

Development of Achaemenid Studies in the West after 1979

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Abstract:

Following the Islamic revolution of 1979 archaeological excavations and Achaemenid studies ceased in Iran. Almost all foreign archaeologists and scholars of ancient Iranian history, as well as many Iranians, who were known as historical nationalist and supported Achaemenid studies, left the country. The politicization of the ancient history of Iran halted studies of the ancient history of Iran, in particular Achaemenid history which had been encouraged and supported during the Pahlavi dynasty; in contrast, after the Islamic revolution of 1979 it was ignored by officials who saw this dynasty as a symbol of ignorance and despotism.

However, in spite of the lack of support for Achaemenid studies by Iranian officials during the last three decades, western scholars in general and European scholars in particular continued to study Achaemenid history in their institutions without hiatus, using new methodologies through various disciplines; philology, archaeology, Assyriology, Egyptology, Classical history, and Semitics studies etc. During this time many conferences and meetings have been organized, numerous ancient texts have been translated and studied, many new archaeological excavations and researches have been carried out within the territory of the Achaemenid Empire, from Central Asia to Egypt, and from the Indus valley to the Aegean Sea. A huge number of titles (books and articles) related to Achaemenid history have appeared during the last thirty years in the west, keeping Achaemenid studies very much alive.

This paper, attempts to review and introduce some major academic activities and works undertaken during the last three decades (1979-2011) in western countries. And, it will explain why regardless of the politicization and ignorance of Achaemenid history by officials inside the country, attempts by senior scholars and a new generation of scholars of Ancient Near East from different disciplines utilising new approaches in studies of Achaemenid history, means the field has developed and will continue to develop in the future.

Keywords: *Achaemenid history, Persian Empire, Ancient Near East, western scholars*

During the rule of Rezā Shāh and his son, Mohammad Rezā in Iran - who were both indifferent to religion and looking for unification of Iran and legitimization of their sovereignty based on nationalism, rather than religion - they tried to invoke historical nationalism and glories of pre-Islamic Iran; accordingly they supported all kind of archaeological activities and historical studies in Iran, paying special attention to the Persian Empire. Of course, this policy provoked heavy criticism from the clergy who emphasized Islamic values rather than pre-Islamic traditions. The continuation of this policy angered clergymen as well as many traditional Iranians; the monarchy was toppled in 1979 under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini, who strongly opposed the Pahlavi's historical and political nationalism.

However, following the revolution of 1979 and the new policies adopted by the Islamic government, archaeological excavations and Achaemenid studies ceased in Iran for some time and almost all foreign archaeologists and scholars of ancient history of Iran, as well as many Iranians who were known as historical nationalist and supported the Pahlavi policy, were forced to leave the country or resign. Although, many academic and non-academic titles have been published on Achaemenid history by Iranian individuals during the last three decades, in particular by some western educated scholars, Achaemenid history is still largely ignored by Iranian officials. Nevertheless, the senior generation of scholars in the ancient history of Iran in the West tried to publish new titles by accessing and analyzing previously discovered archaeological materials in Iran or by studying classical and Biblical sources.

A huge number of titles, written mostly by senior and younger generation of scholars of Achaemenid history came to print in the first decade after the revolution of 1979. New trends in Achaemenid studies, which began by using new methodologies from the early 1980s, reached their climax at the end of the 1990s and in the first decade of 2000. ¹It still is speeding up, in particular through the establishment of *www.achemenet.com* and digitalization of the Persepolis Fortification Archive in the *Oriental Institute of Chicago* and the role of *Achemenet, MAVI and PFA project* in recent years and the response they get from inside Iran as well as the Iranian

¹ - For example, more than 1250 books and articles appeared between Autumn 1995 to Autumn 2000 on Achaemenid history, cf. P. Briant, *Bulletin d'histoire achéménide I (BH Ach I)*, (Lyon, 1997) :5-127 ; P. Briant, *Bulletin d'histoire achéménide II (BH Ach II, 1997-2000)* (Pari, 2001) ; P. Briant, *Histoire de L'Empire Perse De Cyrus À Alexandre* , (Paris, 1996) ; E. Haerinck & K. G. Stevens, *Bibliographie Analytique de L'Archéologie de L'iran Ancient.*(, 1996-2003.) ; U. Weber and J. Wieshofer , *Das Reich der Achimeniden: Eine Bibliographie*, AMI, Ergänzungsband 15 (Brelin: 1996) ; A. Kuhrt, *The Persian Empire: A corpus of Sources from the Achaemenid period*, (London and New York, 2007).

government's new policy that has conditionally permitted some foreign archaeologists to work in Iran.

This paper, attempts to review and introduce some major academic activities and works undertaken during last three decades (since 1979) in western countries and it will explain why regardless of the politicization and ignorance of Achaemenid history by officials inside the country, attempts of senior scholars and the new generation of scholars of Ancient Near East from different disciplines and the adoption of new approaches in studies of Achaemenid history, the field has developed and will continue to develop in the future.

As mentioned above, following the Revolution of 1979, foreign archaeologists were banned from working in Iran and foreign archaeological activities came to a halt in Iran at least until 1995. Nonetheless, the senior generation of scholars of the ancient history of Iran in the West tried to publish new titles by materializing and analyzing previously discovered archaeological material in Iran, or by studying classical and Biblical sources, written immediately after the Revolution of 1979.¹ A large number of titles written mostly by senior scholars, as well as a young generation of scholars of Achaemenid history came to print in the first decade after the Revolution of 1979. One of those monographs in the early years of this decade, which followed the survey by Olmstead (1948), was J. M. Cook's *The Persian Empire*, (1983),² a general survey mostly based on Greek sources. The *Cambridge History of Iran*, whose materials had been provided by a number of the most distinguished Iranologists 10 years earlier, was published in the same year.³ Its new edition, the fourth volume of the *Cambridge Ancient History*, published in 1988, was also devoted to the Achaemenid history. Former Soviet Union scholars like Dandanaev, Vladimir G. Lukonin, W. Vogelsang and H. Koch of Germany continued their studies in Achaemenid history during those years and published a number of monographs in the 1980s.⁴ Richard Frye also paid special attention to Achaemenid History in his more lengthy survey of the *Ancient History of Iran* in 1984. The *Bible and Persia*, 1990 by Yamauchi, which was dominated by Greeks and Biblical

² - J. M. Cook, *The Persian Empire*, (London,1983).

³ - A. Mousavi, "The History of Achaemenid, Empire: From Cyrus to Alexander, A look at modern history of Achaemenid Period", *Iranian Journal of Archaeology and History*, 21- 22(1996/1997): 83-89 .

⁴ - M. A. Dandamaev , *Political history of Persian empire*(Leiden,1989); M A. Dandamaev, *Politicheskaya istoriya Achemenidskoi Derzhav* (Moscow, 1985); M. A. Dandamaev and Vladimir G. Lukonin, *The Culture and Social Institutions of Ancient Iran*, Philip L. Kohl (ed.), (Cambridge,1989); R. Frye, *The History of Ancient Iran*, (München,1984); H. Koch, *Verwaltung und Wirtschaft im Persischen Kernland zur zeit der Achämeniden*, Beihefte zum Tubinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients, Reich B, (Wiesbaden, 1990).; P. Briant, 1996 ; U. Weber and J. Wieshofer, 1996.

sources, especially Herodotus, came to print at end of this decade ⁵(Grabbe 1991: 295-98). Along with those monographs, a huge number of articles on Achaemenid History also appeared in academic journals that had been established by the senior generation of Iranologists in London, Paris, Berlin and Leiden for the study of the history and archaeology of Iran. Some of these were specifically devoted to the archaeology and the ancient history of Iran such as *Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies, Iran* (London), *Iranica Antiqua* (Leiden), *AMI Archäologisch Mitteilungen aus Iran* (Berlin), *Studia Iranica* (Paris), *Abstracta Iranica*, (Paris), *Acta Iranica* series and some other journals related to Near Eastern studies like *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* (previously *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*). A number of articles on Achaemenid history were published or reviewed in those Journals and issues like Koch and Mackenzie (eds) 1983, *Kunst, Kulture und Geschichte der Achamenidezeit und ihr Fortleben* were devoted to Achaemenid history and archaeology specifically.⁶

However, the Achaemenid Empire encompassed a variety of nations and territories each with its own history, culture and language, with most of them now located beyond the present Iranian borders where archaeologists continued work. Thus, restrictions banning foreign archaeologists working in Iran could not affect Achaemenid studies abroad. In particular, when we remember that the field of Achaemenid studies can be divided in accordance with linguistic categories and specialists in particular conventions of writing: Old Persian, Elamite, Babylonian, Hebrew, Phoenician, demotic and hieroglyphic Egyptian, Aramaic, Greek, Lycian, Carian, Lydian, Phrygian, etc. Such studies also belong to larger disciplines; Babylonian and Assyriology, Egyptology, Classics and Semitic studies etc.⁷ Archaeological activities and new discoveries in territories which belonged to the Achaemenid Empire and study of those materials by scholars from different disciplines also provided new documents for the study of Achaemenid history. Furthermore, the expanse of the Achaemenid empire and the diversity of disciplines utilised in Achaemenid history encouraged the younger generation of scholars of Achaemenid history, who had mostly been trained in the 1970s, to strive together with the senior generations of this field for a new methodology; an “interdisciplinary” or rather multidisciplinary, “structural” and “statistical” approach to the study the history of the Achaemenid Empire. It was perhaps following this methodology that the modern institution of Achaemenid studies took shape and was marked by the colloquia of the Achaemenid History Workshop (1981-

