

Cyxares: Media's Great King in Egypt, Assyria, and Iran

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I Cyxares in the sources, and their refutation

THE CLAIMS OF CLASSICAL HISTORIOGRAPHY:

"He [Phraortes] began to subdue all Asia, going from people to people, until, in his campaigning, he came against the Assyrians, and especially those of the Assyrians who held Nineveh. These Assyrians had formerly ruled all of Asia but were now quite isolated, all their allies having dropped away from them. But in themselves they were as strong as ever, and when Phraortes fought them, he himself was killed. /

Cyxares, the son of Phraortes, [...] drew together under his own rule all Asia beyond the Halys. Then, collecting all his subject peoples, he attacked Nineveh. [...] He had defeated the Assyrians in battle; but then, when he was beleaguering Nineveh, there came upon him a great host of Scythians, whose leader was their king, Madyes. /

The Medes also took Nineveh [...] and they made the Assyrians their subject, except for the province of Babylon".
(Herodotus, *The History*, I: 102/103/106.)

ASSYRIOLOGY'S "REFUTATION" OF CLASSICAL HISTORIANS:

"In Assyrian and Babylonian records and in the archaeological evidence no vestiges of an imperial structure [of the Medes; G.H.] can be found. The very existence of a Median empire, with the emphasis on *empire*, is thus questionable. / I would suggest [...] that the *Medikos Logikos*, as we have it, is essentially a Greek product".
(Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1988, 212 / Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1994, 55.)

"Only 20 years ago, the existence of a Median 'Empire' that had immediately succeeded the fall of Assyria, and ruled, for half a century, large parts of the Near East until Cyrus — as a supposed vassal of Astyages, the last king of Media — had defeated his overlord and inherited his empire, was regarded as a safe historical fact. / The archaeological heritage does not offer the slightest hint for the formation of a Median Empire. / Classical historiography [...] can be regarded [...] as refuted".
(Rollinger 2005, 1/3.)

II Cyaxares and the stratigraphy of Old-Akkadians and Mitanni

In quite a few Near Eastern sites, e's.g. Billa, Gawra, Chagar Bazar, Nuzi, Brak etc., Old-Akkadian levels of the -23rd century are found immediately, *i.e.* without intervening windblown layer, beneath Mitanni/Hurrian levels of the -16th century.

Despite the contingency of these two levels, excavation reports separate them by a time span of some 700 years. This lacuna, this author claims, is a pseudo-hiatus that results from the different dating methods that are used for Old-Akkadians and Mitanni. The former are dated by counting backwards from Hammurabi, who is dated via a Bible-fundamentalist date for Abraham the Patriarch. For many decades, Abraham's contemporary "King Amraphel" (*Genesis* 14:1), was identified as Hammurabi, the Martu/Amorite Babylonian king.

From the +2nd century up to the 1950s, Abraham was explicitly mentioned in chronological overviews. Since it is now understood that the Abraham sagas date from the Achaemenid period, such references are omitted from modern history books. Yet, Hammurabi's absolute date, frequently changing but always in range of Abraham's year -2000, was not changed to the Achaemenid period, too.

The Mitanni were never dated via Abraham. Because the main texts relating to them were found in Egypt's Amarna of the "New Kingdom", the Mitanni are dated to the middle of the 2nd millennium BCE by the Sothic retro-calculation of modern Egyptology. From a purely archaeological point of view, Akkadian and Mitanni strata are continuous. The material culture of the lower stratum is carried on in the upper one. Of course, new items – especially glass

and ceramics (Nuzi ware etc.) – are added to the traditional ensemble. The 700 year gap, thus, turns out not to be a genuine dark age but a modern invention.

III From Old-Akkadians and Hyksos as stratigraphic bedfellows to the Mitanni=Medes

This author has identified the Old-Akkadians of Naram-Sin and Sharkalisharri as the first ‘world power’ of Ninos (Nimrod in Hebrew) and Sardanapalus/Sharakos which is called “Assyria” by Greek historians and Berossus (Heinsohn 1989): "When the Assyrians had held sway over Upper Asia for five hundred and twenty years, the first to begin the revolt against them [ca. -630; G.H.] were the Medes" (Herodotus, *The History* I: 95).

