



CLOTHING II. IN THE MEDIAN AND ACHAEMENID PERIODS

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ii. In the Median and Achaemenid periods

Information on the dress worn by the peoples of the Median and Achaemenid empires is mainly related to male costume. Female dress will be described briefly at the end of this article. The data come from two categories of sources (Schoppa, pp. 55-70), references by classical authors (e.g., Herodotus, 7.61-80; Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 7.3.13-14; Diodorus, 17.78.5) and antiquities of documentary value. Such antiquities can be divided into five groups.

1. The record relief of [Darius I](#) (521-486 b.c.e.) at [Bīsotūn](#) (esp. pl. X).
2. Figures representing the thirty subject nations ([Figure 46](#)) carved on the facade of the tomb of Darius at Naqš-e Rostam near Persepolis (details in Schmidt, III, pp. 80-90; Walser, p. 52) and copied on those of his successors; the figures at Naqš-e Rostam are identified by preserved inscriptions.
3. Persepolitan friezes (particularly on the eastern stairway facade of the [Apadāna](#),) representing warriors, nobles, and delegates of various subject nations (Walser, pp. 68-103; Hinz, 1969, pp. 95-113; Schmidt, III, pp. 145-62); the glazed-brick friezes from Susa and Persepolis showing soldiers in different uniforms (Dieulafoy, pp. 280-94, pls. IV-VII; von Gall, 1972, pp. 264-65); and the



figures engraved on the base of the Egyptian statue of Darius from Susa now housed in the Iran Bastan Museum, Tehran (Porada, pp. 816-19, with references)

4. Representations on various, especially portable works of art: Greek vases (Bovon; Schoppa, pp. 28ff.); contemporary Egyptian stelai (von Bissing); “Greco-Persian” seals (Boardman, pp. 308-58); paintings, especially those discovered in the Karaburun I tumulus near Elmalı (Elmalı) in the former province of Lycia in southwestern Turkey (Starr, pp. 79-87; Mellink, pp. 222-23; Cook, p. 165, pl. 30, with references); sculptures, especially those from Sidon and Lycia (Kleemann, pp. 173-74; Borchhardt; Dentzer; Shahbazi, 1975, with references); the “Oxus treasure” (Dalton); and, above all, the highly detailed hunting and combat scenes on the so-called Alexander sarcophagus from Sidon (shortly after 320 b.c.e.; von Graeve, pp. 95-100) and the Alexander mosaic (Winter) from the floor of the House of the Faun at Pompeii (1st century b.c.e., after a Hellenistic painting approximately contemporary with the sarcophagus).

5. Relics and remnants of clothing found in the Altai barrows, which are decorated with Achaemenid motives (Rudenko, pp. 83-98, 296-97, pls. 63-65, 151-57).

Of these groups, the first (the Bīsoṭūn relief) and the second (the tomb reliefs) afford absolute identification of figures and their clothing, as well as clear chronological indications. The seal of Anīmas (Shahbazi, 1975, p. 20, pl. LXXV) and the figure of [Autophradates](#), satrap of Lydia, on a Lycian monument (the tomb of Payava) also provide clear identifications. During the Median and Achaemenid periods many minor, mainly stylistic changes did occur, but in general the forms of the clothing remained the same and can therefore be discussed as a whole. The richness of these documentary sources has given rise to an enormous literature on the history of Iranian costume, notably by George Rawlinson, O. M. Dalton, A. S. F. Gow, Ernst Herzfeld, Helmut Schoppa, E. F. Schmidt, S. I. Rudenko, Gerold Walser, A. B. Tilia, Anne Roes, Geo Widengren, Walther Hinz, and Stefan Bittner (see bibliography).

