This reconstruction implies that the *sepru-teppir* had knowledge of at least Old Persian and Aramaic. This could explain their having especially Semitic names. In order to gain their relatively high positions in the administration, they had to learn Old Persian, but this cannot have been all too difficult (Stolper and Tavernier 2007: 20). On the other hand, *Rāšta- the *sepru* is either an Aramaean who has adopted an Iranian name or he is an Iranian who has learned Aramaic (cf. above).

It also means that all translational issues were situated at the office of the *sepru-teppir*, who thus knew two or three languages (Old Persian, Aramaic, and, if necessary, Egyptian or Elamite) and at least two scripts (alphabetic Aramaic, Mesopotamian/Elamite cuneiform or Egyptian Demotic script). That this must have been possible is proven by the Aramaic epigraphs on some of the Elamite documents from Persepolis and the Aramaic dockets on Babylonian documents, for these indicate that some people knew both scripts (Stolper and Tavernier 2007: 19–20). Knowledge of more than one script by an individual is also perhaps attested in an Aramaic Fortification tablet (PFAT 261:1), where the personal name ṣryn is written with a Greek alpha instead of an Aramaic aleph, although the aleph does appear elsewhere in the same text (Fig. 2.1.1).

It should be stressed that it is not the case that the entire Achaemenid administration was situated at the *sepru-teppir*-level. If that were true, it would mean that all the Elamite tongue-shaped memoranda would be translations from Aramaic originals. This is not probable. These memoranda belong to a lower level of administration, totally controlled by simple scribes, such as the 'Persian *puhu* copying texts' (Tavernier 2008: 64–5). Only when the document was issued by the satrapal administration or something of comparable level was its first written version in Aramaic. On lower administrative levels the local languages took over.

In addition, one should not forget that geographical variants most likely existed in the way the Achaemenid administration dealt with linguistic problems. The way it worked in Egypt was not necessarily exactly the same as the way it worked in Persepolis or Bactria. The Achaemenids thus invented an ingenious system to issue orders to all inhabitants of their realm, whatever language they spoke. First of all they placed



2.1.1. PFAT 261. Persepolis Fortification Archive Project – University of Chicago.

Table 2.1.11. Language and administration in the Achaemenid empire

Level	Language
king, satraps	Old Persian
satrapal administration (top level)	Aramaic
local administration (lower level)	local vernacular languages (Egyptian, Elamite, etc.)

Aramaic between their own language, Old Persian, and the languages of their citizens; secondly, they made extensive use of the linguistic knowledge of a special class of scribes: the *septu-*teppir**.

This implies that the Achaemenids consciously used Aramaic as a kind of empire-wide bridge between the elite language (Old Persian) and the vernacular languages (Elamite, Egyptian, etc.), which points to an active Achaemenid language policy. Table 2.1.11 makes this clear. In this sense, Aramaic became a kind of blanket covering the whole empire. As such, it was extremely important as a means of keeping the vast empire together and making the administration work properly, and its performance of this task had both a horizontal component (use throughout the empire) and a vertical one (contact between high level satrapal administration and low level administration).