The first ‘world ruler’ has the following territories assigned to him: "The first about whom history provides us with stories of his outstanding deeds is Ninos, king of the Assyrians. / Easily he defeated the inhabitants of Babylonia [and] / the Armenians. // Eventually he began to subdue the nations of Asia. And, indeed, within 17 years he was master of them all — with the exception of India and Bactria. / He subjugated Egypt and Phoenicia, Coele-Syria, Cilicia, Pamphylia, and Lycia (Ctesias as preserved in Diodorus Siculus 2, 1: 4-8;//2, 2: 1/3.)

If Ninos is the *alter ego* of Naram Sin, Classical historiography of the Ancient Near East can no longer be blamed as a “product or an “invention” (Vlaardingerbroek 2005, 232): “Naram-Sin, the mighty, king of the four quarters [first mentioning of such title], victor in nine battles in one year. / Conqueror of Armanum, Ebla, and Elam./ [He campaigned in] the land of Subartum on the shores of the Upper Sea, and Magan, along with its provinces” (Frayne 1993, 112/167/163).

The Old-Akkadian strata, in this author's stratigraphy based view of Ancient Near Eastern history, provide archaeological proof for the power defeated – in the late -7th and not the -23rd century – by the fragile alliance of Medes, Scythians (Guti/Qutheans in cuneiform) and Chaldea (Kalam in its own language but, since 1868, misnamed Sumer by modern scholars): "Assyrii principes omnium gentium rerum potiti sunt, deinde Medi, postea Persae, deinde Macedones" (Aemilius Sura, 2nd century BCE).

If the Old-Akkadians are an *alter ego* of the pre-Median Assyrian superpower, the Mitanni strata – sitting right on top of Old-Akkadian strata – must belong to the so far undiscovered period of Median rule over Assyria. In Egypt, the power immediately preceding the Mitanni period is not Biblically dated but is tied to Sothic retro-calculation. Therefore, its kings are not dated to the -23rd century like the Old-Akkadians but to the -16th century.

These rulers are called the Great Hyksos. They are enigmatic Semites who take control of Egypt. The close material relationship between the Hyksos – with Sharek (Salitis) as prominent ruler – and Old-Akkadians – with Sargon in the same role – was seen long ago. Stratigraphically, both empires immediately precede the Mitanni. They share glyptique, script, weapons (scimitars), glacis walls, pottery etc. (Heinsohn 1991). Therefore, the Hyksos are another *alter ego* of the pre-Median Assyrians from the Classical sources. This reconstruction gives the following imperial sequence of the Mesopotamia excavated since the 19th century as seen through Classical sources (Greek, Armenian, Latin).

Formalized stratigraphy of Assyria/Syria

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Assyria's three pre-Hellenistic strata groups excavated since the 19 th century | | Assyria's periods known to Greeks of the -5 th to -2 nd century |
|---|--|--|

(this author regards strata I to III on the left as archaeological confirmation of Greek historiography)

| | | |
|---------------------|---|---------------------|
| Hellenism/Parthians | = | Hellenism/Parthians |
|---------------------|---|---------------------|

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| [I] Middle to Late Assyrians* | = | Achaemenid Satrapy Athura (Assyria) |
|-------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|

*Nowhere, there are levels with Achaemenid material several strata above typical Late Assyrian remains. The Medes, that are so frequently mentioned in the Late Assyrian texts, are the Medes that time and again challenge the rule of their Achaemenid overlords.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| [II] Mitanni's Shaushatra of Nineveh** (Hurrian cuneiform and Sothic date) or Nineveh of Shamshi-Adad** (Assyrian cuneiform and Biblical Hammurabi date) | = | Media's King Cyaxares in Media's Satrapy Assyria (Greek language and date of Classical authors) |
|---|---|---|

**Nowhere, there are levels with Mitanni material several strata above Shamshi-Addad remains

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| [III] Old-Akkadians*** of Naram Sin and Sharkalisharri (Cuneiform Akkadian, Biblical dates) or Hyksos*** with Sharek/Salitis (Egyptian language, Sothic dates) | = | Assyria of Ninus/Nimrod and Sardanapalus/Sharakos (Greek language and date of Classical authors) |
|--|---|--|