Edith Porada has emphasized that “in Near Eastern art in general, differentiation among peoples was mostly made on the basis of dress” (p. 822). The ancient peoples of the Near East had favored styles of loose or draped costume consisting of pleated skirts, wrapped overgarments, and tunics. It is possible that as early as the end of the 2nd millennium b.c.e. the migrating



Iranians brought with them a costume that had been developed in Eurasia, where the climate fluctuated sharply and life depended on cattle raising and the use of the horse, particularly in fighting (Widengren, pp. 228-41; Houston, p. 160; Goetz, p. 2228; Rudenko, p. 88 and *passim*). It consisted of a tall cap, tight-fitting leather jacket and trousers, a long-sleeved coat, and boots. The Persians modified and adopted the Near Eastern pleated dress (Walser, p. 72; Hinz, 1969, pp. 70-79), supplementing it with a headband or a tall, fluted hat (probably derived from an Assyrian feathered headdress; Gow, p. 144 n. 29; Barnett, in *Survey of Persian Art*). Hence scholars sometimes call this style “Persian costume” and the dress of Central Asian origin “Median costume” (Schoppa, pp. 46-48). These designations are not always accurate, however. Herodotus testified (1.135, 7.61-62) that the “Persians” habitually wore “Median” dress; on a seal impression from Persepolis [Cyrus I](#) (ca. 630 b.c.e.) is shown as a horseman in the tight-fitting costume (Hinz, 1976, p. 53 figs. 16-17); the Achaemenid prince Artimas of Limyra (a cousin of [Cyrus the Younger](#); see [astōdān](#)) is represented on his seal (dated ca. 401 b.c.e.) in a similar way (Shahbazi, 1975, p. 120, pl. LXXV); and on Darius’s tomb his weapon bearer, [Aspačanā](#) (Gk. Aspathines), whom Herodotus (3.70) specifically identified as “Persian,” wears “Median” dress (Schmidt, III, p. 86, pl. 24). Dress alone can thus not be used as the criterion of nationality, and it is safer to designate the loose, draped style as “court dress” (see, e.g., Schoppa, p. 47: “a costume that can be identified as court dress”) and the tight-fitting style as “cavalry costume” (Shahbazi, 1976, p. 24; *idem*, 1978, pp. 498-99; Porada, p. 815).

Male clothing

In general the male costume of the peoples of the Achaemenid empire may be divided into five categories: “Court dress” (I) of the Persians and Elamites; “cavalry costume” (II) of Iranian and related groups (Medes, Armenians, Cappadocians, Parthians, Bactrians, Areians, Zarangians, Arachosians, Sogdians, Choresmians, Skudrians, and Scythians); the “Greek” style, including a short tunic and a loose mantle open in front (worn by Carians, Lydians, Greek islanders, and Ionians); the “Indian” style, consisting of a kilt with or without a mantle (worn by Indians, Gandarians, Sagartians, and Makans); and the dress of the plains dwellers, including a long gown reaching to the knees or ankles and a cloak (worn by Arabs, Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Libyans, and Nubians). The emphasis here will be on the first two categories. In all, five items of clothing may be distinguished: headgear, overgarment, shirt or tunic, trousers, and footgear. Before discussing these items it is useful



to note that in the ancient Iranian tradition the three social estates were differentiated through the colors of their costumes: The warriors wore red, the priests white, the pastoralists blue (Hinz, 1979, p. 61, with references; cf. Widengren, p. 240). Traces of colors have been detected on the clothing of the royal figures and dignitaries represented on certain Achaemenid monuments (Schmidt, I, p. 116, III, p. 80; Lerner, 1971; idem, 1973; Tilia, II, pp. 31-69); in an early 5th-century painting from Elmalı (Mellink, pp. 222-23; Starr, pp. 82-83) with a banqueting scene involving “a grandee whose physical appearance, costume, and surroundings seem wholly Persian” (Cook, p. 165); and on a Greco-Persian stone relief depicting a man in “Median” dress (Boyce, *Zoroastrianism* II, pp. 146-47). The evidence has been interpreted as attesting that the old Iranian tradition was partially observed in Achaemenid ceremonial dress: The king wore red shot with blue and white to symbolize his authority over the three estates (Hinz, 1979, p. 61). Schoppa must be credited with the ingenious observation (p. 48), based on Greek data, that the “cavalry costume,” which is depicted in “Greco-Persian” minor arts with ample pleats, was shown at Persepolis without indications of drapery only because pleats and appliquéd decorations were indicated by the use of various colors. Indeed, at Persepolis the laces of the royal shoes were indicated only by colored outlines (Tilia, II, p. 55 n. 1).

