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To cite this article: Mohammad-Taqi Imanpour (2015) Re-establishment of Achaemenid History and its Development in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, *Iranian Studies*, 48:4, 515-530, DOI: [10.1080/00210862.2014.881083](https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2014.881083)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2014.881083>



Published online: 30 Apr 2014.



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Re-establishment of Achaemenid History and its Development in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

Iranians were aware of Sasanian history through traditional historical writings, but they knew nothing about Achaemenid history. Following European travelers to Persia from the fifteenth century, who were well prepared by reading the classical and biblical texts, Persepolis and Pasargadae were rediscovered and Achaemenid history re-established in the nineteenth century. The rise of Reza Khan to power and his grand emphasis on nationalism and ancient Iran that characterized his reign also left a deeper impact on Achaemenid studies in this period. In this paper the re-establishment of Achaemenid history and its development in nineteenth and twentieth centuries are discussed and reviewed.

After the foundation of the Persian empire by Cyrus the Great and the establishment of his authority over a large geographical area, including Lydia, the Aegean sea and the Greek cities along the Anatolian coast, hostility developed between the Persians and Greeks during the reign of Darius the Great and his successor Xerxes, who fought the Persian–Greek wars of 490 and 480 BC. Those wars and the vital role of the Persian empire in the ancient world, its civilization and the defeat of this great empire by Alexander the Great became events of world-historical importance that fascinated ancient historians like Herodotus, Xenophon, Ctesias, Deinon, Diodorus Siculus, Nicolas of Damascus, Brosus, Polybius, Plutarch, Arrian, Quintus Curtius, Strabo and others in this period.¹ Moreover, after the conquest of Babylonia by Cyrus the Great, he permitted the Jews to return to their homeland (as he did with other nations displaced by the former Assyrian empire) and even gave the Jewish peoples carte blanche authorization for funds from the imperial treasury (Ezra 6:8). The support given to the Jews by Persian kings during this period led to references to Achaemenid kings in such as Cyrus the Great, Xerxes and Artaxerxes in the Old Testament.²

Although the history of the Persian empire has been overshadowed by the hostile accounts of Greeks, which have shaped Greek attitudes, European historical traditions

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and Europe's view of Persia,³ nonetheless, the account of Achaemenid history by ancient historians and references in the Old Testament to Achaemenid rulers⁴ have provided sources and inspiration for European travelers and historians to continue the study of Achaemenid history and the Persian kings from at least the fifteenth century onward. Cyrus the Great in particular has enjoyed much attention.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, with the development of diplomatic and trade relations between some European countries and Persia during Safavid rule (1501–1736 AD), alongside political and economic change during this period and after the relocation of the Safavid capital from Tabriz to Isfahan, north of Fars province,⁵ the number of visitors to Iran increased and traffic around Persepolis and Pasargadae, the Persian capitals, intensified. In addition to Persepolis, which was described by many Greek historians and geographers, Pasargadae, Cyrus' capital, was been referenced by ancient historians and geographers like Strabo (Geography XV), Arrian (Anabasis VI, 29., VII), Plutarch (Artaxerxes, iii. I.), Quintus Curtius (Hist. Alex. V. 6. 10), making Parsa an attractive destination for travelers.⁶

The gradual European discovery of the sites—in particular Persepolis and Pasargadae (in the Plain of Marvdasht and Dasht-e Morghāb in Parsa)—and the material culture of the Ancient Near East in the sixteenth century led to the establishment of Achaemenid studies, the story of which can be read in Heleen Sancisi-Weerdenburg and Jan Willem Drieyers (eds.), *Achaemenid History VII: Through Travellers' Eyes* (1991), Lindsey Allen, "Chilminar *olim* Persepolis': European Reception of Persian Ruin," and St. John Simpson, "Pottering Around Persepolis: Observations on Early European Visitors to the Site," both in Christopher J. Tuplin (ed.), *Persian Responses: Political and Cultural Interaction with (in) the Achaemenid Empire* (2007). By the early seventeenth century, the sites in Parsa were identified and the story of the exploration of Persepolis became an interesting chapter of European research in the Orient.⁷

The study of the Persian empire in the context of Athenian history, as well as the Greek and Persian wars, as described by Herodotus and other Greek historians, continued in Europe and especially in England during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁸ As pointed out by Turner, it seems this development in England was clearly influenced by changing political circumstances in Europe—following the American revolution and radical movement for reform in Europe—which had awakened a new interest in the Athenian experience as well as Cyrus the Great, referred to as a wise and enlightened monarch in Greek sources, in particular *Cyropaedia*.⁹ This development coincides with the publication of European travelers' accounts of Persia and the identification of the Persian capitals, Persepolis and Pasargadae, by those who visited Iran.¹⁰