***Nowhere, there are levels with Hyksos material several strata above Old-Akkadian remains

IV Cyaxares as Shaushatra in Egypt

In the Amarna correspondence, the names of Mitanni/Maitani rulers are not translated but merely written in cuneiform as heard by the scribes. Therefore, it is possible for modern scholars to identify the Mitanni as Indo-Aryan kings and famous horse breeders. In that aspect – as well as in the very size of their empire – they strikingly resemble the Medes. The empire of the latter is regarded by modern historians as a “phantom” (Rollinger 2005) without archaeology and texts. Like Ninos – as the first world ruler thriving not before the -8th/-7th century – is seen as “a Greek invention” (Vlaardingerbroek 2005, 232) so are the imperial Medes.

The rulers of multi-national empires are necessarily “Kings of Kings” (*i.e.*, emperors) and, therefore, known under different names written in different languages and even alphabets. The names of Austro-Hungarian emperors, for example, were written in German, Latin, Hungarian and five Slavic idioms. The literal meanings of their names – or just one of their many territorial titles – could be translated into other languages. Yet, it was also possible that their names were written as heard, albeit with some changes to make them sound acceptable in the other languages. In such a process the royal names lose the literal meaning they may have in their native language. Thus, example given, future excavators could find in Vienna a larger number of imperial names written in different languages and alphabets. Unless they knew something about Austro-Hungarian history, future archaeologists might well be led astray, *i.e.* they might put the different royal names into a chronological sequence with different nations ruling in the Danube metropolis, even though these rulers all come from the same stratum.

Excavating in different cities of that empire, future diggers could come to the conclusion that only those imperial names written in German belonged to the emperor whereas in reality the texts in question may have merely circulated

among members of the German speaking minority of, e's.g. Budapest, Trieste or Prague. Thus, in a provincial city of any multi-national empire one may find the emperor's name in his native tongue, as well as written differently in other idioms. Thus, whenever one does research on the Median, Achaemenid, Seleucid and Parthian empires, one has to look for their royal names not only in their native tongue (or sound) but also in the many languages of their subject nations. When it comes to the identifications of deities, the same problems pertain. Without knowledge of Christianity, e.g., it is not easy to recognize the "Mother of Jesus", the "Queen of Heaven", the "Mother of God", "Mary", the "Holy Virgin", the "Madonna" etc. as one and the same Jewess Miriam. One Mary, therefore, could be expanded into a full blown pantheon.

If the Mitanni are the thus far missing Medes – misdated by pseudo-astronomical Sothic retro-calculations of modern Egyptology (Heinsohn 1993a) – it is easy to identify Media's imperial rulers Cyaxares and Astyages in the Amarna correspondence. They are Shaushatra – who, like Cyaxares, is on record for conquering and plundering the city of Assur – and Tushratta, who is in charge of Nineveh (Heinsohn 1988, 109). The latter slowly sees his empire eroded by Aziru the Martu very much in the same way as Cyrus the Mardian takes over the realm of Astyages.

By providing Ancient Egypt with the Median-Mitanni chronological benchmark, Pharaoh Akhnaten, the famous correspondence partner of the Mitanni=Medes – with a Sothic date in the -14th century – is identified with Necho II of the Greek sources with a date of -610 to -594 (for details see Heinsohn/Illig 2001, 367).

If the Mitanni strata belong to the Medes, one may ask now how rulers of this power – immediately succeeding the Old-Akkadians stratigraphically – are called in the languages of their new Semitic subjects. Since the Old-Akkadians are dated by counting back from Hammurabi, one has to ask what Assyrian

Great King on the throne of Nineveh has not only been dated by the same scheme but also explicitly claims to be a direct successor of the Old-Akkadian kings. Is there a candidate whose Assyrian archaeological heritage was found right on top of Old-Akkadian remains?

