



ARŠĀMA

ARŠĀMA (Greek *Arsámēs*, Aramaic *ʾršm*), name of several Achaemenid notables. It is a compound of *aršan* “male, hero” and *ama* “strength,” thus meaning “having a hero’s strength;” the feminine form **Aršāmā* (Greek *Arsamē*) is also attested, in the name of the daughter of Darius the Great (Justi, *Namenbuch*, p. 29; W. Hinz, *Altiranisches Sprachgut der Nebenüberlieferungen*, Wiesbaden, 1975, p. 206).

1. Grandfather of Darius the Great.

2. Satrap of Egypt.

1. The earliest-known and most famous *Aršāma* was the grandfather of Darius the Great, who counts his forebears as follows (DB 1.4ff.): Darius, son of *Vištāspa* (*Hystaspes*), son of *Aršāma*, son of *Ariyāramna*, son of *Čaišpiš*, son of *Haxāmaniš(a)* (*Achaemenes*). Herodotus (7.2) also names *Aršāma* (*Arsames*) the son of *Ariyāramna* (*Ariaramnes*) and grandson of *Čaišpiš* (*Teispis*). According to Darius (DB 1.10f.), eight kings of his family preceded him. From this it may be inferred that *Ariyāramna* and *Aršāma* had been local kings ruling over a region in *Fārs* (*Persis*). The short Old Persian text allegedly found in *Hamadān* (Kent, *Old Persian*, p.116, bibliography p. 107), which begins “*Aršāma*, the great king, king of kings, king (in) *Persia*,” however, is not authentic (H. H. Schaefer, “Über die Inschrift des *Ariaramana*,” *SPAW*, 1931, pp. 635-45), and can not be regarded as a serious source document (contra P. Lecoq, *Acta Iranica* 3, 1974, pp. 48-52). *Aršāma* came to the throne in about 590 B.C., but was still alive when Darius ascended the throne in 522 (DSF 13; XPF



19-20); he thus must have lived no less than ninety years (W. Hinz, *Darius und die Perser* I, Baden-Baden, 1976, p. 59). The fact that he called his son Vištāspa, a name which had been borne by the royal patron of Zoroaster, may indicate that Zoroastrianism had by his time been accepted by the Achaemenid family (Boyce, *Zoroastrianism* II, 1982, p. 41).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Given in the text. See also under ARIYĀRAMNA.

(A. Sh. Shahbazi)

2. An Achaemenid prince who supported the ascent to the throne of Darius II against Xerxes II (424-23 B.C.) and was the satrap of Egypt at least until 406-05 B.C. (Ctesias, *Persica* 63-67, 78-79; Polyaeus, *Strategemata* 7.28). Various administrative matters in his satrapy are discussed in some surviving Aramaic papyri (see A. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.*, Oxford, 1923; G. R. Driver, *Aramaic Documents of the Fifth Century B.C.*, Oxford, 1954; B. Porten, *Archives from Elephantine*, Los Angeles, 1968; P. GreLOT, *Documents araméens d'Égypte*, Paris, 1972, pp. 280ff.; E. Bresciani, "La Satrapia d'Egitto," *Studi Classici e Orientali* 7, 1958, pp. 132-34, 142-46). These documents are dated between 428 (the 37th year of Artaxerxes I) and 406 B.C. A group of letters in Aramaic written on *diphterai* (leather scrolls) found in Egypt deal with the administration of his own estates in the western delta of the Nile. These included the vine-growing districts of Papremis (see Bresciani, "Ancora su Papremi; proposte per una nuova etimologia e una nova localizzazione," *ibid.*, 21, 1972, pp. 299-300). Arsames wrote these letters from Susa, where he lived between 411 and 408 B.C., to various addressees, among them Artavant (*rtwnt*), who was probably functioning as satrap in Arsames' absence.

During this period, July-August, 410 B.C. (14th year of Darius II), symptoms of disorder and rebellion appeared in Egypt. For example, the Temple of Yahu on the island of [Elephantine](#) was destroyed by the Egyptians who associated themselves with the local high officials of the Achaemenid government against the Hebrew colony, which was loyal to the great king of Persia (see Driver,



Aramaic Documents, pp. 4-5; E. G. Kraeling, *The Brooklyn Museum Papyri*, New Haven, 1953, pp. 100ff.; Porten, *Archives*, pp. 278-89; Grelot, *Documents*, pp. 386ff.; on the motivation of the Jewish and Egyptian conflict at Elephantine, cf. *ibid.*, pp. 398-405, and Bresciani, "Egypt in the Persian Age," *Cambridge History of Judaism*, ed. W. D. Davis, I, Cambridge, 1984, p. 363 n. 3. The report on this episode specifies that it happened while Arsames "was with the king;" Arsames' responsibility or even knowledge of this happening is excluded also in the appeal that the Hebrew community made in 407 B.C. (Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri*, no. 30-31) to Bagōhī, the governor of Judea, soliciting the reconstruction of their temple. We know nothing of the whereabouts of Arsames after 404 B.C., when Darius II died and [Amyrtaeus](#) seized power in Egypt as pharaoh. A group of small cuneiform panels in Neo-Babylonian concern Arsames' land holdings in Babylonia from 464/63 to 408 B.C. (Driver, *Aramaic Documents*, pp. 6, 44-53).

See also [ARAMAIC](#) i, ii.

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