During the eighteenth century and by the beginning of the nineteenth century, because of growing political and commercial interests in Persia, the number of British travelers increased, and later French archeological travelers visiting Persepolis and Pasargadae and then Susa continued the interest in and study of the Achaemenids.¹¹ For example, there is a dramatic increase in graffiti (visitors etching names and messages into the ancient monuments) throughout the nineteenth century,

with most occurring on the side of the Gate of All Nations, window frames and inner walls of the Palace of Darius, indicating Persepolis' great attraction for foreign travelers, historians and archeologists as well as Iranians.¹² Those developments and the rise of archeological travelers led to some archeological excavations by French and British archeologists at those sites during the nineteenth century, which provided more evidence for later studies.¹³

Travelers who visited Iran and wrote about it also provided generations of European scholars interested in ancient history of Near East with essential documentation.¹⁴ Following those developments and influenced by Azar Kayvāni's book, *Dabestān-al-Mazāheb*, Sir John Malcolm published *The History of Persia* in 1815.¹⁵ This early information, moreover, helped the construction of part of today's knowledge of early Iranian history and the Achaemenid by scholars of ancient history. The travelers' examination and drawings of ancient monuments and cuneiforms finally led to the decipherment of Old Persian cuneiforms, and also Elamite and Babylonian cuneiforms in the early nineteenth century. This was a huge development in the study of Ancient Near East and Achaemenid history. Shortly after the decipherment of the Bisetun inscription by Colonel Henry Rawlinson, his brother George Rawlinson, based on the translation of those cuneiforms and classical texts, published the first three volumes of ancient Iranian history; *The Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient World* in 1871 and *The Seven Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World* in 1885, where the fifth monarchy was Achaemenid, the sixth the Parthians and the seventh the Sasanians.¹⁶ For the first time, well-known Greek sources, together with evidence from Iran itself, were taken into account.¹⁷ Later, in 1915, Sir Percy Sykes, who also described his mission to Persia, wrote *History of Persia* in two volumes and paid special attention to the history of the Achaemenids and Sasanians, using previous information and discoveries.¹⁸

The recognition and gradual revelation of Persepolis and Pasargadae and the exploration of Achaemenid history, of which Iranians had little knowledge, was a great development in Iranian history. Of course, Arabic translations of Khodāy-Nāmak (the official Sasanian history), which had been preserved in Pahlavic, and Ferdowsi's *Shāhnāme* in Persian meant that historians of the early Islamic period were acquainted with Sasanian history, but this was not the case with Cyrus the Great and Darius, or indeed Pasargadae and Persepolis. These ancient Achaemenid cities had other associations for the Iranians, with Pasargadae being linked to King Solomon of the Old Testament and Quran, and Persepolis being associated with mythological figures like Jamshid and thus named Takht-e Jamshid, Chilmēnār and Sadsetun.¹⁹

This development provoked nationalism and interest in ancient Persia among Iranians. Even the Qājār rulers, originally a Turkish tribe from north Iran, imitated Achaemenid motifs in the stone and plaster decoration of grand houses, particularly in Shirāz.²⁰ This did not, however, stop them giving away many artifacts and whole archeological sites to western nations, as can be witnessed at the Louvre in Paris, which has a great deal of Susa in its museum.²¹ The interest in ancient Iran and its monuments, which followed the establishment of Achaemenid history, grew in Iran during the nineteenth century and led to the publication of 'Āsār-e Ajām' by Mirzā

Fursat Shirāzi in 1896, which gathered information about the most important monuments of Persia, including Persepolis.²²