V Cyaxares as Shamshi-Adad in Assyria

Shaushatra=Cyaxares and Tushratta=Astyages are extremely powerful kings. They are ranked as high as Egypt's pharaohs or even higher, as can be learnt from the tone of their letters to Amarna. They are undoubtedly not only in control of Nineveh but also of Assur (Dercksen 2004, 157). Yet, they have never ceased bewildering modern researchers because there is a total "lack of Mitanni royal inscriptions" (Charpin 2004, 378), i.e. of inscriptions in the Hurrian language of the letters to Amarna. This author identifies the Hurrian/Hurrite language as the language of the Araratian/Armenian partners of the Medes (Heinsohn 1993c) who had been subjugated by Ninus/Naram Sin ("Armanum").

But let us not forget that the Mitanni=Medes as rulers over Assyria are Sothic-dated. If we want to find their inscriptions in the Assyrian language we have to look for Abraham-Hammurabi-dated rulers in Assyria whose strata immediately follow Old-Akkadian levels. A ruler fulfilling these requirements is well known. His name is Shamshi-Adad (also Shamshi-Addu). There is no doubt that he is not an Assyrian (Grayson 1985, 9 ff.; Yamada 1994, 11 ff.) but from "Amorite descent" (Charpin 2004, 375). The Amorites (Martu), coming from a "nomadic" background (Edzard 2004, 91), still defy identification. Though they left some 40.000 tablets in Semitic cuneiform (Akkadian), their own language is not known (Haldar 1971, 1 ff.).

For nearly two decades, this author has identified the Martu as a Mesopotamian *pars pro toto* name for Iranians that was derived from the tribe of

the Mardoï (Mardians/Amardians; Heinsohn 1988, 68 ff.). Located around Susa, they were famous for their metal products of their metallurgy and feared as the best archers in Iran.

The Amorites only become a massive presence during the IIIrd Dynasty of Ur (Streck 2004, 313). These Abraham-dated “Sumerians” (-2100) – known as people of Kalam in their own language – are identified by this author as the Chaldeans of the late -7th century who help the Medes and the volatile Scythians defeat Assyria seen by Classical authors as mankind’s first world power. Since the Ur III-“Sumerians” stratigraphically follow the Old Akkadians in Southern Mesopotamia in the same manner that the Amorite Shamshi-Adad follows them in Assyria, it has to be expected that a larger number of Amorites will not be found before the date assigned to Ur III.

Does a descent from Iran provide a clue to Shamshi-Adad’s origins? His own capital is called Ekallatum. This city was never excavated or even located in Assyria though one may see it on maps produced by modern Assyriologists, who place it somewhere between Assur and Nineveh. Yet, hundreds of excavators have searched this area in vain. If Ekallatum is just another Semitic rendering for Ekbatana, a political center of Cyaxares’ in Iran, it is located in Media and cannot possibly be excavated in Assyria. It has already been sensed that the city of Assur may have served as a “religious capital” of Shamshi-Adad whereas enigmatic Ekallatum was in a similar position “politically” (Charpin 2004, 381). That would fit Ekbatana quite nicely.

Though not being an Assyrian, Shamshi-Adad calls himself “King of Akkad” (Charpin 1984, 44 f.). He also carries the title “King of the Whole” (other translation “King of All”). This title has been in use since Old-Akkad’s King Sargon supposedly preceding Shamshi-Adad by half a millennium. Yet, Shamshi-Adad’s regnal dates (recently put at -1809[or -1813] to -1781) are not calculated in accordance with stratigraphy. He is dated in connection with

Hammurabi, whose Bible-fundamentalist Abraham date was derived from “King Amraphel” (*Genesis* 14:1). The assumed synchronism between Shamshi-Adad and Hammurabi is an indirect one and, therefore, controversial. Yet, beyond doubt is the fact that “Shamshi-Adad thought of himself as the successor of the empire of Akkad and its universal-imperial rulership” (Westenholz 2005, 14).

How is Shamshi-Adad positioned stratigraphically? To be Cyaxares in Assyrian garb, he has to follow Sharkalisharri (-2217 to -2193), Akkad’s last king, as immediately as Cyaxares follows Sharakos, pre-Median Assyria’s last king. Shamshi-Adad’s building activity in Nineveh is directly connected to Old-Akkadian buildings. He repairs the Old-Akkadian temple Émenuè in the district of Émashmash. The lowest of the six levels (stratum VI) of Nineveh’s Ishtar temple (90 x 45 meters) was assigned by the excavators to Manishtusu of Akkad (-2269 to -2255) and Shamshi-Adad albeit the two are supposedly separated by 450 years (Thompson/Hamilton 1932, 58; Tenu 2005, 28).

