



ARIZANTOI

ARIZANTOI, people comprising one of the six tribes (*génos*) of the Median nation (*éthnos*) as listed by **Herodotus** (1.101). Cf. the ten tribes of the Persian nation (1.125). Etymologically the term is **arya-zantu-*, “having Aryan lineage.” Cf. Young Av. *huzantu-* and Gathic *huzāntu-*, “having good lineage,” in *Yt.* 13.134 and *Y.* 43.3, 46.5, and 49.5. S. Insler compares OInd. *sujātá* “well descended, noble” (*The Gathas of Zarathustra*, Tehran and Liège, 1975, p. 233; see also W. Krause, “Iranica,” *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung* 56, 1928-29, pp. 302-03). The word *zantu-* also has a more technical application, in the Old Iranian fourfold definition of progressively inclusive lineage groups which is exemplified in Old Persian (e.g., inscription DSe, lines 11-14) and Avestan (e.g., *Yt.* 10.18; see discussion in I. Gershevitch, *The Avestan Hymn to Mithra*, Cambridge, 1967, pp. 296-99; other examples in *AirWb.*, cols. 1660-61). These groups are: *nmāna-* “family,” *vīs-* “clan” (Herodotus 1.125: *phrétrē*), *zantu* “nation,” *dahyu-* “people.” Herodotus’ “tribes” do not occur in this system but are presumably comprised within the “nation.” Apparently *zantu-* might designate either a broad unit (tribe) of patrilineal kinship (Old Pers. *ciça-*) or a collectivity of these (nation). The ethnic reality of Herodotus’ tribes has been debated (see, e.g., E. Benveniste, *Les mages dans l’ancien Iran*, Paris, 1938, p. 18).



BIBLIOGRAPHY

See also Weissbach in Pauly-Wissowa, II/1, col. 1117.

I. M. D'yakonov, *Istoriya Midii*, Moscow and Leningrad, 1956, pp. 146ff.