Headgear. The best-documented item of clothing from the Median and Achaemenid periods is headgear (Schoppa, p. 47; Calmeyer, pp. 173-78). Seven types are associated with “court dress” (I). Type I.1 was a simple, twisted headband worn by the royal guard (see [Figure 47](#), [Figure 47a](#)). Type I.2 was a circlet or fillet (worn by Elamites and many “Persian” soldiers) and type I.3 a wider fillet (worn by soldiers, royal attendants, and monster-slaying heroes); either could be decorated with floral motifs: embroidered on cloth or felt and incised or applied on metal, as in the headgear of Darius’s attendants at Bīsoṭūn and Persepolis ([Figure 48](#); for details, see Tilia, II, pp. 58-66). Type I.4 was a long scarf (of wool, linen, or possibly silk) wrapped around the head (for example, of the Persian figure on the Egyptian statue of Darius) or closely around the head and neck, leaving only the central features of the face bare, as worn by the royal towel bearer on the “Treasury relief” at Persepolis (Schmidt, I, pl. 121), by the “servants” on the Tačara (palace) stairways (Schmidt, I, pls. 133-34), and by the members of Delegation IV on the Apadāna stairways (possibly Parthians or Areians; Walser, p. 76). Type I.5 was a plain cylindrical hat (taller when worn by royal figures, as on the “Treasury relief”; see also [Figure 49](#)). Types I.6 and I.7 were, respectively, shorter and taller



fluted hats most commonly associated with “Persian” dignitaries (Figure 50). Both these types were evidently called *mítira* (cf. Herodotus, 1.195, 7.62.2, 7.90).

Four basic types of headgear were worn with the “cavalry costume” (II). Type II.1 consisted of a simple ribbon wrapped around the hair and tied in the back (plate I), worn by members of Delegation XV on the Apadāna stairways (perhaps Bactrians [Walser, p. 90], Areians [Hinz, 1969, p. 104], or Parthians [Schmidt, III, pp. 148-49]). Type II.2 was a plain rounded cap most commonly worn by “Median” dignitaries. This cap survives in the Fārs and Bakhtiārī regions, yet it was of Mesopotamian—or, more precisely, Elamite—origin (Walser, p. 69). A silver rhyton of the Achaemenid period (excavated at the site of Erebuni in Yerevan and now in the museum there) ornamented with the figure of a “Median” horseman (Arakelyan; Harper, p. 30) indicates that this cap was of a stiff material (probably felt), which in some instances was reinforced and adorned by an outer metal retainer with a ring in the back to which an appendage could have been attached (Figure 51). The figure of an eagle embroidered on the cap clearly anticipated a well-known Parthian and Sasanian tradition, the adorning of the cap (and costume) with “devices,” or signs of heraldry (for such “devices,” see Bivar, 1959). Type II.3 was a bonnet with three knobs in front, a short extension like a tail, and earflaps, worn by the members of Delegations III (Armenians), IX (Cappadocians?; plate li), and XVI (Sagartians) on the Apadāna stairway facades. This type was also of foreign origin, derived from an old Anatolian type of hat (Barnett, 1957, p. 69). Type II.4 was a hat attested by the Greeks as *tiára*, *kídaris* or *kítaris* (Lat. *cidaris*), or *kyrbasía* (rendering Ir. **kurbāsa*, which may survive in Zāzā *kur* “hat”; see Bailey, p. 9; Schmitt, pp. 468-69; on the synonymous use of these terms by classical authors see Gow, p. 144 n. 30; Pauly-Wissowa, Suppl. XIV, cols. 792-93). It was a hood or cap of felt (Strabo, 15.3.15), leather, silk (as shown by the rendition on the Alexander mosaic; silk fabrics were known in Greece from the middle of the 4th century b.c.e. [Aristotle, *De Animalibus* 5.19; see [abrīšam iii. silk textiles in iran](#)], and the general assumption is that they originated in the east), or, more commonly among the nobility, soft cloth (as in representations on satrapal coins and the Alexander sarcophagus). It covered the head, the neck (with a long, pointed neck guard), ears, cheeks, and chin (with very long side flaps that could be tied over the chin or at either side of the neck; see Figure 52, Figure 53, plate lii). The magi wore, in addition, a kerchief (Av. *paiti.dāna-* > Pers. *panām*) to cover their noses and mouths loosely in order to avoid pollution of the sacred fire by their breath (Strabo, 15.3.15; Boyce, *Zoroastrianism* II, p. 20 n. 44). Herodotus mentioned (8.120) a