⁵ - Yamauchi, E. M., *Persia and the Bible* (Michigan, 1990); Lester L Grabbe, “Review of E. Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible*, *JSJ* (1991): 295-98

⁶ - H. Koch and D. N. Mackenzie (eds), *Kunst, Kulture und Geschichte der Achamenidezeit und ihr Fortleben* (AMI), (Berlin,1983)

⁷ - P. Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, translated by Peter T. Daniels (Indiana, and Eisenbrauns, 2002); also see: at <http://www.achemenet.com/pdf/call.pdf>: 5

1990) and its associated publications (*Achaemenid History: I-VIII*, 1987-1994).⁸ The most important aspects of these colloquia - as was mentioned in the first call for the meeting - was to establish contact between various researchers who in their several fields were working on the Achaemenid period in Near Eastern and Mediterranean history .⁹

The annual multidisciplinary Achaemenid History workshop began as the brainchild of Heleen Sancisi-Weerdenburg at Groningen University. As one of the new generation of scholars of Achaemenid History, she started the ground-breaking work of this thematic and multidisciplinary colloquia in 1981 and was soon joined by Amelie Kuhrt from London. Both launched a series that was to continue until 1990 when in Ann Arbor, at Michigan University they found another collaborator, Margaret Root.¹⁰ The first volume of these thematic and academic series of workshops was published in 1987 and was largely devoted to the proceedings of the *Third Achaemenid History workshop* which had been held in 1983. New volumes were provided for all workshops held until 1994. Although the colloquia, in general, dealt with problems of sources in the study of the Achaemenid Empire, each annual colloquium was devoted to an important aspect of Achaemenid history; *Sources, Structure and synthesis* (1987), *Greek Source* (1987), *Methods and Theory* (1988), *Centre and Periphery* (1990), *The Root of European Tradition* (1990), *Asia Minor and Egypt: Old Cultures in a new Empire* (1991), *Through Traveller's Eyes* (1991) and, *Continuity and Change*, (1994).¹¹ The multidisciplinary approach of this series of Achaemenid History Workshops provided an opportunity for various scholars of the Ancient Near East, Central Asia and the Mediterranean, including Classics, and from different disciplines such as ancient history, archaeology, Assyriology, Egyptology and Philology to contribute. Using a multidisciplinary approach in these series of Achaemenid Workshops saved Achaemenid History from being viewed from a Hellenocentric stance which relied only on Greek history, providing one-sided images of Achaemenid history.¹² In this type of research, non-written evidence and written traditions of non-literary character have become more important and have served to question the traditional view of the history of the Achaemenid period based predominantly on the use of Greek historical sources. This new approach to the study of the history of the Achaemenid empire, which comprised so many different nations, earlier empires and kingdoms like Assyria, Egypt, Babylonia and Lydia as well as various cultures and languages -

⁸ - For more information about these series of Achaemenid History(14 volumes by now) see:

<http://www.ninoleiden.nl/publicationslist.aspx?series=11%7CAchaemenid+History>

⁹ - H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, "Congress and Communications: Colloquium Early Achaemenid History, Groningen, 29th May 1981", *Persia*(1980): IX:232.

¹⁰ - P. Briant, 2002: 3

¹¹ - See: <http://www.nino-leiden.nl/publicationslist.aspx?series=11%7CAchaemenid+History>.

¹² - Sancisi-Weerdenburg, H., "Introduction", in H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg,(ed.), *Achaemenid History I: Sources, Structures, Synthesis*(Leiden, 1987): XI-XIV.

with each studied within different academic disciplines, was an important event which could bring all those scholars together and keep Achaemenid studies alive among different disciplines.¹³

A second approach which was emphasised in this series of workshops and was in use, at least from 1970s, was the “structural” approach, looking at the empire from below, .i.e. “not so much the study of events and chronologies, but the analysis of an entire society”.¹⁴ Although part of this road had already been paved by research which attempted to study the organization of the empire on various administrative and bureaucratic levels, in particular by Pierre Briant in *Rois, tribute et paysans*, in 1983;¹⁵ nonetheless, emphasis on the structural approach in this series of Achaemenid History Workshops helped scholars of Achaemenid History to break away from the dominant Hellenocentric discourse, which looked to Achaemenid history from the top, without paying attention to how this great empire worked within the lower strata.¹⁶ Furthermore, by using statistical approaches in this series of workshops they could assert a relationship between the number of documents and objects like coins and seals found in a province and the intensity of the presence with the control exercised by the Persian central government.¹⁷ Thus, the interruption in the Babylonian archive in the first years of Xerxes’s reign is connected “with the revolts known from classical sources and with the Babylonian usurpers attested in a few tablets and all these matters are put in a cause-and-effect relationship with Xerxes’ brutal repressive measures against the Babylonian temples and against Babylonia itself”;¹⁸ or the limited number of objects that have been discovered in some sites in Anatolia indicate that imperial power in those territories was limited to a few closely-controlled enclaves and the major routes, not to all those lands.¹⁹ It is also true for the case that we have not found enough evidence or markers to prove previous claims regarding the “Median Empire” which previously had been suggested by some historians and scholars of ancient history.²⁰ By using the new methodology in the study of Achaemenid history (the multidisciplinary, structural and statistical approaches), the studies which had been limited either to Classical historians (Persian-Greek Wars

¹³ - Ibid.

¹⁴ A. Kuhrt and H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, “Introduction”, in H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, and A. Kuhrt(eds), *Achaemenid History II: The Greek Sources*(Leiden,1987): X.

¹⁵ - Sancisi-Weerdenburg, 1987:XIII

¹⁶ - Ibid.

¹⁷ - H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, “The quest for an Elusive Empire”, in H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg and A. Kuhrt(eds), *Achaemenid History IV: Centre and Periphery*(Leiden, 1990):263-274.

¹⁸ - (http://www.cais-soas.com/CAIS/History/hakhamaneshian/new_trends.htm: 5

¹⁹ -P. Briant and Rémy Bouchardat (eds), *L’archéologie de l’empire achéménide: nouvelles recherches*, Actes du colloque organisé au collège de France par le , (21-22 novembre 2003(Paris, 2005)

²⁰ - H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, “ Was there ever a Median Empire?” in A. Kuhrt and Heleen Sancisi-Weerdenburg(eds), *Achaemenid History III: Method and Theory* (Leiden, 1988) :197-212; M. T. Imanpour, “The Medes and Persians: Were the Persians ever Ruled by the Medes?”, *Nāme-ye Irān-e Bāstān(The International Journal of Ancient Iranian Studies)*, 2/2 (2002-2003): 61-81.

and the arrival of Alexander in Asia in 334 BC), the Old Testament (to Cyrus the Great and the return of Jewish exiles to their homeland, and the Persian Court), or had been reduced to a few major sites such as Pasargadae, Susa and Persepolis, was brought within the field of history by the initiative of Heleen Sancisi-Weerdenburg and Amelie Kuhrt.²¹ This highly academic, international colloquia, though small, provided an opportunity for scholars of the Ancient Near East from different disciplines, in particular Achaemenists, to meet and to carry on discussions more systematically on historical problems and questions posed by the organizers of each workshop meeting. It is perhaps the reason why P. Briant refers to 1983 as “golden Star” in his intellectual history when following an invitation of Sancisi-Weerdenburg, he participated for the first time in the Achaemenid Workshop in Groningen.²²

The Achaemenid History Workshop became a model for scholars of the ancient history of Iran and the Near East in varied disciplines for organizing such meetings and conferences in different institutes across Europe, whether thematically focussed in terms of geographical scope (e.g. Anatolia, Trans-Euphrates, the coastal plain of the Black and Mediterranean Seas), or type of evidence (coinage, archaeology) and Textual sources (Classical, Biblical sources and Old texts) or with wider thematic remits and relatively disparate content. Both subsequently and in parallel with this series of colloquia (Achaemenid workshop in 1980s and early 1990s), mostly thematic meetings and conferences were held in France, largely through the efforts of Pierre Briant in Belgium, Turkey, Britain and sporadically in other European countries and the United States.