Stratigraphically, Shamshi-Addad follows the Old-Akkadians in Nineveh in the same way as elsewhere the “Mitanni” strata sit right on top of the Old-Akkadian strata – with a pseudo-hiatus of 700 years in between. From the Classical authors we learn that the Medes follow the Assyrians of Nineveh like Shamshi-Adad follows the Old-Akkadians in the same city: “At last Cyaxares and the Medes invited the greater number of the Scythians to a banquet, at which they made them drunk and murdered them, and in this way recovered their former power and dominion. They captured Nineveh [...] and subdued the Assyrians. [...] Then Cyaxares died, after a reign [...] of forty years. He was succeeded by his son Astyages (Herodotus, *Histories* I:106).

Shamshi-Adad is cursed by modern Assyriologists for his “patent falseness” and “obvious falsification” (Westenholz 2005, 12, 14). His immediate succession to the Great Kings of Akkad does not fare any better: “The direct line of kingship from Akkad to Shamshi-Addu is projected here with force and it

provides a clever double claim, for, along with descent from the Akkadian idea of kingship, if nothing else, comes the claim to the throne of the city of Assur” (Michalowski 1993, 86). But is Shamshi-Addad’s claim really a “pious forgery” so proudly revealed by modern Assyriologists (e.g., Westenholz 2005, 14)? This author is not inclined to join the accusations against him. After all, it is not only stratigraphy that bears him out. Shaushatra of “Mitanni” as well as his Median *alter ego* Cyaxares are on record for conquering and plundering the city of Assur. If Shamshi-Adad is Cyaxares in Assyrian garb, modern Assyriologists may be much closer to the very crime for which they indict the king. After all, it is not Shamshi-Adad who dates himself four centuries after Sharkalisharri, the last Old-Akkadian king whom this author identifies with Sharakos, the last pre-Median king of Classical historiography. This stretching of time between Old-Akkadians and the “King of All” is the work of today’s Assyriologists who – albeit unknowingly – turn their own confusion into a verdict against their subject of research.

Outside of Nineveh and Assur, it is difficult to attribute significant strata to the decades of Shamshi-Adad’s power over his widespread empire. Yet, if he is an *alter ego* of Cyaxares of Media, one has to add the “Mitanni” strata of Northern Mesopotamia and Syria to accommodate the first Amorite/Martu “King of the Whole”. At Nineveh proper, the supposedly non-retrievable “Mitanni” remains are the finds attributed to Shamshi-Adad.

This is also true for the famous Ishtar of Nineveh which figures so prominently in the Amarna correspondence. In the Amarna letters the deity carries the name “Ishtar of Ninveh” (Amarna letter 23). It is a “statue [...] of pure gold” (Amarna letter 24). Supposedly, no information on such precious idols is available in – Sothis dated – -14th century Assyria. Yet, Shamshi-Adad is on record for having commissioned such gold statutes. In a letter he even gives the weight of “20 minas of gold” for a statue of Bêlet-Agade destined for the city of Assur (Charpin 2004, 380). Thus, the statue of the Ninevite Ishtar send

by Tushratta to Egypt to heal Amenophis III was sent by his *alter ego* in Assyrian garb, Shamshi-Adad's son Ishme-Dagan. In a way this identity has been sensed when Shamshi's Ishtar of Nineveh is perceived as "a prefiguration of the great Mitannian goddess Ishtar of Nineveh" (Westenholz 2005, 16).

Ishme-Dagan is the last ruler from Shamshi-Adad's line. Still during his father's lifetime he is made king of Ekallatum. From there, Ishme-Dagan is slowly losing his Assyrian domain to another branch of Martu/Amorites. In this he resembles very much Astyages, Media's last Great King residing in Ekbatana, who is losing his satrapy Assyria to Cyrus from the Persian tribe of the Mardoii/Amardians. Of course, one has to look for yet other royal names of Cyaxares and Astyages. After all, they ruled over many peoples. Yet, in Assyria Shamshi and Ishme look like prime candidates. Yet, who is Cyaxares' alter ego on his Iranian home turf?

