



## RHOXANE I. THE NAME

### RHOXANE

#### i. THE NAME

Rhoxane is a woman's name, and the Greek rendering of OIr. \**Raṁšnā-*, f. (not \**Raṁšānā-*), that is the feminine counterpart of masculine \**Raṁšna-*, Gk. *Rhōxánēs* (in Plutarch, *Themistocles* 29.1 a chiliarch of Xerxes I). More probable than to think of a one-stem name ("the shining one") is the interpretation as a form shortened from compounds like OIr. \**Raṁšna-dāta-* or \**Raṁšna-pāta-* which contain the adjective OIr. \**raṁšna-* (Av. *raoxšna-*) "shining, radiant, brilliant" (cf., e.g., MPers. *Rōšn*, m.; Pers. *Rōšan*, m., *Rōšanak*, f., and Syr. *Rōšnak*, f.). The Greek form has an anaptyctic *-a-* (to avoid the triple consonance), which has the accent according to the rules of Greek grammar (see esp. Justi, p. 262ab; Schmitt, 2006, pp. 185f.; Schmitt 2011, pp. 313f.).

The name is attested for various women belonging to the nobility of [Achaemenid](#) times. Apart from the famous wife of [Alexander the Great](#) (see ii.) may be named the following:

(a) One of [Cambyses'](#) wives (Ctesias, fragm. 13 § 14) is said to have given birth to a headless child; it is possible (but cannot be proved) that she was one of his two sisters Cambyses married according to Herodotus 3.31.6 (cf. Brosius, pp. 46f. and 69; Schmitt, 2006, p. 185).



(b) One daughter of Idérnēs (see [HYDARNES](#), [3]) and (half-)sister of Terituchmes and of [Stateira](#) (Ctesias, fragm. 15 §§ 55f.) is described as a very beautiful woman and a good archer and lancer; since her brother Terituchmes fell in love with her and therefore left his wife [Amestris](#), the daughter of [Darius II](#), she has been killed on orders of Amestris' mother Parysatis, who took cruel revenge for that unfaithfulness on Terituchmes' entire family (cf. Brosius, pp. 73 f.).

(c) The name lived on in the royal family of [Pontus](#), where we learn of one sister of king [Mithridates VI](#) Eupator, who together with her sister and the two wives of the king was killed in Pharnacia on her brother's orders, so that these royal women could not fall into the hands of the Roman troops under Lucullus in 72/71 BCE (cf. Plutarch, *Lucullus* 18.2).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

.

M. Brosius, *Women in Ancient Persia 559–331 BC*, Oxford, 1996.

F. Justi, *Iranisches Namenbuch*, Marburg, 1895, p. 262ab.

R. Schmitt, *Iranische Anthroponyme in den erhaltenen Resten von Ktesias' Werk (Iranica Graeca Vetustiora. III)*, Vienna, 2006.

Idem, *Iranisches Personennamenbuch. Band V/5A: Iranische Personennamen in der griechischen Literatur vor Alexander d. Gr.*, Vienna, 2011.

[F.] Stähelin, "Roxane. 2)–6)," in Pauly–Wissowa, *RE* 1A/1, Stuttgart, 1914, col. 1154–56.