Pierre Briant and Clarisse Herrenschildt organized the first such conferences, “le tribut dans l’Emire perse” in Paris (1986). Briant also organized another two meetings, the *Near East viewed by a Greek* and *Anabasis of Xenophon* in Toulouse in 1995. Josette Elayi and Jean Sapin organized three meetings on the Transeuphrates region, *Syria-Palestine under the dominion of Great Kings* in 1990, 1993-4, 1996-97; Jean Kellens organized a colloquium on Persian religion, *la religion Iranienne a lepoque Achemenide* in Belgium (Liege, 1987). Bakir organized the *Hellespointine Phrygia and Asia Minor* (1998) in Turkey. Pierre Debord, Raymond Descat with the cooperation of the Centre Georges-Radet of Bordeaux called two meetings, the first on *Coinage of Asia Minor* (1985) and the second on Monetary problems, *Coins and Coinage* (1989), both in France. *Coinage of Asia Minor* was another colloquium organized by Casabonne in Turkey in 1998. Similar symposiums on coinage and monetary history were held at St. Hildas College, Oxford in April 1986 under general title of the

²¹ - P. Briant, 2002: 4.

²² - P. Briant, 2002: 3.

Impact of Empire on Fifth century Coinage and subtitled as *Persia, the Athenian coinage Decree*. The proceeding of conference was published later.²³ Another Numismatic meeting devoted to research on coins that had been discovered between years 1996-2001, mostly from the territories under Persian rule such as Asia Minor, Palestine and Egypt, was held at Madrid in 2003.²⁴ Scholars of Judean history also organized a number of conferences on the history of the Jews during the Achaemenid period. In July 2003, a conference was held at the University of Heidelberg(Germany), focusing on the people and land of Judah during the 5th and early 4th centuries BC., the period when the Persian empire ruled over the entire ancient Near East. This conference in fact was the second of the three such meetings. The proceedings of the conference were published later in 2006.²⁵ A similar International (Israeli-British) conference on Judaism, *Judah between East and West: The Transition from Persian to Greek Rule (ca. 400-200 BCE)* was held in 2007 by the Department of Archaeology and Middle East in Tel Aviv University at which many papers were devoted to Judaism under Persian rule.²⁶ A number of books related to Judaism during Achaemenid period have been published in recent years as well.²⁷

Although these new approaches helped scholars of Achaemenid History to break away from the dominant of Hellenocentric view which relied just on Greek history, classical historians had an essential role in many of those colloquia and Achaemenid studies in the last three decades. This is because much of Greek history in the fifth and fourth centuries during the Achaemenid period was concerned about the interaction with Persia. Even the Greek historiography tradition which was initiated by Herodotus was the result of this interaction, as Herodotus stated he started writing history just to know who the Persian are.²⁸ As David Lewis (1977) also demonstrated in the seminal series of lectures delivered at the University of Cincinnati in 1997, “much of Greek history in the fifth and fourth centuries remains incomprehensive if Greek interaction with Persia is not taken into account”.²⁹ The interest of David Lewis, a classical historian, was not limited to the history of

²³ -For the Proceeding of Conference see: Carradice (ed), *Coinage and Administration in the Athenian and Persian Empire*, the Ninth Oxford Symposium on Coinage and Monetary History, BAR International Series 343(1987).

²⁴ -Cf. <http://www.ins.org.il/The%20Levant%201996-2001.pdf>

²⁵ - For the Proceeding of Conference see: <http://www.achemenet.com/document/ConferenceUCI190208.pdf>.

²⁶ -Cf: http://www.achemenet.com/document/PB260307_Plan-Conference.pdf

²⁷- For example see: Peter R. Betford, *Temple restoration in Early Achaemenid Judah*, A supplement to the Journal for Study of Judaism, 65(2001); James M. Trotter, *Reading Hosea in Achaemenid Yahud* (Sheffield, , 2001)

²⁸ - A. Mousavi, “ The History of Achaemenid, Empire: from Cyrus to Alexander, a look at modern history of Achaemenid Period” , *Iranian Journal of Archaeology and History*, 21- 22[1375/1376 (1996/1997)]: 83.

²⁹ - A. Kuhrt, “Introduction”, in M. Brosius and A. Kuhrt (eds.) *Achaemenid History XI: Studies in Persian History*, Essays in Memory of David M. Lewis (Leiden ,1998) :1-6.

Classical Athens but his recognition of the vital role that the Persian Empire, its powerful neighbour, played in Greek political development and self-definition³⁰. Accordingly he was at the forefront of Greek historians who turned to the history of the Persian Empire and maintained regular contacts with the Oriental Institute in Chicago, where thousands of Persepolis Fortification Tablets are housed. Through his connection to this centre, he established close links with Mathew Stolper, who has been in charge of the tablets since Richard Hallock's death in 1981 as well as with Margaret C. Root who has been working on the seal-impressions of the Persepolis archive for thirty years.³¹ David Lewis's knowledge of Classical Greek and Persian history made him an obvious choice to revise the volumes of *Cambridge Ancient History*, volume (IV-VI) and he was invited to participate on several occasions in the Achaemenid Workshops in 1986, 1987.³² David Lewis' approach to Greek history and the Persian Empire was followed by his pupils such as Christopher Tuplin and Maria Brosius who have published various titles on Achaemenid History and now are known more so as Achaemenists than Classicists.³³ Margaret Christen Miller and A. Zournatzi are also Classical scholars who, in recent years, have been active in Achaemenid studies.³⁴ Heleen Sancisi-Weerdenburg by initiating the Achaemenid Workshop in fact established the modern Institute of Achaemenid Studies, and Pierre Briant one of the most distinguished scholars of Achaemenid history in our time, both turned to history of the Persian Empire from Classical studies. For example Heleen Sancisi-Weerdenburg (1944-200) became familiar with Achaemenid history when she was studying Ancient Greek language and history in Leiden University.³⁵ Pierre Briant also began to take an interest in the ancient Near East, and accordingly came to Achaemenid history through one of the successors of Alexander, the former satrap of greater Phrygia, Antigonus of One-Eyed and peasants of Asia Minor at the every beginning of Hellenistic period, in land that had been part of the

³⁰ - Ibid.

³¹ - Cf. Mark B. Garrison and Margaret C. Root, *Persepolis seal studies: an introduction with provisional concordances of seal numbers and associated documents on fortification tablets*, *Achaemenid History IX* (Leiden, 1996)

³² - Cf. D. Lewis, "Brissonius: De Regio Persarum Principatu Libritres(1590)", in H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg and J. W. Drijvers(eds), *Achaemenid History V: The Roots of the European Tradition* (Leiden, 1990):67-79

³³ -For C. J. Tuplin's recent publications see: Cf. C. J. Tuplin., *The Failings of Empire* (Stuttgart, 1993); idem, *Achaemenid Studies*, *Historia Einzelschriften* 99 (Stuttgart, 1996); idem, *Achaemenid Studies*, *Historia: Einzelschriften* 99(Stuttgart, 1996); idem (ed.), *Pontus and the Outside World*, (Leiden, 2004); C. J. Tuplin, and T. E. Rihll (eds.), *Science and Mathematics in Ancient Greek Culture*, (Oxford, 2002); and for some of Maria Brosius' publications see: M. Brosius, *Women in Ancient Persia, 559-331 BC* (Oxford, 1996); M. Brosius and A. Kuhrt (eds.) *Achaemenid History XI: Studies in Persian History*, *Essays in Memory of David M. Lewis* (Leiden, 1998); M. Brosius, *The Persian Empire from Cyrus II to Artaxerxes I* (London, 2000); M. Brosius, *The Persians: An introduction* (London, and New York, 2006).

³⁴ - For some of their works see: M. C. Miller, *Athens and Persia in the Fifth century BC: A Study in Cultural receptivity* (Cambridge, 1997); A. Zournatzi, *Persian rule in Cyprus: Sources, Problems, Perspectives*, *Meletemata* 44(2005).

³⁵ -K. Abdi, "The News: Hellen Sancisi-Weerdenburg", *The Iranian Journal of Archaeology and History* 15/29-30(2001-2002) : 79.

Achaemenid empire. Briant has mentioned “ the preparation of long article on Eumenes of Cardia(1972-73), an opponent of Antigonos and of a small book on Alexander (1974) quickly convinced me of the need to go further in time; just what was this Achaemenid Empire”.³⁶ Briant by writing and editing more than 150 titles in the subject relating to Achaemenid history, in particular the book of *Histoire de L'Empire Perse De Cyrus À Alexandre* (1996), in which nearly all available sources and bibliographies had been consulted, opened new era in the Achaemenid studies. His establishment of *www.achemenet.com* and promoted the position of the modern Institute of Persian Studies in recent years.