VI Cyaxares as Kutuk-Inshushinak in Iran

Iran exhibits some of the most meticulous stratigraphies of the Ancient Orient. Yet, chronologists are time and again stunned that — after numerous levels reaching from far back up to around 2000 BCE — very little is left for the next two millennia for which they expect all the action described by Classical historians.

In the decisive publication covering the time spans of Ancient Near Eastern history — *Chronologies in Old World Archaeology: Third Edition* (Ehrich 1992) — the reader will be surprised with chapter headings like "The Chronology of Mesopotamia, ca. 7000-1600 B.C." (Porada et al. 1992, 77), or "The Chronology of Iran, ca. 8000-2000 B.C." (Voigt et al. 1992, 122). Since, e.g. in Susa/Ville Royale, the two millennia from -2000 to the Parthian period have only two strata against the sixteen strata attributed to the millennium

lasting from -3100 to -2000, he may understand that such a short stratigraphy does not justify a separate chapter for the more recent two millennia.

And yet, any reader would like to know why there are so few strata for the 2000 years much closer to him. After all, he has already learnt that the master stratigraphies of other areas, e.g. Nippur for Babylonia, also suffer from a similar scarcity of material for the very same 2000 years. Nobody tells him that the period up to -1700 is Biblically dated after Abraham the Patriarch whereas Achaemenids and Parthians still carry the dates assigned to them by Classical historiography. The excavators themselves are not aware of the basis of the chronology they confidently employ.

Iranian Stratigraphies of Tepe Yahya (left; lowest level is VIID; cf. Voigt et al. 1992; with slightly different dates Potts 2004), and Susa (Ville Royale; middle; lowest level is 18; cf. Voigt et al. 1992). For comparison, Babylonia's stratigraphy of Nippur's Inanna Temple on the right (lowest level is XX; Hansen/Dales 1962, Gibsen/Hansen/Zettler 2001). [Abraham-derived Biblical dates are employed from -3rd millennium up to levels IVA, 3, and III (Sothic date in II) respectively]

| Tepe Yahya | | Susa | | Nippur* | |
|---|---------|-------|----------------------------------|---------|------------------|
| | | | | | Parthians (+100) |
| I | (+200) | | | | "Lacuna" |
| II | (-275) | 1 | | I | (-680) |
| III | (-500) | 2 | Early Achaemenid | (-500) | II (-1300) |
| Enigmatic lacuna in all stratigraphies | | | | | |
| IVA | (-1900) | 4-3 | Susa VB = Late UR III | (-1900) | III (-1900) |
| IVB1 | (-2300) | 6-5 | Susa VA Kutik-Inshushinak | (-2200) | IV (-2100) |
| IVB4-IVB2 | (-2400) | 8-7 | Susa IVB = Old-Akkadians | (-2400) | V (-2300) |
| IVB5 | (-2500) | 12-9 | Susa IVA = Early Dynastic III | (-2700) | VI (-2500) |
| IVB6 | (-2700) | 15-13 | Susa IIIC = Early Dynastic II | (-2800) | ... |
| IVC | (-3100) | 18-16 | Susa IIIB | (-3100) | XII (-3000) |
| | | | | ... | |
| | | | | | XX (-3300) |

| | |
|-----------|---------|
| VA2-VA1 | (-3800) |
| VB | (-4250) |
| VC | (-4300) |
| VIB2-VIA | (-5100) |
| VIID-VIIA | (-5300) |

*Keall and Ciuk (1991) have shown that pottery of Nippur's Old-Babylonian level III and pottery of the Parthian period are clearly continuous and even partly identical though supposedly up to 2000 years apart. Stratigraphically, Nippur's levels III to I – now stretched over 1800 years – belong to the period of Achaemenids whose Nippur activities are beyond doubt (banking etc.). Nippur's stratum I is safely dated to Esarhaddon identified by this author as the Achaemenid Great King Arsakes/Artaxerxes II in Assyrian garb. Esarhaddon's mother Sakutu (cuneiform sources) is the *alter ego* of Artaxerxes' mother Par-Syatis (Greek sources). Esarhaddon's vassal in Cyprus, Eresusar (cuneiform sources), is the *alter ego* of Artaxerxes' vassal in Cyprus, Euagoras (Greek sources). Esarhaddon's Egyptian opponent, Tachos (cuneiform sources), is the *alter ego* of Artaxerxes' Egyptian opponent, Tacharka (Greek sources; in detail Heinsohn 2000, 83-91)