Furthermore, the new political, social and economic situation in Iran at the turn of the century provided more ground for the encouragement of studying Achaemenid history. The rise of Rezā Khān—a secular nationalist with strong patriotic feelings towards Iran's past—to power, first as prime minister and then as king in 1925, led to support for all kinds of archeological activities and historical studies. Looking for the unification of Iran, Rezā Shāh tried to reawaken the memory of Iran's ancient history—especially the Achaemenid and Sassanid empires—and glorified Zoroastrianism as the original religion of Iran. He supported numerous archeological activities and historical studies and prepared the ground for more archeological excavations and historical studies in Iran during his rule compared with the Turkish Republic and Iraq in the twentieth century.²³ Thus, archeological excavation and historical studies in Iran expanded during his rule, in particular at Persepolis.²⁴ During Rezā Shāh's reign, the French monopoly on archeological excavations in Iran, which had been obtained from Muzaffar al-din Shāh (1896–1905) of the Qājār dynasty, was abolished.²⁵ The ending of the French monopoly opened up Iran to archeological expeditions from other countries such as Britain, and especially the United States, which launched archeological investigations in Iran.²⁶ Through Rezā Shāh's support and under the auspices of the Oriental Institute of Chicago a few seasons of excavations were conducted at Persepolis, first by Ernst Herzfeld (1931–34),²⁷ and then Erich F. Schmidt (1935–39).²⁸ Ernst Herzfeld (1879–1948) was an active figure in Iranian archeology. In addition to excavations at Persepolis, he conducted extensive surveys and excavations in Iran, including Pasargadae, Cyrus the Great's capital.²⁹ He also inaugurated the first series of *Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* in 1929. The result of those excavations and Erich F. Schmidt's survey were later published by Schmidt in three folios entitled *Persepolis I: Structures, Reliefs, Inscriptions* in 1953, *Persepolis II: Contents of Treasury and other Discoveries* in 1957 and *Persepolis III: The Royal Tombs and other Monuments* in 1970. Excavations at Persepolis then continued under the direction of Iranian archeologists such as Isā Behnām, Mahmud Rād, Ali Sāmi and Akbar Tajvydi.³⁰ Ali Sāmi, after meeting Erich F. Schmidt while involved in the archeological work, became more active in this field and carried out a few seasons of excavations at Pasargadae as well. He later wrote more than fifty books and articles on the ancient history of Iran and Persian old capitals, including *Persepolis*, *Pasargadae* and *The Achaemenid Civilization*. A number of his books were later translated into English by Norman Sharp.³¹

Along with these archeological activities, which partly concentrated on Persepolis and Pasargadae, the Persian capitals, the first academic history of ancient Iran by an Iranian scholar, Hassan Pirniyā (Moshir al-Duleh), was published during Rezā Shāh's rule. Pirniyā was highly versed in ancient history, and consulted sources in the European as well as ancient and modern Near Eastern languages. In 1927 he published *Ancient History of Iran: From Ancient Times to End of Sasanids* in one volume; this was more general and surveyed pre-Islamic Iran up to the end of the Sasanid era on the basis of Greek and Roman sources. However his *Dāstānhā-ye Irān-e Qadīm* (1928) attempted to trace the historical evidence of the western sources in the

Shāh-nāma and other traditional Persian accounts.³² These two works were encapsulated a year later in a single volume entitled *Irān-e Qadīm* (1929), which for many years remained the standard school text. This was followed by a more comprehensive publication in three volumes in 1933, which was a logical outgrowth of his pioneering work.³³ The first two volumes were devoted to the early history of Iran, mostly the Achaemenid period. The third volume dealt with the Parthians. Although subsequently many books and articles were written about ancient Iran by Iranian scholars, for many years Pirniyā's book remained the most influential publication in Iranian scholarly circles and it was used as a textbook in Iranian universities.

The great emphasis on nationalism and ancient Iran which characterized the reign of Rezā Shāh had a deep impact on Iranian historiography, which paid special attention to the Persian empire. This continued during the reign of his son, Mohammad Rezā Shāh Pahlavi, who came to power 1941. The events of World War II and the occupation of Iran by the Allies, which had put an end to scholarly activities in Iran, including archeological excavation, were resumed after 1945. This was done gradually over about ten years and then increased dramatically in the 1960s and 1970s. As described by one scholar, this period was "the explosive phase" in Iranian archeology.³⁴ In 1961 the British Institute for Persian Studies was established and sponsored a number of surveys and excavations in Iran, such as at Pasargadae by David Stronach. During this time many archeologists arrived in Iran, including Roman Gherishman who continued work at Susa, and Elamite Ziggurat at Choga Zanbil and other sites in Iran. Louis Vanden Burghe of Gent University worked in central Fars, and other archeologists such as Donald McCown of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, Robert Dyson of the University of Pennsylvania and Wolfram Kleiss, T. Cuyler Young Jr, D.B. Whitehouse, Schmidt and others all were working in Iran in this period. During this time the work at Pasargadae and Persepolis continued and some extensive conservation and reconstruction was carried out at Pasargadae by David Stronach, with the results of those excavations published in *Iran: Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies* in 1963 and 1964 and later, in 1978, as book entitled *Pasargadae: A Report on the Excavation Conducted by the British Institute of Persian Studies from 1961 to 1963*.³⁵ Ali Sami also published the result of his excavation in *Archaeological Report* (1950/1329: 5–17) and then as a book entitled *Pasargadae or the Oldest Capital of Iran*, in 1951/1330; this book was later translated into English by R.N Sharp.³⁶ Work in Persepolis by Schmidt, A.B. Tilia and Iranian scholars such as Akbar Tajvdy also continued. It was also during this period that more than 2,000 Elamite fortification and treasury tablets and hundreds of Aramaic tablets were translated and published by George Cameron, Richard Hallock and Raymond Bowman.³⁷