However, Classical historians like archaeologists, Biblical scholars and linguistics also held a number of conferences in association with Achaemenid history after the Achaemenid History Workshop. The thematic colloquia of *Anabasis of Xenophon* was held by Pierre Briant at Toulouse (1995); and *Xenophon and his world* by Christopher Tuplin at Liverpool in 1999.³⁷ The old model conference of *Persia and Greeks: Reaction and Reception* was held in Universite de Rennes II in September 2004, forming part of the Celtic Conference in Classics.³⁸ The latest of such thematic conferences, *Herodotus and Persian Empire*, was recently held in Innsbruck in November 2008, during which many aspects of Herodotus’s report on Persian conquered lands and the organization Persian empire as it is conceived by Herodotus was discussed in comparison with other sources.³⁹ Furthermore, for two hundred years, from the second half of the sixth century to the 330’s BC the Persian Achaemenid dynasty ruled Anatolia, Transcaucasia and the eastern shore of the Black Sea as part of an enormous empire. The Great King Darius I and his successor, Xerxes I, both tried unsuccessfully to conquer Greece and the northern Black Sea territories. In contrast to the Mediterranean, Egypt, Phoenicia and Syria, the Black Sea did not have prosperous cities or provinces to offer. Thus it seems that after some initial struggles the Persian Kings acknowledged the fact and the Caucasus formed the natural borders of the Persian Empire. On the other hand, they could not avoid getting involved in the affairs of the Black Sea in order to keep the border safe. The presence of the Persians in those regions and the consequences of the long lasting Persian presence for the inhabitants of Anatolia and the Black Sea region has been the subject of a number of different

³⁶ - A. Mousavi,, [1375/1376 (1996/1997)]: 83; P. Briant, Briant, *Histoire de L'Empire Perse De Cyrus À Alexandre* (Paris, 1996). And for Briant’s Curriculum vitae see: http://www.college-de-france.fr/default/EN/all/civ_ach/travaux.htm.

³⁷ - C. J. Tuplin, and Vincent Azoulay (eds), *Xenophon and his world, paper from conference held in Liverpool*, July 1999, *Historia Einzelschriften*172(Stuttgart 2004);

³⁸ - Cf. C. J. Tuplin,“Introduction”, in C. J. Tuplin (ed), *Persian Response: Political and Cultural Interaction with Achaemenid Empire*, (Swansea, 2007).

³⁹ - See: http://www.achemenet.com/document/Herodotus_Conference_Tagungsprogramm_nov-2008.pdf

conferences and meetings in recent years. A conference entitled *The Achaemenid Impact on Local Populations and Cultures in Anatolia (6th- 4th)* was held at Istanbul in 2005. It discussed monuments in Turkey and provided a perspective on this kind of influence and its effect on the shores of the Black Sea. The cross-cultural and political encounter between the Persians and Greeks, Anatolia, the Black Sea as well as the Persian periphery in the Black Sea region has been the subject of another interdisciplinary conference in Greece. An international conference, *Ancient Greece and Ancient Iran: Cross-cultural encounters*, was held in 2006. It was jointly organized the National Hellenic Research Foundation (NHRF) in Greece, the Iranian Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organization (ICHTO) and the Hellenic National Commission for UNSECO at Athens. Many scholars from different disciplines in particular archaeology, classical history and ancient history participated and aspects of Persian and Greek cultural interaction were examined.⁴⁰ In January, 2008, an interdisciplinary conference entitled “Achaemenid Impact in Black Sea Communication of Powers in Circumpontic Cultures” was organized in Sandbjerg in Denmark with the support of the Danish National Research Foundation’s Centre for Black Sea Studies. It is also promising that new Society for Hellenistic and Iranian Studies (SHIS) has been established just recently and its first annual lecture took place on Tuesday, 10 March 2009 in King College, London.⁴¹

At the same times archaeologists have been working in a vast geographical area from India to the Mediterranean Sea and from Central Asia to Egypt. All these regions were within the Persian imperial sphere of influence e.g. Central Asia and Afghanistan, Anatolia and Eastern Mediterranean, Egypt and Mesopotamia, and all are outside the boundaries of modern Iran. Many archaeological sites have been identified and excavated, with some associated with the Persian rule in those territories. An overview of some of these works and surveys is provided in “*L’archéologie de l’empire Achéménide: nouvelles recherches*”, a conference organised by Pierre Briant and Rémy Boucharlat and held at the College de France in Paris in 2003. This conference provided an excellent overview of the state of research of the whole Achaemenid Empire in Anatolia, Central Asia, Mesopotamia, east and south of the Mediterranean Sea in Syria, Palestine, Egypt, as well as in Iran.

⁴² Pierre Briant and Remy Boucharlat, in their relatively long introduction in the proceedings of this conference briefly, and other participants more comprehensively, overviewed the history of archaeological excavations and some discovered objects in some of those lands including the regions

⁴⁰ - The proceedings of this conference, edited by Antigone Zournatzi, are now published .

⁴¹ - For mor information about this Society and its activities see: <http://www.sh-is.org>.

⁴² - For information about the papers were presented in this conference see: P. Briant and Rémy Boucharlat, (eds), *L’archéologie de l’empire achéménide: nouvelles recherches*, Actes du colloque organisé au collège de France par le << Réseau international d’ études et de recherches achéménides >> (GDR 2538 CNRS), 21-22 novembre 2003 (Paris, 2005).

in southern Caucasia (Transcaucasia which included modern Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia), Cilicia and the Hatay in southeast modern Turkey, southeast Anatolia, Coastal Plain of Palestine, northeast Syria, Egypt, northern Iraq and Central Asia during the Persians rule.⁴³ The archaeology of Iran was briefly reviewed and an Achaemenid site in Fārs, Tepe Hakvan at Moshkan was more comprehensively outlined. Most of those papers are available on line in PDF format at (<http://www.achemenet.com/pdf/colloque/pdf>).

This was not the only archaeological conference held in association with Achaemenid history. There have been a number such colloquia and studies focussing thematically in terms of geographical scope like Transeuphratian, Caucasia, Anatolia and Central Asia and discussing the regional archaeology during the Achaemenid period (<http://www.mediatechnix.com/transeuphratene/menua.htm>). Eastern Georgia was, for example, the subject of a regional conference in which new discoveries in this region from the Achaemenid period were discussed. A Georgian-German team started excavations at the site of Gumbati in Eastern Georgia in 1994. Since then the question of Achaemenid rule in Transcaucasia has become an issue of lively discussions and the subject of two international conferences in Tbilisi.⁴⁴ Much archaeological excavation was also conducted in the Transeuphratian territories, at many satrapal capitals of the Persian Empire, now situated in modern Turkey. These include Dascylium, Sardis, and Gordion in Phrygia and Lycia. The results of some of this work in the 1980s and 1990s have already been published.⁴⁵

The archaeological discoveries, in particular the ceramics in Central Asia during the Achaemenid period and the role of Achaemenid organization in Central Asia, Afghanistan and Pakistan, has been the subject of meetings and discussion in the 1980s, in particular by J. C. Gardin, “Les relations entre la Méditerranée et la Bactriane dans l’antiquité d’après des données céramologiques inédites”, (Paris 1989); “Migrateurs et porteurs de pots en bactriane de l’âge du bronze à nos jours”, (Paris, 1986);⁴⁶ and Briant, *L’Asie Centrale et les royaumes proche-orientaux du premier millénaire*, C.

⁴³ - P. Briant and Boucharlat (eds), 2005: 17-27.

⁴⁴ - See: <http://www.achaement.com/pd/collques/resumes/>; cf. Florian S. Knauss, “Caucasia”, in P. Briant and Rémy Boucharlat (eds), *L’archéologie de l’empire achéménide: nouvelles recherches*, Actes du colloque organisé au collège de France par le << Réseau international d’études et de recherches achéménides >> (GDR 2538 CNRS), 21-22 novembre 2003 (Paris, 2005).

⁴⁵ - J. Elayi-J., *Sapin, Quinze ans de recherche (1985-2000) sur la Transeuphratène à l’époque perse* (Transeuphratène, Supp.8(Paris, 2000) ; Young Jr and T. Cuyler, “From Phrygian capital to Achaemenid entrepot : middle and late Phrygian Gordion”, in *Neo-Assyrian, Median, Achaemenian and other Studies in honour of David Stronach II*(1999): 191-242 ; BHach I(1997): 22-24

⁴⁶ - J. C. Gardin, “Les relations entre la Méditerranée et la Bactriane dans l’antiquité d’après des données céramologiques inédites”, in J. L. Huot, M. Yon et Y. Calvet (eds), *De l’Indus aux Balkans, Recueil à la mémoire de Jean Deshayes* (Paris, 1989): 447-460 ; J. C. Gardin, “Migrateurs et porteurs de pots en bactriane de l’âge du bronze à nos jours”, in M. Th. Barrelet et J. C. Gardin (eds), *A propos des interprétations archéologiques de la poterie: questions, ouvertes* (Paris, 1986): 76-84.