In Egypt, the search for Cyaxares arrives at Shaushatra. Stratigraphically he follows, in Northern Mesopotamia/Syria, the Hyksos as immediately as Shamshi-Adad follows their Old-Akkadian *alter ego* in Nineveh and Assur. Who follows in the same stratigraphic sequence, the Old-Akkadian period in Susa, Iran's most important metropolis? It is Kutik-Inshushinak. In his Akkadian inscriptions he calls himself Puzur-Inshushinak.

Kutik-Inshushinak is not a native from Susa. Yet, he manages to conquer that strategic city. Kutik's political ambitions are permanently challenged by an enigmatic power called Guti in the cuneiform sources (formerly also read as Qutheans). His realm is under intermittent attack from the declining Old-Akkadians and the rising Guti, alternating with periods of peace and diplomatic approaches. However, after taking Anshan – located in the area of the Mardians/Amardians identified by this author as the Martu/Amorites of the cuneiform sources – Kutik is able to subdue the Guti, throw off the yoke of the Akkadians, and unite all of Iran under his rule. This achievement brings more than seventy towns and cities “under his feet” (Hinz 1983, 388).

With these deeds, Kutik looks very similar to Cyaxares, whose unification of Iran is time and again disrupted by a declining Assyria and the treacherous Scythians: “Tradition holds that at the end of Phraortes’ [father of Cyaxares] reign there was a major invasion of Western Iran by nomadic Scythians who then held political power in the region from 653 to 624 BC. Herodotus reported that Cyaxares (625-585 BC) drove the Scythians out and re-established Median royal power” (Cuyler Young Jr. 1980, 147). This author has identified the Qutheans as the Scythians quite a while ago (Heinsohn 1988, 110).

Only for two decades, Kutik has a presence in Susa (Biblically dated between -2240 and -2220, but also around -2100). Then, he is on record for a gigantic move that is not yet comprehensible for modern Assyriology. He conquers Mesopotamia. In an Akkadian inscription (Hinz 1983, 388), he lets the world know that the power over the “Four Quarters” now rests with him.

The Old-Akkadian royal title “King of the Four Quarters (Universe)” indicates Kutik’s rule over a vast empire. But from where does he rule it? Here, the sources fall silent. It is definitively not Susa. Yet, if Kutik moves into a capital suiting his new empire, we may look for him at Nineveh. There, the post-Akkadian “King of All” is an Amorite invader known under the Assyrian throne name of Shamshi-Adad.

Before leaving Susa for good, Kutik creates a linear script (Vallat 1978, 194). It is called “Elamite” because the very same territory has texts of Proto-Elamite and cuneiform Elamite. Only the latter can be read. Linear “Elamite” consists of 80 symbols. It is written in vertical columns running from top to bottom and left to right. After some twenty years, i.e. after the departure of Kutik to his empire of the “Four Quarters”, this new script is not further developed and goes out of use.

Modern historians are convinced that from the “assumed imperial space [of the Medes] not a single written document has been preserved”. If anybody still wants to claim the veracity of the Median Empire he would have to admit, that the Medes “would have created the only empire without writing skills in the 3000 years of Ancient Near Eastern history” (Rollinger 2005, 3).

However, if Kutik is the Iranian original for Cyaxares of the Greek sources such accusations of primitivism would turn out to be blatantly false. After all, Cyaxares=Kutik does not only publish inscriptions in Akkadian but also modernizes Iranian writing by introducing a very advanced linear script. Moreover, as Shamshi-Adad as well as Shaushatra, Cyaxares employs his subjects of Assyrian and Hurrian descent to use their cuneiform scripts for his correspondence and royal inscriptions. How much more could be demanded from a ruler who, admittedly, takes over the Near East as a martial invader?