gold-embroidered tiara among the gifts that Xerxes presented to the people of Abdera to win their friendship. Occasionally a ribbon was tied around the hat, with the end falling down over the back (Dalton, pl. XIV, no. 49; Ghirshman, p. 93 fig. 121a). This ribbon was the diadem, which, according to Xenophon (*Cyropaedia* 8.3.13), “the kinsmen” of the great king wore around their tiaras as “the mark of distinction.” Quintus Curtius described the diadem of Darius III (336-31 b.c.e.) as “blue (*caerulea*) variegated with white” (3.3.19; cf. 6.6.4, where it is described as “purple (*purpureum*) variegated with white”). The coins of Tissaphernes (see *Âciθrafarnah 3) and Pharnabazus (Hinz, 1979, figs. 31, 12), as well as a figurine from Persepolis (Hinz, 1976, fig. 34), show that Persian magnates were allowed to knot their diadems *in front* of the tiara (Hinz, 1976, p. 141, with reference). In any event, the tiara had a top like a hood, often lined inside with luxurious animal fur. Ordinarily it was worn flat, either pressed down in front to form three knobs or falling in folds on either side. Only the great king had the right to wear his tiara (*kyrbasía*) “upright,” that is, with the top erect, presumably held by inner retainers (Xenophon, *Anabasis* 2.5.23; Arrian, *Anabasis* 3.25.3; Plutarch, *Artaxerxes* 26, 28; idem, *Themistocles* 29). The Greeks mockingly compared this version to a cockscomb (Aristophanes, *Aves* 487; Dio Chrysostomus, 4.66); hence the so-called “Darius krater” of the late 4th century b.c.e. in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples, which shows the great king wearing a tiara resembling a cockscomb (Hinz, 1979, fig. 45), is of no documentary value (Gow, p. 148). As is well known, this type of Persian headgear became generally popular among Middle Easterners and was worn by monks and priests from Tibet to the Hellenistic realm, where—under the term “Phrygian cap”—it survived, with slight modifications, in Roman and European cultures (Dalton, p. xxx). Related head-dresses of the 4th and 3rd centuries b.c.e. have been found in the frozen tombs of the Altai (e.g., at Pazyryk). One, made of stiff brown felt, was originally a tall hat with broad circular side flaps (Rudenko, p. 89) and was edged at the bottom with disks covered with gold leaf and decorated externally with leather (Rudenko, p. 90). Another (Figure 54) was made of two pieces of white felt bordered by an ornamented leather covering and provided at the apex with a square “turret” made from four leather cutouts covered with gold figures forming a battlemented “crown” (Rudenko, pp. 90-91). The Scythians wore the *kyrbasía* (cf. Rostovtzeff, pp. 55, 57) so tall that the tip bent backward, and one group (no. 15 on the tomb relief and Delegation XI on the Apadāna stairway facade; Figure 46, plate lii) wore hats so tall that the Persians called them “Tall-Helmet/Pointed-Hat Scythians” (Saka *tigraxaudā*; Kent, *Old Persian*, p. 186; Shahbazi, 1982, pp. 216ff., with references). The points, which curve



toward the back, do not resemble the crest of the “upright” tiara, for, as can be seen from the Alexander mosaic and a gold statuette from the “Oxus treasure” (Dalton, pl. XIII/2-2a), the latter stood vertically and, in addition, bore precious adornments.