VIIIè-VIIè siècles avant notre èr.⁴⁷ Many Achaemenid objects and documents have been discovered in Egypt during archaeological excavations in the last twenty years which have changed the previous view on the nature of the Persian presence in Egypt during the reign of the Great King, Darius and Xerxes affording “A certainty and new lead” .⁴⁸ We can, for example, mention the discovery of the tomb of Udjahorresnet, one of the high ranking Egyptian collaborators with Persian imperial power under Cambyses and Darius;⁴⁹ the discovery of a funerary Stele part of which depicts an individual seated on a Persian-style throne wearing a Persian type of robe;⁵⁰ the discovery of a corpus of Aramaic documents dated during the ruling years of Persian kings, as well as huge discoveries including an entire ancient village dated to the Achaemenid period at the site of Ayn Manawir buried in the sand, south of Khagegeh Oasis in the western Desert, in the Dash region, with houses, fields, orchards, irrigation channels and, most importantly, Qanats using an Iranian technique.⁵¹

Less than two decades after the Revolution of 1979 a number of archaeologists, firstly Iranian archaeologists based in western academic institutions and then French, British, Australian and other European and North American archaeologists, were allowed to work in Iran, in the heartland of the Achaemenid Empire.⁵² They have been allowed to work on joint excavations with Iranian archaeologists and under the direction of the Iranian Culture Heritage Organization (ICHO).⁵³ This organization sponsored two symposia first at Susa on 14--17 April 1994 and second in Tehran on 18-

⁴⁷ - P. Briant , *L'Asie Centrale et les royaumes proche-orientaux du premier millénaire* (C. VIIIè-VIIè siècles avant notre ère), ERC (Paris, 1984) : 47ff ;

P. Magee, Petrie Cameron, Robert Knox and Farid Khan, “The Achaemenid empire in south Asia and Recent Excavation in Akra in Northwest Pakistan”, *American Journal of Archaeology* 109 (2005) : 711-741.

⁴⁸ - See : http://www.cais-soas.com/CAIS/History/hakhamaneshian/new_trends.htm: 9.

⁴⁹ - L., L. Abusir IV, Bare, *The shaf tomb of Udjahorresnet at Abusir*, *Universitas Carolina Pragensis* (1999).

⁵⁰ - I. Mathieson, Elizabet Bettles, Sue Davies and H. S. Smith , “A Stele of Persian Period from Saqqara”, *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 81(1995) : 23-40;Cf. M. Giovino, “ Egyptian Hieroglyphs on Achaemenid Period Cylinder Seals”, *Iran* 44(2006): 105-114

⁵¹ -[Http://www.achemenet.com](http://www.achemenet.com); http://www.cais-soas.com/CAIS/History/hakhamaneshian/new_trends.htm: 8

⁵² - Abbas Alizadeh from the University of Chicago, and Kamyar Abdi, from the Museum of Anthropology, the University of Michigan and an academic member of the Dartmouth College , were two of the Iranian archaeologists permitted to carry out their excavations in Iran from 1995. Kamyar Abdi began his archaeological activities in Iran first in Islamabad plain in KermanShāh and at Malyan in Fars province from 1997. He then continued his survey in collaboration with Iranian archaeologists in Malyan for few seasons, the report of those excavations can be read in the Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies, *Iran*, from 1999 onward. For the result of those excavation see: A. Alizadeh, “Archaeological Surveys in North western Fars, Iran”, *The Annual Report of the Oriental Institute of University of Chicago for 1994-1995*, The Oriental Institute of Chicago(Chicago. 1995): 29-32; K. Abdi 2001. “ Malyan 1999” *Iran* 399 (2001):73-98; idem, “ Archaeological Research in Islamabd Plain, Central western Zagros Mountain: Primary Report for First season”, *Iran*37 (1999).

⁵³ - The name of *Iranian Culture Heritage Organization* later was changed to the Iranian Culture Heritage and Tourism Organization (ICHTO) . The Iranian Centre of Archaeology Research (ICAR) is an academic branch of this organization with archaeologists working under its direction

21 November 1997.⁵⁴ Accordingly during the last decade, many excavations in different parts of Iran have been carried out but only a few of them have focussed on the Achaemenid period and the Fārs region. During this period many other joint-excavations have been carried out by foreign archaeologists in the Tehran Plain and Bushehr province, with their reports available in *Iran: Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies* (2002, 2003, 2004, 2006) and *Journal of Archaeology and History* which has been Published by Iran University Press since 1986. A joint excavation under the supervision of Ali Rezā Asqari, from the Iranian Archaeology Research Centre (IARC) and Daniel T. Potts from the Australian University of Sydney carried out excavations at an Achaemenid historical site in Norābād of Mamasani, Fārs province in southwestern of Iran, between Sousa and Persepolis since 1382/2003. In the second season of excavations at this site, a restricted amount of remains of a columned hall and stairways were discovered; this is one of the ten largest buildings with a structure similar to Persepolis. This Achaemenid building has huge columns measuring about one meter thick, the same as the Persepolis columns. The dimensions are similar to columns of the Hall of Hundred Columns at Persepolis. There are traces of lotus flowers on the base of the columns and the colour of the columns are the same as the Persepolis columns.⁵⁵ The results from a few sessions of excavations can be read at Potts and Roustae in *Iran: Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies* (2004, 2005, 2006, 2007) and in Daniel T. Potts and A. Asqari Chāvedī (2009). It is believed that the building could be either one of the buildings of the famous Lidoma Town and a depot for collecting and storing the tax of the region with similar function that has been attributed to that of Borazjān construction in Bushehr province in south-western Iran or it could be one of that main Royal Road Stations which connected Susa to Persepolis.⁵⁶ However, the joint excavation, from the Archaeology Research Centre of Iran (IARC) and British Institute of Persian Studies under the name of the Mamasani Archaeological Project is still going on in the Mamasani region with the latest reports of these excavations presented by Cameron Petrie & Lloyd Weeks in the 10th annual Workshop of the British Institute of Persian Studies (Bips) in Manchester on 30-31 January 2009 entitled: *From Village to Town: Socio-economic and political transformations in the Mamasani District, Fārs between 6000 and 3000 BC*, excavations by the Mamasani Archaeological Project in 2008/09.

However, by taking into account the previous discoveries at Farmeshgān in Fārs (between Shirāz and Firouzābād) by Mostafavi, the site that Mostafavi believed was probably a Royal Road Station connecting Suruvān (Fahliān) to south-east and traversed Bishāpur, Kāzrun, Jerreh, Frāshband and

⁵⁴ - N. N. Chegini(ed), *Proceeding of the Second Archaeological Symposium in Iran after the Islamic Revolution*, Tehran, 18-21 November, 1997(Tehran, 1997).

⁵⁵ -<http://www.payvand.com/news/08/feb/1076.html>).

⁵⁶ - Ibid.

Firuzābād and then to the province of Persepolis.⁵⁷ It seems that the Mamasani site could be a Royal Road Station connecting Susa to Persepolis. At same time it cannot be ignored that this station could also be located beside a regional governmental centre in a strategic place between the two Persian Capitals, Persepolis and Susa.

A joint Iranian-Italian Archaeological Mission from the Iranian Centre for Archaeological Research, the Parsa-Pasargadae Research Foundation, the University of Bologna, and the Italian Institute for Africa and the East carried out its first season of activities in a five-year program, *From Palace to Town*. The first season began in September and this excavation was concluded on November 7, 2008 providing the first information about a city where the common people lived, a city some distance from Persepolis, at the time of the Achaemenid dynasty. It also has been claimed that, in collaboration with the Parsa-Pasargadae Research Foundation, the team is also studying the possibility of setting up a centralized data base compiling all the information on Persepolis and the surrounding area, which may be put online on a web site.⁵⁸

The new discoveries through this project in the Persepolis area, together with Mamasani discoveries, can perhaps be called the only significant Achaemenid archaeological developments which have taken place in the heartland of the Persian Empire during last thirty years. In particular when we remember that a few seasons of excavation carried out in Hegmatāneh, Hamadān by the Iranian archaeologist, Sarrāf and by the Franco-Iranian team in Susa and Pasargadae did not bring so much change in trends of Achaemenid history.⁵⁹

I must also mention a number of relatively less thematic colloquia, partially associated with Achaemenid history, that have been held mostly in Britain during the last three decades.

British scholars working on the ancient history of Iran continued their research and studies in Achaemenid history after the Revolution of 1979. In addition to their effective role in the publication of the *Cambridge History of Iran* and the *Cambridge Ancient History*, they also organized a number of conferences on ancient the history of Iran. Some of these were associated

⁵⁷ - Sh. Razmjou, "Notes on Forgotten Achaemenid Site at Farmeshgan: Iran", in P. Briant and Remy Bouchard (eds), *L'archéologie de l'empire achéménide: nouvelles recherches*, Actes du colloque organisé au collège de France par le << Réseau international d'études et de recherches achéménides >> (GDR 2538 CNRS), 21-22 novembre 2003 (Paris, 2005) ; M. M., Mostafavi, "The Achaemenid Royal Road, Post station between Susa and Persepolis", in Pope (ed.), *ASurvey of Persian Art*, 14, (Tokyo, 1967): 3008-3010 .

⁵⁸ - <http://www.payvand.com/news/08/dec/1012.html>.