Was the peculiar linear “Elamite” language written for twenty years under Kutik the language of the Medes? The Median language is almost entirely unknown (Schmitt 2003). If Linear Elamite was close to Avestan (McAlpin 1975) or Scythian is, therefore, difficult to decide. On the other hand, Linear Elamite developed by Kutik cannot yet be sufficiently read. Therefore, it may be premature to rule out that this “Elamite” – other than Proto-Elamite and cuneiform Elamite (used by the Achaemenids side by side with Persian and Akkadian) – was the Median language in written form. One must not forget that at the beginning of decipherment, cuneiform Elamite was called Median by Grotefend, Rawlinson, Westergaard etc. Only in 1874, Archibald Henry Sayce (1845-1933) suggested “Elamite”. Yet, nobody has proven thus far that Linear Elamite belongs to the same language as cuneiform Elamite.

VII Cyaxares, a truly imperial monarch

The Medes and their imperial reaches are saved from modern attempts to annihilate them from the book of history. The moment, non-scholarly dating schemes are excluded from the work of historiography, the stratigraphic location where one has to look for the Median Empire becomes clear. It is the stratum immediately below the Achaemenids who succeed them.

The 1500 or so years that separate Kutik-Inshushinak from the Achaemenids in Tepe Yahya and Susa are due to a pseudo-hiatus. The stratigraphy is clearly continuous. The stratigraphy based overview below, therefore, provides no less clear information that Media's greatest king, Cyaxares, is respected in the vast territory from Egypt to Iran.

Cyaxares in historiography and stratigraphy

| Greek historiography | Egyptian sources and/or strata | Assyrian sources and/or strata | Iranian sources and/or strata |
|-------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|
| Macedonians | Ptolemies | Hellenism/Parthians | Hellenism/Parthians |
| (I) Achaemenids | Ramessides* | Middle Assyrians** to Late Assyrians | Achaemenids |
| (II) Cyaxares | Shaushatra | Shamshi-Adad | Kutik-Inshushinak |
| “No strata” | Mitanni strata (on Akkad strata) | Post-Akkad strata | Post-Akkad strata |
| -625 to -585 | Sothic date | Bible-derived date | Bible-derived date |

 (III)

Ninos-Assyrians Hyksos

Old-Akkadians

Old-Akkad. Elamites

* Achaemenid Satrapy Mudraya=Egypt; ** Achaemenid Satrapy Athura=Assyria. The Medes which are so frequently mentioned in the Late Assyrian texts are the Medes that time and again challenge the rule of their Achaemenid overlords.

By dismissing a dating scheme tied to Bible-fundamentalism one must not fall into a new trap by sanctifying the chronology provided by Classical historiography. Thus, Cyaxares' reign from -625 to -585 is not at all sacrosanct. Greek historians, too, may have expanded the actual historical time span to meet a pre-conceived system (Heinsohn 2005, 4). Yet, by liberating the chronologies from Egypt to India from some 1500 blank years enforced by Abraham's genealogy, the Greek dates seem to be much closer to reality than Scripture. Thus, if Assyriology will muster the strength to break the shackles of Bible-fundamentalism in the 21st century, it may profit no less than the sciences do since the 19th century.

Today, the best and the brightest historians of Classical Greece are slandered as inventors or even liars and crackpots in matters of the pre-Hellenistic Ancient World. With is defense of the empires of Ninos-Assyrians, Medes and Achaemenids by invoking stratigraphy into the witness stand, and by desisting the belief in the chronology of GOD or baseless retro calculations, this author will certainly come up against the same accusations. Yet his case, he may be told, is even more hopeless because he neglects all that was excavated and deciphered within the last 200 years. This could not be further from the truth. He merely tries to assign this evidence its appropriate historical frame. The scholars of antiquity – taken with a grain of salt – are borne out strikingly by the works of modern archaeology. Yet, this work is not set to good use by forcing the

excavators not to follow the strata in the ground but pre-conceived chronology ideas. Modern Assyriology has excavated and deciphered the very sources used by Greek historians in antiquity. This seminal achievement will last for ever.

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