Overgarments. Several overgarments were associated with court dress. The vest (I.1) was worn by Darius the Great (in a hunting scene on his cylinder seal in the British Museum; Ghirshman, p. 268 fig. 329), the Persepolitan monster-slaying hero ([plate liii](#); see Schmidt, I, pl. 147; Hinz, 1969, p. 78, pl. 27), and the Persian and Elamite throne bearers represented on the tombs (Figure 46). It had vertical pleats and, being sleeveless, left the wearer free to move quickly. It seems to be attested also on a Greek vase, where it is painted in red, with patterning and a broad white stripe down the front (Gow, pp. 146, 150 fig. 8), as well as on an enigmatic silver statuette from the “Oxus treasure” ([plate liv](#); Dalton, pp. 1-2, fig. 41, pl. II/1). Scholars are sharply divided over the construction of the pleated robe (I.2) with very wide sleeves (Figure 49). Herzfeld (p. 259) maintained that it was “a simple rectangular piece of soft material, reaching in front and back from neck to ankle, and in width from wrist to wrist, arms outstretched, with a slit for the head. It was open at the sides and only girded around the waist by a belt.” His view has received wide support, at least in part (Houston, p. 162; Walser, p. 69 n. 5; Beck; cf. Schmidt, I, p. 163, III, p. 80, who, however, followed Rawlinson, p. 152, in incorrectly identifying it as the [candys](#)). Roes, however, argued for a two-piece costume, a cape-like top with wide sleeves and a pleated skirt. Her reconstruction was supported by Hinz on linguistic grounds (1969, p. 70). Nevertheless, that it was a single piece girt in the middle by a wide cloth belt, below which it fell in tiers of pleats to form a “skirt,” is clear from the representation of a “Persian nobleman” engraved on the seal of Artaxerxes (III?; 359-38 b.c.e.), now in the Hermitage, St. Petersburg (see [plate lv](#)). The extraordinary wide sleeves were enlarged by the insertion of separate pieces at the back; they could be thrown back on the shoulders for greater ease of movement (see esp. Schmidt, I, pls. 114-16, 144-46). Additional pleats, straight or bunched at the sides, produced the fullness usually associated with court dress. The chest was well covered but, as Hinz observed on the figure of Vahyazdāta on the Bīsotūn relief (1969, p. 72, pl. 26a), the back was left open. The lower part could be lifted and tucked into the wide belt. At Persepolis Darius the Great, Xerxes I (486-65 b.c.e.), and Artaxerxes I (465-25 b.c.e.) are all depicted wearing the same royal robe, a luxuriously pleated garment originally of red or purple fabric, magnificently patterned with concentric circles and lotus blossoms (Figure 49). Blue strips



edging the hems of the robe and sleeves, as well as along the vertical pleats in the “skirt,” are “embroidered” with figures of marching lions in red (for details, see Tilia, II, pp. 41ff.; 53ff., esp. p. 54 fig. 6).