⁵⁹ - Sh. Razmjou, 2005; M. H. Sarraf, "Archaeological excavation in Tepe Ekbatana (Hamadan) by the Iranian Archaeological Mission between 1983-1999", in G. Lanfranchi, M. Roaf, R. Rollinger (eds), *Continuity of Empire(?) Assyria, Media, Persia, History of the Ancient Near East/Monographs-V*, (Padova, 2003); cf. P. Briant, *Bulletin d'histoire achéménide I (BHach I)*, Topoi , Supp. 1 [Lyon, 1997.]: 42-43.. P. Briant, *Bulletin d'histoire achéménide II (BHach II)*, 1997-2000 (Paris, 2001) :71-73.

with Achaemenid history. The number of British participants and their communications with the Achaemenid History Workshops during the years 1983-1990 was more than any country, nearly twice of the French who then became more active in parallel and the subsequent meeting which was held with Achaemenid workshop.⁶⁰ Amelie Kuhrt, (University of College London) joined Heleen Sancisi-Weerdenburg immediately after the first Achaemenid Workshop in Groningen and continued her collaboration after this workshop. It was through her efforts, financial help from the British Academy and the support of University College, London, that the third Achaemenid History Workshop was held in London in 1985. British scholars became more active later in the 1990s and 2000s, holding a number of conferences in association with Achaemenid history. In most of those meetings and conferences which have been held in London, John Curtis and Vesta Sarkhosh (Curtis), the British Museum, directly or indirectly played a crucial role in organizing such meetings, in some cases with financial support from the Soudavar Memorial Foundation. In honour of a distinguished Russian scholar who died in 1984, a group of his friends decided to establish a fund in his memory by launching an annual seminar at the British Museum. Four seminars were held in memory Vladimir G. Lukonin in the British Museum, all on the relationship of Mesopotamia and Iran in which the third was dedicated to “Relations between Mesopotamia and Iran in the Achaemenid Period” in July 1995. In this seminar, scholars from different disciplines such as archaeology (D. Stronach, E. Haerinck, R. Boucharlat), Old Testament (Christopher Walker) and ancient Babylon (T. C. Mitchell) discussed various aspects of those relationships”. The proceedings were published by J. E. Curtis in London.⁶¹

The lecture series entitled “The Idea of Iran”, whose title was borrowed from Gherardo Gnoli’s collection of essays, *The Idea of Iran* (Rome 1989), was another multidisciplinary conference series with a session devoted to the Achaemenids, *The Birth of the Persian Empire*, was delivered at the School of Oriental and African Studies in the spring and summer terms of 2004 and organized by the London Middle East Institute at SOAS and the British Museum. The fourth Lecture Series of the *Idea of Iran* with support of the Soudavar Foundation was held in January 2009. Taking into account the nature of the origin of the Persians, they broadened their approach and scholars from different disciplines (archaeology, history, religion and philology) were invited to discuss various issues concerning the origin of Iran as a political, religious and ethnic entity.⁶² The international conference *The World of Achaemenid Persia* with wide range of subjects including history/historiography, new sources, art & architecture, gender, political continuity/change,

⁶⁰ - <http://www.achemenet.com/pdf/call.pdf>

⁶¹ - For example see: J. E. Curtis (ed), *Mesopotamia and Iran in the Persian Period: Conquest and Imperialism 539-33 B. C.*, Proceeding of a Seminar in memory of Vladimir G. Lukonin, 1997, (London, 1997).

⁶² - V. Sarkhosh Curtis and Sarah Stewart(eds), *The Birth of Persian Empire*, (London, 2006)..

iconography, religion, origins & legacy was organized by the British Museum and the Iran Heritage Foundation in association with the Persian Cultural Foundation and with support of the Soudavar Memorial Foundation from 29th September to 1st October 2005 in London. Over 50 speakers at this three day conference discussed various aspects of Achaemenid culture. The proceedings of this conference were published in 2010 by John Curtis and St. John Simpson.⁶³

Over 50 speakers at this three day conference discussed the history, art and Society in Achaemenid Persia and the Ancient near East. This conference coincided with a comprehensive exhibition, *Forgotten Empire: the World of Ancient Persia*, which was on display at the British Museum (9 September 2005 - 8 January 2006). One of the main aims of the exhibition was to re-address the negative Eurocentric view of the ancient Persians that has resulted from the exclusive reliance on classical Greek sources throughout history. An extensive catalogue of the Exhibition, *Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia*, 2005, edited by John Curtis and Nigel Tallis and published by British Museum Press, provided a series of detailed articles about the history, languages, archaeology, religion, burial costumes, administration, transport, warfare, relations with Greece, and Legacy .⁶⁴

Furthermore, in addition to some regular lectures and seminars in Achaemenid history held in various institutes in European and American Universities,⁶⁵ many papers have been presented in relationship with Achaemenid history at some of the non-thematic conferences related to the History of Iran or the Near East such as the SIE and RAI conferences which are organized by different societies and organizations.⁶⁶

These academic activities and meetings have resulted in the publication of a huge number of books and articles. The number of publications in Achaemenid History in the first decade after the Revolution of 1979 is comparable with the number of all publications in previous decades.⁶⁷

Nonetheless, they are not comparable with what has been done in this field during the 1990s and early 2000s, particularly in recent years, the years that we can claim Achaemenid Studies have

⁶³ - J. Curtis and St. John Simpson, *The Proceeding of International conference of Achaemenid World of Persia*(London, 2010).

⁶⁴ - For a short report on Exhibition see: Eleanor B. Wilkinson, Achaemenid Conquer London, Museum Review, *American Journal of Archaeology* , 110(2006): 295-299

⁶⁵ - http://www.college-de-france.fr/default/EN/all/civ_ach/cours_et_seminaires_anterieurs.htm.

⁶⁶ - For example see: M. T. Imanpour, "The Medes and Persians: Were the Persians ever Ruled by the Medes?", *Nāme-ye Irān-e Bāstān*(The International Journal of Ancient Iranian Studies), 2 /2 (2002-2003) : 61-81. M. T. Imanpour, "A comparison between the Assyrian and Persian fauna as they appear in the relief" in 50th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale (South Africa, 2004); M. T. Imanpour, "Was No-Rooz Celebrated in Persepolis During the Achaemenid Period?" in Antonio Panaino and Andrea Piras(eds), *Proceedings of the 5th Conference of the Societas Iranologica Europaea*, Ravenna, 6-11 October 2003, I(Milano,2006).

M. T. Imanpour, "The Communication Roads in Parsa during the Achaemenid Period" in *6th European Conference of Societas Iranologica Europaea*, Vienna, 18-22 September 2007 .

⁶⁷ - K. Abdi, 1992: 32

reached their climax. In particular, we should note that many of these meetings and conferences, archaeological excavations, and study of texts and cuneiform (Elmaite, Babylonian, Aramaic, Phoenician, Phrygian, Lycian, demotic and hieroglyphic Egyptian, etc . . .), took place during the last two decades of the 1990s. It is worth mentioning that just between Autumn 1995 and Autumn 2000, more than 1250 published books and articles were reviewed by Pierre Briant in BHach I and BHach II.⁶⁸

However, the majority of the contributors to Achaemenid studies, who have contributed to a so-called explosion of Achaemenid research and publications in the 1980s and 1990s, come from different disciplines - archaeologists, biblical scholars, linguists and classicists etc.- only partially and incidentally corresponding to the Achaemenid period and territories. As Pierre Briant mentioned the number of researchers who were fully engaged with the history of the Achaemenid world were sparse, little more than around fifteen.⁶⁹ After the Achaemenid Workshop, most of those Achaemenists worked in a relatively isolated manner and with no journal specifically devoted to the field of Achaemenid studies. The only Institute that at moment is optionally offering an Achaemenid History course is a French University, Toulouse-II within the context of the normal Licence d' Histoire .⁷⁰ Thus, the establishment of an international network in which all existing research projects relevant to Achaemenid history, including archaeological, linguistic, classical and Biblical activities, could be co-ordinated and would stimulate further work remained necessary.⁷¹ It was following this feeling of shortcoming that Pierre Briant called scholars from different disciplines to collaborate in the establishment of such an international network, an Achaemenid Website. His call received positive responses from colleagues in different disciplines and thus, *achemenet.com* was established by end of 2000. It was decided that the communication crossroads be established at the Collège de France, centred on the chair Histoire et civilisation du monde Achéménide et de l'empire d'Alexandre [<http://www.college-de-france.fr/>] and a steering committee in charge of the development of the site was elected (<http://www.achemenet.com/pdf/call.pdf>). The establishment of this site was the next important step in Achaemenid studies in the early 2000s, in that it provided an opportunity for scholars from various disciplines to contribute to Achaemenid research through either

68 - For more information about the number of publications from 1970-1985 which was reviewed by P. Briant see: P. Briant, 1996:1056-1077) . Also for more information about those bibliographies and the new publications see: www.achemenet.com. The list of titles which have been cited in the Bibliography of Brian's above book as well as bibliography of Amelie Kuhrt's latest book, *The Persian Empire: A corpus of Sources from the Achaemenid period* (2007) also provide a huge number of relevant publications on Achaemenid history. See also: Weber and Wieshofer, 1996.

⁶⁹ -<http://www.achemenet.com/pdf/call.pdf>, p.4 .

⁷⁰ -<http://www.achemenet.com/pdf/call.pdf>, p.5

⁷¹ -<http://www.achemenet.com/pdf/call.pdf>: p.4.

creating a link between their speciality and the *achaemenenet.com* site or by transmitting their information directly to the central site in Paris for inclusion.

