

HISTORY OF ACHAEMENID IRAN

Tentative diagram of the 40-hour seminar

(in 80 parts of 30 minutes)

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1 A - Achaemenid beginnings I A

Introduction; Iranian Achaemenid historiography; Problems of historiography continuity; Iranian posterior historiography; foreign historiography

1 B - Achaemenid beginnings I B

Western Orientalist historiography; early sources of Iranian History; Prehistory in the Iranian plateau and Mesopotamia

2 A - Achaemenid beginnings II A

Brief Diagram of the History of the Mesopotamian kingdoms and Empires down to Shalmaneser III (859-824 BCE) – with focus on relations with Zagros Mountains and the Iranian plateau

2 B - Achaemenid beginnings II B

The Neo-Assyrian Empire from Shalmaneser III (859-824 BCE) to Sargon of Assyria (722-705 BCE) – with focus on relations with Zagros Mountains and the Iranian plateau

3 A - Achaemenid beginnings III A

From Sennacherib (705-681 BCE) to Assurbanipal (669-625 BCE) to the end of Assyria (609 BCE) – with focus on relations with Zagros Mountains and the Iranian plateau

3 B - Achaemenid beginnings III B

The long shadow of the Mesopotamian Heritage: Assyria, Babylonia, Elam/ Anshan, Kassites, Gutti, Akkad, and Sumer / Religious conflicts of empires – Monotheism & Polytheism

4 A - Achaemenid beginnings IV A

The Sargonid dynasty and the Divine, Universal Empire – the Translatio Imperii

4 B - Achaemenid beginnings IV B

Assyrian Spirituality, Monotheism & Eschatology; the imperial concepts of Holy Land (vs. barbaric periphery) and Chosen People (vs. barbarians)

5 A - Achaemenid beginnings V A

The Medes from Deioces to Cyaxares & Astyages
The early Achaemenids (Achaemenes & the Teispids)

5 B - Achaemenid beginnings V B

- Why the 'Medes' and why the 'Persians'?
What enabled these nations to form empires?

6 A - Zoroaster A

Shamanism-Tengrism; the life of Zoroaster; Avesta and Zoroastrianism

6 B - Zoroaster B

Mithraism vs. Zoroastrianism; the historical stages of Zoroaster's preaching and religion

7 A - Cyrus the Great (Cyrus II) I A

The end of Assyria, Nabonid Babylonia, and the Medes

7 B - Cyrus the Great (Cyrus II) I B

The Nabonidus Chronicle

8 A - Cyrus the Great (Cyrus II) II A

Cyrus' battles against the Medes

8 B - Cyrus the Great (Cyrus II) II B

Cyrus' battles against the Lydians

9 A - Cyrus the Great (Cyrus II) III A

The Battle of Opis: the facts

9 B - Cyrus the Great (Cyrus II) III B

Why Babylon fell without resistance

10 A - Cyrus the Great (Cyrus II) IV A

Cyrus Cylinder: text discovery and analysis

10 B - Cyrus the Great (Cyrus II) IV B

Cyrus Cylinder: historical continuity in Esagila

11 A - Cyrus the Great (Cyrus II) V A

Cyrus' Empire as continuation of the Neo-Assyrian Empire

11 B - Cyrus the Great (Cyrus II) V B

Cyrus' Empire and the dangers for Egypt

12 A - Cyrus the Great (Cyrus II) VI A

Death of Cyrus; Tomb at Pasargad

12 B - Cyrus the Great (Cyrus II) VI B

Posterity and worldwide importance of Cyrus the Great

13 A - Cambyses I A

Conquest of Egypt and Cush (Ethiopia: Sudan)

13 B - Cambyses I B

Iran as successor of Assyria in Egypt, and the grave implications of the Iranian conquest of Egypt

14 A - Cambyses II A

Cambyses' adamant monotheism, his clash with the Memphitic polytheists, and the falsehood diffused against him (from Egypt to Greece)

14 B - Cambyses II B

The reasons for the assassination of Cambyses

15 A - Darius the Great I A

The Mithraic Magi, Gaumata, and the usurpation of the Achaemenid throne

15 B - Darius the Great I B

Darius' ascension to the throne

16 A - Darius the Great II A

The Behistun inscription

16 B - Darius the Great II B

The Iranian Empire according to the Behistun inscription

17 A - Darius the Great III A

Military campaign in Egypt & the Suez Canal

17 B - Darius the Great III B

Babylonian revolt, campaign in the Indus Valley

18 A - Darius the Great IV A

Darius' Scythian and Balkan campaigns; Herodotus' fake stories

18 B - Darius the Great IV B

Anti-Iranian priests of Memphis and Egyptian rebels turning Greek traitors against the Oracle at Delphi, Ancient Greece's holiest shrine

19 A - Darius the Great V A

Administration of the Empire; economy & coinage

19 B - Darius the Great V B

World trade across lands, deserts and seas

20 A - Darius the Great VI A

Rejection of the Modern European fallacy of 'Classic' era and Classicism

20 B - Darius the Great VI B

Darius the Great as the end of the Ancient World and the beginning of the Late Antiquity (522 BCE - 622 CE)