Associated with “cavalry dress” was the “Median robe” (II.1) with long, narrow false sleeves worn slung over the shoulder (plate lvi, plate lvii); this overgarment is generally called “candys,” although doubts about the meaning of the word (for etymologies, see [candys](#)) and the identification of the garment are still being expressed (e.g., Hinz, 1969, pp. 70-72). Persian kings and magnates wore this cloak frequently (see esp. Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 1.3.2, 8.3.10, 8.3.13; idem, *Anabasis* 1.5.8; cf. Bittner, pp. 188-92). Autophradates, a Persian satrap of Lydia in the first quarter of the 4th century b.c.e., is shown wearing this “Median” robe in an audience scene on the Perso-Lycian tomb of Payava from ancient Xanthus, in Lycia (now in the British Museum; Shahbazi, 1975, pp. 137-70, pl. lxxviii). Herodotus (9.109) mentioned a “long robe of many colors and very remarkable in appearance” that Xerxes’s wife, Amestris, “had woven with her own hands” and presented as a gift to her husband. Other ancient sources give the same impression. Xenophon (*Cyropaedia* 8.3.3) wrote of “the most beautiful garments” that Cyrus the Great had distributed among his nobles “and other Median robes . . . with no stint of purple or sable or red or scarlet or crimson cloaks.” He further described the candys of Cyrus the Great as “all purple” (*Cyropaedia* 8.3.13), and Quintus Curtius (3.3.17) depicted that of Darius III (336-31 b.c.e.) as “a cloak of cloth of gold, ornamented with golden hawks” (see also Kantor, pp. 6-8, pl. XI). Finally, Diodorus noted (17.77.5) that Alexander dressed himself in a white tunic (*chitón*) and the Persian sash and “everything else” except the trousers and the candys. A sleeveless robe reaching to the knees, worn slung over the shoulder and fastened in front by an elaborate fibula just below the right shoulder (II.2) was worn by Delegation IX on the Apadāna stairway (probably the Cappadocians; Schmidt, I, pl. 35; Walser, pls. 16, 54) and may be of Anatolian origin. The Sogdian (no. 7), the Choresmian (no. 8), and the Amyrgian Saka (Saka *haumavargā*, no. 14) on the tomb reliefs, as well as the members of Delegation XVII on the Apadāna stairway (Amyrgian Saka; Schmidt, III, pp. 112-13, 150), wear a tight-fitting, sleeved coat, cut obliquely at the side to allow ease of movement while riding (II.3). It was either made of leather with fur-lined edges or was entirely of fur or skin (similar to the modern *pūstīn*) and could vary in ornamentation and color (Walser, pp. 93-94). The name of this eastern Iranian coat may have been **gaunaka* (> Gk. *gaunákēs*, with variants: Widengren p. 239 n. 2; Schmitt, pp. 462-63). Widengren derived the word from



Avestan *gaona*– which means either “color” or “hair.” As he pointed out, however, other evidence suggests that the garment “got its name because it was an extremely hairy coat.” Finally there was a short, sleeved coat (caftan, II.4) made of sable fur or of a “double thickness of very thin white felt” decorated with leather appliqués covered with gold disks (Figure 55; Rudenko, pp. 83-87).

Shirts and tunics. “Court dress” included a garment that is best documented on Greco-Persian sculptures (e.g., the “Satrap sarcophagus” from Sidon and the “Payava monument”) and particularly in the frontal representation of a Persian magnate or prince (plate lviii) on the “Kamini stele” (Bivar, 1970, pl. I). This figure stands with outstretched arms, evidently holding a pair of beasts by the horns. He wears no outer clothing but only a full-length belted garment with long sleeves and a round neck. Both the Alexander monuments (von Graeve, pp. 95-98), as well as classical authors (Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 8.3.13; idem, *Anabasis* 1.5.8; Diodorus, 17.77.5; Quintus Curtius, 3.3.17), attest to the wearing of undergarments (chiton) as part of cavalry costume. Xenophon (*Cyropaedia* 8.3.13) emphasized that the wearing of a purple chiton “shot with white” was a prerogative of the great king, and Quintus Curtius (3.3.17) confirmed the fact and described the item as “a purple-edged tunic woven about a white center.” Strabo (15.3.19) even reported that Persian commanders wore the white chiton under a variegated one, as well as three pairs of leather trousers. From the monuments it is clear that originally a tight-fitting, knee-length belted leather tunic formed part of the cavalry costume. Eventually a more elaborate cloth version with long sleeves and a wide V-shaped neck opening appeared; it is best documented on the Alexander mosaic and the Alexander sarcophagus (plate lix). The tunic was belted fairly high, and the skirt could be looped up over the girdle for action. Sleeveless tunics worn by Persians are also represented on a few Greek vases (Gow, pp. 146-47). A shirt with sleeves was found at Pazyryk (plate lx; Rudenko, pp. 83-85, fig. 29). The Greeks usually referred to such an undergarment (shirt or tunic) as *chitón*, but their lexicographers noted a Persian word for it, which they rendered as *sárapis* (Gow, p. 146; cf. Widengren, p. 238 n. 2, quoting the information from Pollux 7.61 that the “Median” purple chiton was called *sárapis* and from Hesychius that, “*sárapis* is Persian for *chitón*”). The Old Persian term has been reconstructed as **sarapiš* (Widengren, p. 238 and n. 2) or something similar.