The bilingual (French and English) *achaemenet.com* site included two main sections; first, a museum cell which is linked to many museums in Europe, North America and Turkey where archaeological materials of relevance to the Persian empires, such as coins, seals and other objects, are held. This cell has a number of sub-groups, including museums and institutions and geographical areas; an iconography cell, for example, includes Achaemenid images, both central and provisional and contains seals, coins, sculpture, treasury etc. A tool has been installed on this screen that allows researchers to closely examine the objects they are looking at or working on.

The second and main section includes six main cells, each containing a number of sub-groups like *Announcement, Explore the empire, Texts, On-line publication, Research tools and Contacts*.

Through the first cell scholars are able to find up-to-date information about Achaemenid publications (new books, articles, and projects), conferences, seminars, exhibitions and other news related to Achaemenid studies. Under the Explore the Empire cell, archaeological sites like Pasargadae in Iran, Ayn Manâwir in Egypt and Berel in Central Asia are introduced. By clicking on each toponym, researchers gain access to whatever information the archaeological teams have uploaded. On the screen a colour map also shows all archaeological sites of relevance to Achaemenid history. Minting and monetary systems is another sub-group in which some information on coins and monetary systems throughout Persian Empire territories is provided. Anatolian documents in various categories, Egyptian and Babylonian texts as well as Royal inscription and the Persepolis Tablets have been classified under the Texts cell. It is perhaps one of the most important sections in the *achemenet.com* site in that it enables linguists and scholars of Achaemenid history easy access to documents and texts from Asia Minor, Egyptian texts (Aramaic and hieroglyphic) . It also provides access to many Babylonian texts, Royal Inscriptions and the Persepolis Tablets via this site or via a link to the Oriental Institute in Chicago and Abzu (<http://www.etana.org/abzu/>) where the Persepolis Tablets and the Royal Inscriptions are available on line. In the next cell, on-line publications, journals like *Arata, Nabu, Jasr* and in press articles relevant to Achaemenid history all are accessible. The fifth cell is named Research tools which includes a number sub-groups like bibliographies, digital books, directories and the Persepolis Fortification Archive. In the bibliographies sub-group, *BH Ach I* and *BH Ach II* have been made available to scholars on-line and access is provided to the thematic titles of new series of *Persika*, (12 issues) from 2001, and to *Abstracta Iranica* in which publications related to Achaemenid and other parts of Iranian history are reviewed. Through the next sub-group scholars also can access digital books, such as the *Persepolis Fortification Tablets* (1969)

or the *Persepolis Treasury Tablets* (1948), *Aramaic Ritual Texts from Persepolis* (1970) etc. available via the Oriental Institute of Chicago, <http://oi.uchicago.edu/pdf/OIP.pdf>. In the next sub-groups, it is possible for scholars to link to websites that relate to Iranian studies or the Near East e.g. the Persepolis Fortification Archive Project; which is especially relevant to Achaemenid history. Communication with scholars from different disciplines whose work focuses either entirely or partly on the Achaemenid history is also possible via the last link which is provided.⁷²

The establishment of *achemenet.com*, which began as the brainchild of Pierre Briant, roughly coincided with the Persepolis Fortification Archive Project (PFA) at the Oriental Institute of Chicago University where a new phase in recording and distributing information began.⁷³

After the Achaemenid History Workshop, it is perhaps the second main development in the field of Achaemenid studies in the early 2000s, in particular, when we remember that, in recent years, there has been a close collaboration between Pierre Briant, and other scholars including Wouter F. M. Henkelman from the College de France, Paris, and with Matthew W. Stolper, Director of PFA at Oriental Institute of Chicago. The result of those collaboration have been the publication of *L'archive des Fortifications de Persepolis État des questions et perspectives de recherches* (2008).⁷⁴

During 1930-31, the Oriental Institute organized a Persian Expedition to conduct excavations at Persepolis, an Achaemenid royal administrative centre in the province of Fārs. This expedition was led by Ernst Herzfeld. He served as director of the Persian Expedition until the end of 1934. He then was succeeded by Erich F. Schmidt, who continued to excavate in the region until 1939. In 1933/4 Herzfeld, working on the Fortification walls at the northeast corner of the Persepolis trace, found thousands of clay tablets and fragments in two small rooms at the edge of the great stone terrace. There were four main types of tablets and fragments: pieces with texts in Elamite cuneiform script and language, pieces in Aramaic script and language, pieces with no texts but with seal impressions, and some oddities ; a tablet in Greek, a tablet in Phrygian, a tablet in Old Persian.⁷⁵ Most of the Fortification tablets arrived in 2,253 numbered boxes at the Oriental Institute in 1936, on loan for study and analysis. They became available for study in 1937. The results of long,

⁷² - See: <http://www.achemenet.com>.

⁷³ - Cf. <http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/projects/pfa/>; <http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/projects/persia.html>

⁷⁴ - This book in pdf is accessible at http://www.college-de-france.fr/media/civ_ach/UPL46243_Persika12_Archive_Fortifications_Persepolis.pdf.

⁷⁵ - <http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/projects/pfa/>

painstaking work were the translation and analysis of 2,087 Elamite and Aramaic texts.⁷⁶ Following Richard Hallock's death in 1981, Matthew W Stolper was appointed to oversee the Persepolis Fortification Archive Project. He collaborated with a number of the younger generation of scholars in this field including: Elspeth R. M. Dusinger (University of Colorado), Mark B. Garrison (Trinity University), Wouter F. M. Henkelman (College de France and Amsterdam), Annalisa Azzoni (Vanderbilt University), Margaret Cool Root (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor), Gene Gragg (Oriental Institute) and many other scholars who, directly or indirectly, have been involved with this project. Many books and articles have been published in recent years by those scholars with some of them available through *www.Achemenet.com*, and in *Arata; Persika*.⁷⁷ Along those activities, the PFA Project Team has also organized the Persian Gallery, The Virtual Museum; Photographic Archives of Persia and an Exhibition of Photographs: Persepolis and Ancient Iran.

The *achemenet.com* and the Oriental Institute began a new phase of research activities through the Persepolis Fortification Archive Project (2002) using electronic equipment and media alongside the conventional tool-kits of philology and scholarship, translation and distributing the information of the Royal inscriptions, Seals and Persepolis Fortification Tablets including Hallock's Persepolis Fortification Texts and Cameron's Treasury Tablets. All these undertakings have made Achaemenid studies alive.⁷⁸ The website *www.achemenet.com* together with the Oriental Institute have provided information and given access to many Achaemenid archaeological and textual sources and objects on-line, including Achaemenid objects in European collections, North American and Turkish museums. All these have become an important international academic network through which students of Achaemenid history can easily access huge number of materials and objects, and publication for their research. Moreover, many of the senior and new generation of scholars and students in field have now become affiliated with the Oriental Institute and have played a productive role in the development of Achaemenid studies in particular in 2000s. Margaret Cool Root, Mark Garrison and Wouter F. M. Henkelman have had a close affiliation with this centre and the result of

⁷⁶ - Gorge G. Cameron, *The Persepolis Treasury Tablet*, OIP 65(Chicago, 1948); R. Hallock, *Persepolis Fortification Tablets*, OIP 92 (Chicago,1969); R. A. Bowman, *Aramaic Ritual Texts from Persepolis*, OIP 91(Chicago, 1970).

⁷⁷ - See also: P. Briant, Wouter Henkelman and Matthew Stolper (eds), *L'achive des Fortifications de Persepolis État des questions et perspectives de recherches*, *L'achive des Fortifications de Persepolis État des questions et perspectives de recherches*(Paris, 2008) ; M. Brosius and A. Kuhrt (eds.), *AchHistXI*. (1998).

⁷⁸ -See: <http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/projects/pfa/>

these collaborations have been a number of publications on Achaemenid history .⁷⁹ Furthermore, Setting up data structures for recording, linking, analyzing and presenting images and documents on-line; Oriental Institute of Chicago and PFA entered co-operative agreements with projects at the Collège de France, the University of Southern California, and UCLA which led to distribution of PFA data through at least three other on-line sources.

Finally, and not least, Achaemenid history also has attracted the attention of many students of Near East studies during the last thirty years. Despite of the Iranian government policy banning foreign archaeologists and scholars of ancient history from working in Iran following the revolution of 1979, senior generations of scholars of Achaemenid history in different disciplines (Archaeology, Old languages, Classical history, Ancient civilisation, Biblical studies, etc) continued to study Achaemenid history and to train new researchers in this field, using either new archaeological discoveries from Persian territories outside of modern Iranian borders or by re-examination and analysis of previously discovered materials. Taking into account these restrictions, only few of more than fifty doctoral dissertations that have been written on Achaemenid history have been devoted to the Achaemenid homeland, Parsa, during this period, where access to new materials has nearly been impossible.⁸⁰ Most of these researches have been conducted at universities in the United States and in Europe, including the United Kingdom and France and sparsely in other countries where scholars of ancient history of Iran, in particular Achaemenid period are based. The presence of some senior scholars in those institutes has encouraged students of the Ancient Near East to choose topics that are associated with Achaemenid history. For example, the presence of David Stronach and Crawford H. Greenwalt Jr. at the University of California, Berkeley; Margaret Cool Root and Brian B. Schmidt at the University of Michigan; Matthew W. Stolper at the University of Chicago; John Huehnergard at the University of Harvard etc. in United State and late T. Cuyler, Jr. Young at the University of Toronto in Canada; Amelie Kuhrt and Lindsay Allen at the University Kings College London; the

⁷⁹ - For example see: Mark B. Garrison and C. Root Margaret, *Persepolis seal studies: an introduction with provisional concordances of seal numbers and associated documents on fortification tablets (Achaemenid History IX)*, (Leiden,1996) .

