



## ARAXA

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**ARAXA** (Elamite ḥa-rak-qa, Akkadian a-ra-ḥu), Old Persian form of the name of a leader of a Babylonian rebellion against Darius I (DB 3.76ff.). He arose in the district Dubala, in south Babylonia, or (according to the Akkadian version of the Bīsotūn (Behistun) inscription) in Ur. After occupying the capital of the country, he was recognized as king of Babylonia and claimed to be Nebuchadnezzar (IV), son of Nabonidus. For a brief period he controlled the whole country; from 16 August 521 B.C., documents from Babylon, Sippar, and Borsippa in the north and Uruk in the south are dated from the first year of his reign. Probably his reign was accounted a continuation of Nidintu-Bēl's (Nebuchadnezzar III), from whose accession year (522 B.C.) some Babylonian documents are dated.

In the Persian and Elamite versions of the Bīsotūn inscription Araxa is called an Armenian, but according to the Babylonian version he was an Urartian. His father's name, Haldita (i.e., Haldi is great), is theophoric with Haldi, the chief god of the Urartian pantheon, so he was called an Armenian probably according to his provenance. The name Araxa is also attested for some private persons in Babylonian business documents of the Achaemenid period. The opinion of Brunner and Schedl that Araxa of the Bīsotūn inscription was the same person as Nebuchadnezzar of the book of Judith can not be accepted.

Darius detached a force under Vindafarna (Intaphernes), and on 27 November 521 B.C. the troops of Araxa, consisting of 2,497 men, were defeated. Araxa was made captive and by a royal order impaled at Babylon together with his foremost followers. He is pictured on the Bīsotūn relief among "false" kings



(DB1).

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