The results of these activities were the publication of numerous books and articles on the history and ancient civilization of Iran. Annual conferences were also organized inside the country and it was during this period that the scholarly *Journal of Historical Surveys* was published in Iran and the *Archaeological Reports Collection* was provided with up-to-date information about archeological activities and new discoveries in Iran.³⁸

In addition to Ali Sāmi and Mohammad-Taqi Mostafavi, who concentrated more on ancient Iranian archeology and history in this period,³⁹ A. Shapour Shahbāzi also became active in Achaemenid studies after returning from London, where he had studied at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS). He published a number of books and articles on Achaemenid history before leaving Iran after the Islamic Revolution in 1979.⁴⁰ In 1948 the first scholarly book, *The Persian Empire*, offered much ancient and new evidence.⁴¹ It was published in the United States by A.T. Olmsted and was used for many years as a textbook in Iranian universities, after its translation into Persian by Mohammad Moqadam. We must also mention other monographs on Achaemenid history by scholars from the former Soviet Union, such as M. Dandamaev.⁴²

Mohammad Rezā Shāh Pahlavi, like his father, was indifferent to religion and was looking for the unification of Iran and the legitimization of his sovereignty based on nationalism, rather than religion. Thus, like his father, he tried to invoke historical nationalism and glorified pre-Islamic Iran. He made a great effort to present himself as the latest in the long line of great Iranian kings extending back to his favorite ruler Cyrus the Great.⁴³ The climax of such feeling and policy was the celebration in 1971 of the 2500th anniversary of the Persian empire, founded by Cyrus the Great in 559 BC. This policy provoked criticism from the clergy, who emphasized Islamic values rather than pre-Islamic tradition. Less than eight years after that ceremony, which angered clergymen as well as many traditional Iranians, the monarchy was toppled under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini who was strongly opposed to Pahlavi's historical and political nationalism, accordingly, archeological excavations and Achaemenid studies ceased in Iran. Almost all foreign archeologists and scholars of Iranian ancient history, as well as many Iranians who were known as historical nationalist and supported Achaemenid studies, left the country and Achaemenid history was largely ignored by Iranian officials.

Nonetheless, western scholars in general and European scholars in particular continued to study Achaemenid history in their institutions, using new methodologies through various disciplines. Many conferences and meetings have been organized, numerous ancient texts have been translated and studied, many new archeological excavations and research have been carried out within the territory of the Achaemenid empire, from Central Asia to Egypt, and from Indian valleys to the Aegean Sea. A huge number of titles (books and articles) related to Achaemenid history have appeared in the West, keeping Achaemenid studies very much alive. New trends in Achaemenid studies, which began by using new methodologies from the early 1980s, reached their climax at the end of the 1990s; for example, between Autumn 1995 to Autumn 2000 more than 1,250 books and articles appeared.⁴⁴ It still is speeding up, in particular through the establishment of www.achemenet.com and the digitalization of the Persepolis Fortification Archive in the Oriental Institute of Chicago.

The first monograph to appear in the West in the early years after revolution was J.M. Cook's *The Persian Empire*, a general survey mostly based on Greek sources, which followed the 1948 book by Olmstead.⁴⁵ The *Cambridge History of Iran*, whose materials had been provided by a number of the most distinguished Iranologists

ten years earlier, was published in the same year.⁴⁶ Former Soviet scholars like M. Dandanaev, Vladimir G. Lukonin, W. Vogelsang as well as H. Koch of Germany continued their studies in Achaemenid history during those years and published a number of monographs in the 1980s.⁴⁷ 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 to study the history and archeology of Iran; some of these were particularly devoted to archeology and the ancient history of Iran, for example the *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) and the *Acta Iranica* series.