Trousers. The Greeks usually called Persian leather trousers *anaxyrídes* and remarked on their colorfulness (Xenophon, *Anabasis* 1.5.8; Herodotus, 1.71,



7.61, 7.64; cf. references in Pauly-Wissowa, I/2, cols. 2100-01), even ridiculing them for this feature (Aristophanes, *Aves* 1087); hence Alexander refused to wear them (Diodorus, 17.77.5). From another Greek term for Persian trousers, *sarábāra*, as well as Aramaic *šarbālā* (Book of Daniel 3:21) and Persian *šālvār*, the Old Iranian form has been reconstructed as **šaravāra* (Widengren, p. 238) or the like. In court dress the long skirt formed a sort of kilt, and trousers were not worn, but cavalry dress included several types of trousers. One variety, represented among the gifts presented by the Medes, Sagartians, and Pointed-Hat Scythians (Walser, pls. 8, 18, 68), consisted of tight-fitting leather breeches terminating in shoes (plate lii), which obviated the horseman's need for additional footgear (Widengren, p. 238; Walser, p. 69; von Graeve, p. 97). Another type, more common in eastern Iran and worn on the Apadāna reliefs by Delegations IV (perhaps Areians; Schmidt, III, p. 149) and VII (perhaps Arachosians; Schmidt, III, p. 149; Walser, pls. 11, 14), was shorter and wider, producing a "baggy" effect when tucked into boot tops (plate lxi). The Persians on the Alexander sarcophagus wear trousers of fine cloth tightly covering their legs and feet; they are painted in blue, yellow, violet, and red, sometimes patterned or ornamented with floral motifs (von Graeve, pp. 97-98; for patterned trousers, cf. Herzfeld, p. 205 fig. 314 center; Bovon). A variant, worn by members of Delegation XV (perhaps Parthians; Schmidt, III, p. 148; Walser, pl. 22) on the Apadāna stairway facade, by Persians on some Greco-Persian gems (Gow, pl. X/9-10), by a silver figure in Berlin (plate lvii; Gow, p. 147 fig. 5), and by a Persian magnate represented on an ivory plaque from Demetrias in Macedonia (plate lxii; Dentzer, p. 216 fig. 8) fell in horizontal folds, indicating that they were of very soft materials, perhaps silk.

Footgear (see esp. Schmidt, III, figs. 33ff.; von Graeve, p. 97; cf. Pauly-Wissowa, IIA/1, cols. 746-51). Two types of shoes were worn with court dress. "Persians" wore low shoes with plain toes, fastened by three or four straps or thongs (Figure 47, plate liii). Elamites wore half-boots, occasionally, as on the tomb of Artaxerxes I at Naqš-e Rostam (Schmidt, III, fig. 39/2), with upturned toes, closed by straps and buttons on instep and upper. The shoes and shoelaces of the Achaemenid kings represented at Persepolis were painted red (Tilia, II, pp. 55-56), whereas the archers represented on the glazed-brick frieze from Susa wear yellow shoes (cf. von Gall, 1972, pp. 264-65). Beside the leather shoes attached to trousers (Walser, p. 69; see above) knee-high boots were also worn; the toes could be "straight" (Areians or Arachosians: plate lx) or turned up (plate lxi). The boots were tied in front (e.g., the Zarangian on Xerxes's tomb; Schmidt, III, fig. 42/9) and had contrasting tops or were turned down at the