Mark B. Garrison and C. Root Margaret , *Seals on the Persepolis Fortification Tablets*, OIP 117(Chicago, 2002).

⁸⁰ - For example see:Sh. Razmjou, *Ritual Practices at Persepolis*, A doctoral dissertation submitted to Birkbeck College, University of London(2008); A, Arfae., *The Geographical background of Persepolis Tablets*, A doctoral dissertation submitted to the University of Chicago(2008); K.Christopher Codella, *Achaemenid Monumental Gateways at Pasargadae, Susa and Persepolis*, A doctoral dissertation submitted to University of California, Berkeley(2007); Cindy L., Nimchuk , *Darius I and Formation of Achaemenid Empire: Communicating the creation of an empire*, A doctoral dissertation submitted to the University of Toronto(2003); Chul-Hyun Bae, *Comparative studies of King Darius 's Bistun Inscription*, A doctoral dissertation submitted to Harvard University(2001); P. Jamzadeh , *The Achaemenid throne: Its significance and its legacy*, A doctoral dissertation submitted to University of California, Berkeley(1991); M. T. Imanpour, *The land of Parsa, The first Persian homeland*, A doctoral dissertation submitted to University of Manchester(1998).

late David Lewis at the University of Oxford, Pierre Briant at Collège de France and Robert Rollinger at Innsbruck etc. each has played an important role in keeping Achaemenid Studies alive in those institutes and training new generations of researchers. We can also name Javier Alvarez-mon (Berkeley), Elspet Roger McIntosh Dusingberre and Mark Bradeley Garisson (Michigan), Wouter F.M. Henkelman (Leiden) Margaret Christina Miller (Harvard), and Maria Brosuis (New Castle) as part of a new generation of distinguished Achaemenists who have been graduated from those institutes. Of course, many dissertations in others universities like Gent University at Belgium, Manchester and Liverpool Universities at United kingdom and Colombia and New York Universities in United State and from Russia or others countries in association with Achaemenid history have been written, which have not been mentioned here.

The scholars and institutes cited above have not been the only scholars or institutes that have been active in Achaemenid studies. There have been many individual scholars in ancient languages, history and the archaeology of Iran that in different institutes partially helped the development of Achaemenid studies in the last three decades. For example we can mention about John Curtis, from the British Museum , for encouraging Achaemenid studies and providing a platform for scholars and young students to work on the material culture of this period. After all, as a result of the Forgotten Empire a new gallery Ancient Iran Gallery was built in the BM (see above). Daniel T. Potts from Sydney University in Australia, ⁸¹ and Matt Waters , ⁸² who have written articles on Achaemenid history, or there are many universities in the united State like Pennsylvania, Colombia, New York, Minnesota, Baylor and in other countries like South Africa and Belgium, where research on Achaemenid history has been done and not been mentioned here. That is also true of the list of conferences, archaeological and linguistic activities and internet websites which I discussed before. There have been many archaeological excavations or meetings on Achaemenid history and the history of Iran and the Ancient Near East in which papers on Achaemenid history were also presented and there are many websites in which material and information about Achaemenid history have been distributed but not been mentioned here. For example, mention should be made of the many excavations which have been done by Israeli archaeologists in Gaza and the West Bank during the last three decades and the many lectures and seminars which have been organized in France and

⁸¹ - For one of his latest article on Persian see: Daniel T. Potts, "Cyrus the Great and the kingdom of Anshan", in *Idea of Iran: The Birth of Persian Empire*, in V. Sarkhosh Curtis and Sarah Stewart (eds), (London, 2006): 7-29.

⁸² -For one of his article in this subject see: M. Waters, "Cyrus and the Achaemenids" , *Iran 42 (2004)*: 103-119.

other European countries that have not mentioned here.⁸³ In this paper I have illustrated that Achaemenid studies in various institutes and by scholars from different disciplines have continued and flourished during these years.

In conclusion the identification of the Achaemenid capitals, Persepolis and Pasargadae, and the reestablishment of Achaemenid history by western scholars in the 19th century, provoked a sense of nationalism and interest in ancient Persia among Iranians that led to the politicization and nationalisation of the ancient history of Iran. This is particularly the case with regard to Achaemenid history during the reign of the Pahlavi dynasty. Following the Islamic Revolution of 1979, which fought against nationalism and the politicization of history, and owing to the ideological agenda of the new government which questioned the whole notion of the monarchical system, foreign scholars who worked on the archaeology and ancient history of Iran were forced to leave the country. Thus Achaemenid studies came to a halt in Iran. Although nearly three decades after that event, only a limited number of foreign archaeologists have been allowed to work in Iran and a PhD course on the ancient history of Iran has been established in at least one of the Iranian Universities, the University of Tehran. Achaemenid studies and scholars of this field are still not supported by the authorities inside and outside the country.

In western institutions, however, Achaemenid studies continued without a hiatus. This was achieved by firstly using and analyzing the previously discovered archaeological materials from Iran, secondly by studying the classical and Biblical sources, and thirdly by studying new archaeological material, ancient texts and cuneiform texts which were discovered in the lands on the periphery of the Achaemenid empire during Persian rule, i.e. western and north-western regions such as the Caucasia (Transcaucasia which included modern Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia), Anatolia, Trans-Euphratia, the coastal plain of Palestine, and other peripheries such as Egypt and Central Asia. In the first decade after the Revolution, Achaemenid studies continued relatively smoothly in the West. The Achaemenid History Workshop was the main event which kept Achaemenid studies alive. In the second and third decades from the early of 2000s and following the digitalization of many Achaemenid objects in Oriental Institutes of Chicago and the establishment of *www.achaemenet.com*, with its Achaemenid history news and data on line, Achaemenid studies developed considerably. This was partly due to the fact that the Achaemenid kings ruled over a vast geographical area covering the entire ancient Near East, as well as western Central Asian, where

⁸³ - See: http://www.college-de-france.fr/default/EN/all/civ_ach/cours_et_seminaires_anterieurs.htm

nations with different languages and cultures are living. Many scholars from different disciplines have worked on the archaeology, ancient history, languages and cultures of these nations during the last thirty years, so that part of their studies (period 559-330 BC) include Achaemenid history. In addition to the above described circumstance, a new development emerged in the methodology of Achaemenid studies: an “interdisciplinary”, “structural” and “statistical” approach for the study of Achaemenid history which has helped the development of Achaemenid studies. This multidisciplinary approach brought together scholars from various disciplines, such as linguistics, iconography and numismatics, archaeology, ancient history, classical history, Assyriology, Egyptology and Old Testament studies. They were all able to contribute to the study of Achaemenid history. This approach not only gave the opportunity to scholars of different disciplines to study Achaemenid history, it also saved Achaemenid history from a purely Hellenocentric view that relied just on Greek historiography.

The second approach, the “structural” approach, looks at the Achaemenid Empire not so much through the study of events and chronologies, but through the analysis of an entire society, in order to find out how this great empire worked within the lower stratum. This approach helped scholars of Achaemenid history to break away from the dominant Hellenocentric view, which looks at Achaemenid history from above. In particular, we should remember that numerous evidence and new materials becoming available through new archaeological discoveries and linguistic studies in the lands on the periphery of the empire.

Furthermore, by using “statistical” approaches in this new trend of Achaemenid history, scholars of ancient history could assert a mechanical relationship between the number of documents and objects, such as coins and seals, found in Achaemenid territories and provinces. Archaeologists and linguists have also provided sufficient materials and evidence, so that scholars of ancient history are able to study the intensity of the presence of Persians and the control exercised by Persian central government over those territories and provinces. Therefore, in spite of the politicization of Achaemenid history and the ideological agenda of the Iranian government, which questioned the whole notion of monarchical systems after the revolution of 1979, Achaemenid studies continued and developed in the West, first because of the geo-historical position of the empire, which included vast areas which now are mostly beyond the present boundaries of Iran and over which the Iranian government cannot enforce its policy, and second because of new methodological approach which was followed by scholars of ancient history for the study of the Achaemenids: the Multidisciplinary, Structural and Statistical approach.

There is no doubt that if archaeologists and scholars of ancient history were allowed to work in Iran, in particular in Parsa, the Achaemenid homeland, and if Achaemenid studies were supported by the Iranian authorities, they could shed more light on Achaemenid history and the Persian homeland, Parsa. Meanwhile, Achaemenid studies will continue to develop, as the Persian Empire cannot be forgotten.

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