Thus, restrictions banning foreign archeologists working in Iran did not prevent Achaemenid studies abroad. In particular, we should 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, Lydian, Phrygian, etc. Such studies also belong to larger disciplines: Babylonian and Assyriology, Egyptology, Classics and Semitic studies etc.⁴⁸ Archeological 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 utilized 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, and “structural” approach to the studying the history of the Achaemenid empire.⁴⁹ 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 Workshops (1981–90) and its associated publications (*Achaemenid History: I–VIII*, 1987–94). 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.⁵⁰

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 Sources* (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 Travellers' Eyes* (1991) and, *Continuity and Change* (1994). 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 to contribute. Moreover, 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 a one-sided image of Achaemenid history.⁵¹ A second approach which was emphasized in this series of workshops was the “structural” approach, looking at the empire from below, that is “not so much the study of events and chronologies, but the analysis of an entire society.”⁵² 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* (1983);⁵³ nonetheless, emphasis on the structural approach in this series of Achaemenid History Workshops also helped scholars of Achaemenid history to break away from the dominant Hellenocentric discourse, which looked at Achaemenid history from the top, without paying attention to how this great empire worked within the lower strata.⁵⁴

However, these 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 Briant refers to 1983 as “golden Star” in his intellectual history when, following an invitation from Sancisi-Weerdenburg, he participated for the first time in the Achaemenid Workshop in Groningen.⁵⁵

The Classical historians had an essential role in many of those colloquia and Achaemenid studies in the last two decades of the twentieth century. Sancisi-Weerdenburg (1944–2000) who conceived the idea of these international colloquia, for example, was a classical historian who became familiar with Achaemenid history when she was studying Ancient Greek language and history at Leiden University.⁵⁶ Pierre Briant, as one of the best known Achaemenists of our age, 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, Antigonos the One-Eyed, and the peasants of Asia Minor at the very beginning of Hellenistic period, in land that had been part of the Achaemenid empire.⁵⁷ Briant wrote and edited more than 150 titles related to Achaemenid history, in particular *Histoire de L'Empire Perse de Cyrus à Alexandre* (1996), for which nearly all available sources and bibliographies were consulted, opened a new era in the Achaemenid studies. David Lewis, a Classical historian, was at the forefront of Greek historians who turned to the history of the Persian empire and maintained regular contact with the Oriental Institute in Chicago, where thousands of Persepolis Fortification Tablets are housed.⁵⁸ 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 are known more as Achaemenists than Classicists, and Margaret Christen Miller and A. Zournatzi, also Classical scholars who in recent years have been active in the case of the Achaemenid studies.⁵⁹

The Achaemenid History Workshops became a model for scholars of the ancient history of Iran and the Near East in different disciplines in organizing such meetings and conferences in various institutes across Europe, whether thematically focused in terms of geographical scope (e.g. Anatolia, Trans-Euphrates, the coastal plain of the Black and Mediterranean Seas), or type of evidence (coinage, archeology) and

textual sources (Classical, biblical sources and old texts), or with wider thematic remit and relatively disparate content. Both subsequently and in parallel with this series of colloquia (Achaemenid workshops in the 1980s and early 1990s), thematic meetings and conferences were also held in France, mostly through the efforts of Pierre Briant, in Belgium, Turkey, Britain and sporadically in other European countries and the United States.⁶⁰

After the Achaemenid workshops, most of those Achaemenists worked in a relatively isolated manner and there was no journal specifically devoted to the field of Achaemenid studies. The only institute that at the moment is offering an optional course in Achaemenid history is a French university, Toulouse-II, within the context of the normal Licence d'Histoire.⁶¹ Thus, the establishment of an international network in which all existing research projects relevant to Achaemenid history, including archeological, linguistic, classical and biblical activities, could be coordinated and would stimulate further work which is still necessary.⁶² It was following this sense of shortcoming that Pierre Briant called scholars from different disciplines to collaborate in the establishment of an international network—an Achaemenid website. His call received positive responses from colleagues in different disciplines and thus www.achemenet.com was established by end of 2000. It was decided that the website should be established at the Collège de France, centered on the chair of Histoire et civilisation du monde Achéménide et de l'empire d'Alexandre, and a steering committee in charge of the development of the site was elected.⁶³ The establishment of this site was an important development in Achaemenid studies that provided an opportunity for scholars from various disciplines to contribute to Achaemenid research either through creating a link between their specialty and the www.achemenet.com site or by transmitting their information directly to the central site in Paris for inclusion.