21 A - Achaemenids, Zoroastrianism, Mithraism, and the Magi A

Avesta and the establishment of the ideal empire

21 B - Achaemenids, Zoroastrianism, Mithraism, and the Magi B

The ceaseless, internal strife that brought down the Xšāça (: Empire)

22 A - The Empire-Garden, Embodiment of the Paradise A

The inalienable Sargonid-Achaemenid continuity as the link between Cosmogony, Cosmology and Eschatology

22 B - The Empire-Garden, Embodiment of the Paradise B
The Garden, the Holy Tree, and the Empire

23 A - Xerxes the Great I A
Xerxes' rule; his upbringing and personality

23 B - Xerxes the Great I B
Xerxes' rule; his imperial education

24 A - Xerxes the Great II A
Imperial governance and military campaigns

24 B - Xerxes the Great II B
The Anti-Iranian complex of inferiority of the 'Greek' barbarians (the so-called 'Greco-Persian wars')

25 A - Parsa (Persepolis) A
The most magnificent capital of the pre-Islamic world

25 B - Parsa (Persepolis) B
Naqsh-e Rostam: the Achaemenid necropolis: the sanctity of the mountain; the Achaemenid-Sassanid continuity of cultural integrity and national identity

26 A - Iran & the Periphery A
Caucasus, Central Asia, Siberia, Tibet and China Hind (India), Bengal, Deccan and Yemen

26 B - Iran & the Periphery B
Sudan, Carthage and Rome

27 A - The Anti-Iranian rancor of the Egyptian Memphitic priests A
The real cause of the so-called 'Greco-Persian wars', and the use of the Greeks that the Egyptian Memphitic priests made

27 B - The Anti-Iranian rancor of the Egyptian Memphitic priests B
Battle of the Eurymedon River; Egypt and the Wars of the Delian League

28 A - Civilized Empire & Barbarian Republic A
The incomparable superiority of Iran opposite the chaotic periphery: the Divine Empire

28 B - Civilized Empire & Barbarian Republic B
Why the 'Greeks' and the Romans were unable to form a proper empire

29 A - Artaxerxes I (465-424 BCE) A
Revolt in Egypt; the 'Greeks' and their shame: they ran to Persepolis as suppliants

29 B - Artaxerxes I (465-424 BCE) B

Aramaeans and Jews in the Achaemenid Court

30 A - Interregnum (424-403 BCE) A
Xerxes II, Sogdianus, and Darius II

30 B - Interregnum (424-403 BCE) B
The Elephantine papyri and ostraca; Aramaeans, Jews, Phoenicians and Ionians

31 A - Artaxerxes II (405-359 BCE) & Artaxerxes III (359-338 BCE) A
Revolts instigated by the Memphitic priests of Egypt and the Mithraic subversion of the Empire

31 B - Artaxerxes II (405-359 BCE) & Artaxerxes III (359-338 BCE) B
Artaxerxes II's capitulation to the Magi and the unbalancing of the Empire / Cyrus the Younger

32 A - Artaxerxes IV & Darius III A
The decomposition of the Empire

32 B - Artaxerxes IV & Darius III B
Legendary historiography

33 A - Alexander's Invasion of Iran A
The military campaigns

33 B - Alexander's Invasion of Iran B
Alexander's voluntary Iranization/Orientalization

34 A - Alexander: absolute rejection of Ancient Greece A
The re-organization of Iran; the Oriental manners of Alexander, and his death

34 B - Alexander: absolute rejection of Ancient Greece B
The split of the Empire; the Epigones and the rise of the Orientalistic (not Hellenistic) world

35 A - Achaemenid Iran - Army A
Military History

35 B - Achaemenid Iran - Army B
Achaemenid empire, Sassanid militarism & Islamic Iranian epics and legends

36 A - Achaemenid Iran & East-West / North-South Trade A
The development of the trade between Egypt, Anatolia, Mesopotamia, Iran, Turan (Central Asia), Indus Valley, Deccan, Yemen, East Africa & China

36 B - Achaemenid Iran & East-West / North-South Trade B
East-West / North-South Trade and the increased importance of Mesopotamia and Egypt

37 A - Achaemenid Iran: Languages and scripts A
Old Achaemenid, Aramaic, Sabaean and the formation of other writing systems

37 B - Achaemenid Iran: Languages and scripts B
Aramaic as an international language

38 A - Achaemenid Iran: Religions A
Rise of a multicultural and multi-religious world

38 B - Achaemenid Iran: Religions B
Collapse of traditional religions; rise of religious syncretism

39 A - Achaemenid Iran: Art and Architecture A
Major archaeological sites of Achaemenid Iran

39 B - Achaemenid Iran: Art and Architecture B
The radiation of Iranian Art

40 A - Achaemenid Iran: Historical Importance A
The role of Iran in the interconnection between Asia and Africa

40 B - Achaemenid Iran: Historical Importance B
The role of Iran in the interconnection between Asia and Europe