knees. This footgear was particularly suitable for fishermen and inhabitants of the lake areas around the Hāmūn in Sīstān (Nöldeke, p. 1). The magi depicted on plaques from the “Oxus treasure” (Dalton, pp. 19-20, pls. XIV-XV) and on a fire altar from Cappadocia (Bittel, pls. A-D) wear high boots with thick soles and fairly high heels, calling to mind Xenophon’s statement, in his description of Cyrus the Great’s adoption of “Median dress” (i.e., “court” dress; *Cyropaedia* 8.1.41), that the Persians “had shoes of such a form that without being detected the wearer can easily put something into the soles so as to make him look taller than he is.” Gow (p. 145 n. 33) remarks that “for the spindle-shanked . . . it had plain advantages.”

Women’s clothing

Persian official monuments do not include representations of women; accordingly, little is known of their costume in the Median and Achaemenid periods. There are, however, a few contemporary representations in other contexts: on a textile from Pazyryk (Figure 56; Rudenko, pp. 296-97, pl. 177c), Greco-Persian seals (Figure 57, plate lxi; Gow, pl. X/1-6; Boardman, nos. 854, 879, 891-92, 964), ivory objects (plate lxii, plate lxiii; Amiet, pp. 173ff.; Dentzer, pp. 216ff.), the “Satrap sarcophagus” (plate lxiv; Kleemann, pp. 21-23), the monuments from Ergili in northwestern Anatolia (Figure 58; Akurgal; Bernard), and small metal vessels (Figure 59; Culican; Gow, p. 137 and n. 14). There are also a few notices by ancient writers. Particularly informative is Ctesias’s reference to the wearing of the *sárapis* by Parysatis, mother of Artaxerxes II (Hinz, 1969, p. 74, with reference), Herodotus’ testimony (9.109) that Xerxes’s daughter-in-law asked him to give her a robe that his wife had woven for him, and Quintus Curtius’s remark that Darius III “was girt woman-fashion” with “a golden belt” (3.3.17). Indeed, the representations of women show that they usually wore the pleated “court dress” and the voluminous “Ionic” chiton (Gow, p. 137; Dentzer, figs. 7-8; Dalton, pp. xxxiii-xxxiv, and nos. 89, 93, 103, 104). Occasionally, as on some of the Ergili sculptures and the “Satrap sarcophagus,” they wore an overgarment that, like the modern *čādor*, covered the head and neck (Figure 58, plate lxiv). The face, however, was always uncovered. The hair was often worn in a single plait at the back (plate lxv). By far the best available documentation of women’s dress from the Achaemenid period is the remnants of actual clothing found in the Pazyryk tombs (Rudenko, pp. 91-98), though in that distant region Achaemenid influence may have been considerably attenuated and probably reinterpreted. Excavated garments include a short cape or caftan (Figure 60) made of



squirrel skin with the fur side inward and bordered with a band of black coltskin; it has narrow sleeves decorated with patterns of applied leather pieces (Rudenko, pp. 91-92). Another was a hood (plate lxvi) of a double thickness of fine leather covered in black coltskin and ornamented with rhomboid leather appliqués; it reached to the shoulders (Rudenko, pp. 96ff., pl. 65A). Finally, two pairs of boots were found. One had fine red-leather tops and vamps stitched to soles decorated on the underside with fantastic patterns. The other was soft, knee-high, with broad cuffs of leopardskin, leather vamps, and thick, rigid leather soles ornamented on the underside (Rudenko, pp. 93-96). This curious feature was practical because the wearer “sat with legs arranged so that the heels were turned out,” as is still customary in Central Asia (Rudenko, p. 96).

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