The establishment of www.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 the information began.⁶⁴ After the Achaemenid History Workshop, it can perhaps be called the second main development in the field of Achaemenid studies, in particular when we remember that, in recent years, there has been a close collaboration between Pierre Briant and his colleagues like Wouter F.M. Henkelman from the College de France, Paris, and Matthew W. Stolper, the director of PFA at the Oriental Institute of Chicago University. The result of that collaboration has been the publication of *L'archive des fortifications de Persepolis état des questions et perspectives de recherches* (2008).⁶⁵ Along with those activities, Pierre Briant also established the *Persika* series in Paris, Collège de France, which mostly deals with the Achaemenids. By now, 18 volumes of this series have been published, each volume devoted to an aspect of the ancient history of Iran, in particular the Achaemenids. For example, the first volume of *Persika* deals with the *Bulletin d'histoire achéménide II*,⁶⁶ the second volume with Irrigation, drainage and the Qanāt system in Iran, Egypt and Greek,⁶⁷ the sixth one with the archeology of Persian empire and the fourteenth with the organization and cultural contact within the Persian empire.⁶⁸

At the same time, archeologists have been working in the vast region from India to the Mediterranean Sea and from Central Asia to Egypt, all regions falling within the Persian imperial sphere of influence such as Central Asia and Afghanistan, Anatolia and the eastern Mediterranean, Egypt and Mesopotamia, all outside modern Iran. Many archeological sites have been identified and excavated, some associated with Persian rule in those territories. A record of some of those investigations and surveys is overviewed in “L’archéologie de l’empire Achéménide: nouvelles recherches,” a conference that was held in Paris, Collège de France in 2003 under the direction of Pierre Briant and Rémy Boucharlat. This conference provided an excellent overview of the state of field research into the whole empire in Anatolia, Central Asia, Mesopotamia, east and south of the Mediterranean sea in Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Iran itself.⁶⁹ Pierre Briant and Remy Boucharlat briefly, in their relatively long introduction to the proceedings of this conference, and other participants more comprehensively, overviewed the history of archeological excavations and some of the objects discovered in some of those lands, including the regions in southern Caucasia (Transcaucasia which included modern Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia), Cilicia and the Hatay in southeast modern Turkey, southeast Anatolia, the coastal plain of Palestine, northeast Syria, Egypt, northern Iraq and Central Asia during Persian rule.⁷⁰

In conclusion, the identification of the Achaemenid capitals, Persepolis and Pasargadae, and the reestablishment of Achaemenid history by western scholars in the nineteenth century, provoked nationalism and interest in ancient Persia among Iranians that led to the politicization and nationalization of the ancient history of Iran, in particular Achaemenid history during the Pahlavi dynasty. Following the Islamic Revolution of 1979, which was opposed to nationalism (though not the politicization of history) and owing to the ideological agenda of the new government which questioned the whole notion of the monarchical system, those foreign scholars who worked on the archeology and ancient history of Iran were forced to leave the country. Thus Achaemenid studies came to halt in Iran. However, Achaemenid studies continued uninterrupted in western institutes, first by materializing and analyzing the previously discovered archeological materials from Iran or by studying the classical and biblical sources and then by examining the new archeological materials and ancient and cuneiform texts which were discovered in the lands on the periphery of the Achaemenid empire during Persian rule. In the first decade after the revolution, Achaemenid studies continued relatively smoothly and the Achaemenid History Workshops were the main event in this regard, and kept Achaemenid studies alive, but in the second and then in the third decades after the Islamic Revolution and following the digitalization of many of Achaemenid objects in the Oriental Institutes of Chicago and the establishment of www.achemenet.com, which brought news and data on Achaemenid history online, and by using new approaches and methodology, Achaemenid studies has increased greatly.

Notes

1. Drews, *The Greek Account of Eastern History*, 104.
2. Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible*, 89–92.
3. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, “Introduction,” xi–xiv; Sancisi-Weerdenburg, “The Fifth Oriental Monarchy and Hellenocentrism,” 117–31.
4. Ackroyd, “The Biblical Portrayal of Achaemenid Rulers.”
5. Matthee, *The Politics of Trade in Safavid Iran*; Allen, “Chilminar *olim* Persepolis.”
6. For more information about the description of Pasargadae by Greek historians and geographers see: Stronach, *Pasargadae: A Report on the Excavation*, 24–6; Imanpour, “The Etymology of Pasargadae.”
7. Curzon, *Persia and the Persian Question*; Gebriel, *Die Erforschung Persiens*; Sancisi-Weerdenburg, “Through Travellers’ Eyes.” See also <http://www.achaemenet.com>, online books.
8. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, “Cyrus in Italy: From Dante to Machiavelli”; Brosius, “Two Views on Persian History,” 79; Tuplin, “Persian Decor in Cyropaedia: Some Observations.”
9. Turner, *The Greek Heritage in Victorian Britain*; Brosius, “Two Views on Persian History,” 87; Harmanny, “Annius of Viterbo on Persian History.”
10. Sarkhosh Curtis, “The British and Archaeology in Nineteenth-century Persia”; Errington and Sarkhosh Curtis, *From Persepolis to the Punjab*.
11. For more information about archeological travelers to Persia and their reports see Abdi, “Nationalism, Politics, and the Development of Archaeology in Iran”; Sarkhosh Curtis, “The Legacy of Ancient Persia,” 254; Larsen, *The Conquest of Assyria*; Simpson, “Pottering around Persepolis.”
12. Simpson, “Pottering around Persepolis,” 344; Allen, “Come Then Ye Classic Thieves of Each Degree”; Sarkhosh Curtis, “The Legacy of Ancient Persia,” 254; Shahbazi, “From Pārsa to Taxte Jamshid”; Allen, “Chilminar *olim* Persepolis.”
13. Abdi, “Nationalism, Politics, and the Development of Archaeology in Iran,” 54; Mousavi, “Jack de Morgan and Excavation at Susa”; Curtis, “William Kennett Loftus and His Excavations at Susa.”
14. Many of those traveler’s books are now available online at <http://www.achaemenet.com>.
15. Nemati, *Examination of Archaism in Qajar’s Historiography*.
16. Rawlinson, *The Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient World*; Rawlinson, *The Seven Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World*; Abdi, “Nationalism, Politics, and the Development of Archaeology in Iran”; Abdi, “The Achaemenid History in Groningen University Collection,” 39.
17. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, “The Fifth Oriental Monarchy and Hellenocentrism,” 128.
18. Sykes, *History of Persia*.
19. Sarkhosh Curtis, “The Legacy of Ancient Persia,” 252; Allen, “Chilminar *olim* Persepolis.”
20. Sarkhosh Curtis, “The Legacy of Ancient Persia,” 256; cf. Amānat, *Pivot of the Universe*; Bigdelu, *Archaism in the Contemporary History of Iran*.
21. Mousavi, “Jack de Morgan and Excavation at Susa”; Mousavi, “Early Archaeological Adventures.”
22. Sarkhosh Curtis, “The Legacy of Ancient Persia,” 256.
23. Atakuman, “Cradle or Crucible.” It is worth mentioning that contemporary with those archeological activities in Iran in the twentieth century, some scholars were dealing with ancient Iranian history, religion and language, which has been discussed by Toraj Daryaee in his brief article entitled “The Study of Ancient Iran in the Twentieth Century.”
24. Abdi, “Nationalism, Politics, and the Development of Archaeology in Iran,” 60; for more information about the Persepolis sculptures in the British Museum, see Curtis, “A Chariot Scene from Persepolis”; Mitchell, “The Persepolis Sculptures in the British Museum.”
25. Mousavi, “Jack de Morgan and Excavation at Susa”; Mousavi, “Early Archaeological Adventures.”
26. Abdi, “Nationalism, Politics, and the Development of Archaeology in Iran,” 59.
27. Ibid., 60 note 56.
28. For the result of those excavations see Schmidt, *Persepolis I: Structures, Reliefs, Inscriptions*; Schmidt, *Persepolis II: Contents of Treasury and other Discoveries*; Schmidt, *Persepolis III: The Royal Tombs and other Monuments*; Schmidt, *Flights over Ancient Cities of Iran*.

29. Herzfeld also wrote his thesis about Pasargadae, entitled "Pasargadae: Untersuchungen zur Persischen Archäologie" (1908); cf. Daryae, "The Study of Ancient Iran in the Twentieth Century," 583.
30. Mousavi, "Obituary: Professor Ali Sami (1910–1989)."
31. For the list of Ali Sāmi's books see *ibid.*, 191–3, and for his nationalist sentiments see Abdi, "Nationalism, Politics, and the Development of Archaeology in Iran," 67, note 90.
32. Amānat, "Historiography VIII–IX: Pahlavi Period," 378.
33. Pirniyā, *The Ancient History of Iran*; Pirniyā, *The Ancient History of Iran: The Comprehensive History of Ancient Iran*.
34. Abdi, "Nationalism, Politics, and the Development of Archaeology in Iran," 68; Young, "Archaeology."
35. Stronach, "Excavations at Pasargadae: First Preliminary Report"; Stronach, "Excavations at Pasargadae: Second Preliminary Report"; Stronach, *Pasargadae: A Report on the Excavation Conducted by the British Institute of Persian Studies from 1961 to 1963*. For more information about archaeological activities in this period see Daryae, "The Study of Ancient Iran in the Twentieth Century," 583–4.
36. Sāmi, *Pasargadae or the Oldest Capital of Iran*.
37. Cameron, *Persepolis Treasury Tablets*; Hallock, *Persepolis Fortification Tablets*; and Bowman, *Aramaic Ritual Texts from Persepolis*. Most of those texts now are available online at <http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/pubs/catalog/oip>.
38. This Archaeological Reports Collection was directed by Sayyed Mohammad Taqi Mostafavi.
39. Mostafavi for example, published a book entitled *The Land of Pars: The Historical Monuments and the Archaeological Sites of the Province of Fars* [in Persian]. This book was later translated into English by Sharp.
40. For example see Shāhbāzi, *Cyrus the Great: Founder of the Persian Empire*; Shāhbāzi, *An Achaemenid Prince*.
41. Olmsted, *History of the Persian Empire*.
42. Dandamaev, *Persien unter den ersten Achameniden*.
43. Abdi, "Nationalism, Politics, and the Development of Archaeology in Iran," 67.
44. Briant, *Bulletin d'histoire Achéménide I*, 5–127; Briant, *Bulletin d'histoire Achéménide II*; Weber and Wieshöfer, *Das Reich der Achimeniden: Eine Bibliographie*; Vanden Burghe, Haerincx and Stevens, *Bibliographie Analytique de l'Archéologie de l'Iran ancien: 1996–2003*; Briant, *Histoire de l'Empire Perse de Cyrus à Alexandre*, bibliographies; Kuhrt, *The Persian Empire: A Corpus of Sources*, bibliographies.
45. Cook, *The Persian Empire*.
46. Mousavi, "The History of Achaemenid Empire," 83.
47. Dandamaev, *Politicheskaya istoriya Achemenidskoi Derzhav*; Dandamaev, *Political History of Persian Empire*; Dandamaev and Lukonin, *The Culture and Social Institutions of Ancient Iran*; Frye, *The History of Ancient Iran*; Koch, *Verwaltung und Wirtschaft im Persischen Kernland*; see also the bibliographies of Weber and Wieshöfer, *Das Reich der Achimeniden*, and Briant, *Histoire de l'Empire Perse de Cyrus à Alexandre*. For more information about those previous works and monographs also see Harrison, *Writing Ancient Persia*, 93–5, and Daryae, "The Study of Ancient Iran in the Twentieth Century," 587.
48. Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 5.
49. Imanpour, "Development of Achaemenid Studies in the West", 95.
50. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, "Congress and Communications," 231. 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 thematically 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 at Ann Arbor they found another collaborator, Margaret Root (Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 3).

51. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, "Introduction," xii. For more information about Greek sources, in particular Herodotus' histories of the Persian empire, see Harrison, *Writing Ancient Persia*, 19–38.
52. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, "Introduction," xii.
53. Ibid., xiii.
54. Ibid.
55. Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 3.
56. Abdi, "The News: Hellen Sancisi-Weerdenburg," 79.
57. Briant, *Histoire de l'Empire Perse de Cyrus à Alexandre*, 10; Mousavi, "The History of Achaemenid Empire," 83–9; and for Briant's curriculum vitae see http://www.college-de-france.fr/default/EN/all/civ_ach/travaux.htm.
58. Imanpur, "Development of Achaemenid Studies in the West," 102–3.
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid., 100–101.
61. <http://www.achemenet.com/pdf/call.pdf>, 5.
62. <http://www.achemenet.com/pdf/call.pdf>, 4.
63. <http://www.college-de-france.fr/>; <http://www.achemenet.com/pdf/call.pdf>.
64. <http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/projects/pfa/>; <http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/projects/persia.html>.
65. Briant, Henkelman, and Stolper, *L'Archive des Fortifications de Persepolis*, available in pdf at http://www.college-de-france.fr/media/civach/UPL46243_Persika12_Archive_Fortifications_Persepolis.pdf.
66. Briant, *Bulletin d'histoire achéménide II*.
67. Briant, *Irrigation et drainage dans l'Antiquité. Qanâts*.
68. For more information about content of 18 volumes of Persika series see http://www.college-de-france.fr/site/pierre-briant/collection_persika.htm#m=#undefined|p=/site/pierre-briant/collection_persika.htm.
69. Briant and Boucharlat, *L'archéologie de l'empire achéménide: nouvelles recherches*.
70. Ibid., 17–27.

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