The multilingual urban environment
of Achaemenid Sardis

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ABSTRACT

Achaemenid Sardis provides a challenging area of research regarding multilingualism in the past. Indeed, Sardis was one of the most important satrapal capitals of the Persian Empire both from a political and commercial point of view, playing a key diplomatic role in Greek-Persian relations. Different ethnic groups lived in, or often passed through the city: Lydians, Greeks, Persians and, possibly, Carians and Aramaic-speaking peoples. Despite this multilingual situation, the epigraphic records found at Sardis, or which relate to the city in some way, are scarce, especially when compared to other areas of Asia Minor. The aim of our research – the preliminary results of which are presented here – is to describe the linguistic repertoire of Achaemenid Sardis and the role played by non-epichoric languages. A multi-modal approach will be adopted and particular attention will be paid to the extra-linguistic (historical, social and cultural) context.

KEYWORDS: Achaemenid Sardis, Aramaic, Greek, Lydian, linguistic repertoire.

1. *Introduction*

This study examines the interrelation between identity and linguistic and socio-cultural dynamics in the history of Achaemenid Lydia. Specifically, the aim of our research is to describe the linguistic repertoire of Achaemenid Sardis and the role played by non-epichoric languages within this context, adopting an approach which combines both linguistic and non-linguistic evidence. Given the richness and the complexity of the topic, the present work focuses on the preliminary results of our analysis[1]. To this end, the paper is organized as follows: section 2 is devoted to a brief historical introduction while section 3 considers methodological issues. Section 4 contains a description of multilingualism and multiculturalism in Achaemenid

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[1]   For reasons of space, the present article does not include a more detailed discussion of the observations made here; these specific issues will be examined more closely in future works. In this respect, we would like to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments and suggestions; many of these have been incorporated while others will be examined in future works.

Sardis, and thus provides an introduction to the textual analysis. Sections 5 to 7 analyse the most representative documents and discuss several pertinent sociolinguistic issues. Finally, section 8 summarizes our conclusions.

2. *Sardis in the Achaemenid empire*

After the conquest of Lydia by Cyrus the Great in 547-546 B.C.[2], Sardis (*Sparda* in Old Persian) became one of the most important satrapal capitals of the vast Achaemenid Empire, being not only a major administrative centre of power but also an important commercial hub[3]. Sardis, in fact, was at the western end of the Royal Road leading to Susa, and was also located near the junction of two main roads that connected the Lydian capital both to the coastal cities of Asia Minor and to the hinterland. This position greatly favoured contact with both the Greeks of the coast and the other inhabitants of Anatolia. Thus, it is not surprising that Sardis played a key diplomatic role in Greek-Persian relations, especially at the end of the 5th and during the 4th century B.C. (Greenewalt, 2011: 1121). It was ruled by a satrap, who was always an ethnic Persian, assisted by a composite administrative class made up of both Persians and members of the local elite. This was a common practice of the Achaemenids who in this way not only ensured their control over, but also the loyalty of their new subjects. As is known, Achaemenid kings were tolerant of local linguistic, social and religious traditions, tending to find similarities and create bonds of a syncretic kind. The result of this was that there were various fusions in the diverse regions of the Empire which took different forms over time[4].

Given these premises, it is quite clear that Achaemenid Sardis provides a challenging area of research regarding multilingualism in the past. Unfortunately – as we will see – the epigraphic records found at Sardis, or which relate to the city in some way, are scant, especially when compared to other areas of Asia Minor.

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[2]   The dating of the conquest of Sardis – as with much of the chronology of the reign of Cyrus – is still a controversial issue. We have opted here to follow the traditional dating (for an overview and related literature see, e.g., Briant, 2002: 34).

[3]   In Old Persian texts the name *Sparda* referred both to the city and to the whole Achaemenid satrapy – including Lydia and other territories in the West – of which Sardis was the capital (see, e.g., Greenewalt, 2011: 1120).

[4]   See Briant (1987), among others.

3. *Which method suits the present analysis?*

With a few exceptions[5], the research carried out until now both on multilingualism in Achaemenid Anatolia and on the corresponding role of non-epichoric languages have been mainly limited to the examination of bilingual or trilingual documents. These have been largely investigated as regards historical-philological and exegetical issues, without paying appropriate attention to the socio-cultural context[6]. On the other hand, recent studies have been published which provide a detailed analysis of Achaemenid Anatolia. Among these, Dusinberre (2003) is particularly relevant to our research, being specifically devoted to Achaemenid Sardis[7]. All these works consider both textual and archaeological evidence, but from a perspective which is primarily historical and cultural; they do not focus on aspects regarding language, nor cover macro-sociolinguistic issues such as the reconstruction of the linguistic repertoire.

Obviously, the scarcity of the epigraphic material available only allows us to reconstruct a partly hypothetical overview, with some inevitable chronological approximation as regards the two centuries of Persian domination. Consequently, for the purposes of this work, and given the present state of research, we will try to examine the texts which are available from a different perspective:

a) As is known, historical sociolinguistic research is a fertile meeting ground where both scholars of Sociolinguistics and Historical Linguistics can compare and test their respective methodologies. Albeit to a limited extent, we have drawn on some of the theoretical bases of Urban Sociolinguistics and in particular from multilingual contexts. As has also been observed by scholars in the field, although this methodology needs to be further developed and refined[8], Urban Sociolinguistics provides us with some useful descriptive tools which, when applied with all due caution to multilingual environments of the past, provide useful suggestions for a description of what Franceschini (2004: 258) calls the «spazio plurivariazionale urbano», characterized by a high degree of heterogeneity, variability and relatively

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[5] See, e.g., Schmitt (1993); Gusmani (2007).

[6] See, among others, Lemaire and Lozachmeur (1996); Rougemont (2013); Adiego (2014); Huyse (2014).

[7] Other recently published studies in this field which are also worthy of mention are Dusinberre (2010) and Greenewalt (2011).

[8] See, among others, Franceschini (2001; 2004).

rapid change, and where there is an intrinsic need to adopt multifactorial explanations. In this context, a key reference point is the definition of the specific nature of the multilingual urban context that today, as in the past, can be considered:

un insieme di reti di interazione sociale e linguistica molto differenziate tra loro, come un insieme di gruppi portatori di norme culturali e linguistiche talora collidenti, talora coesistenti, talora interagenti in un processo di trasformazione. (Sornicola, 1979: 405)

b) Even though the general descriptive validity of this definition is indisputable, it is extremely difficult when analysing written documents of the past to identify the specific elements and dynamics at play (for example, social groups and, even more, social networks), above all if – as in the case of Achaemenid Sardis – there is a distant and scarcely documented situation under investigation. Indeed, it is undeniable, as M. Mancini (2012: 241) observes, that «quando ci si occupa del passato, la nozione stessa di *continuum* o di repertorio urbano diviene sfuggente e inafferrabile». It follows that the usefulness of urban sociolinguistics is essentially twofold: to provide an appropriate descriptive apparatus for the analysis and to set the researcher in the right direction, encouraging him/her, where possible, to interpret any variation in the repertoire in relation to the dynamics which tend to be typical of an urban multilingual environment.

With this in mind, an attempt will be made at reconstructing the extra-linguistic (historical, social and cultural) context in which the documents considered have been produced. Indeed, this is an essential step for any correct textual interpretation, above all in circumstances where documentary evidence is scarce[9]. It also constitutes a preliminary phase in the macro-sociolinguistic analysis of this type of text.

c) At the same time, a multimodal approach (Mullen, 2012) will be adopted so as to integrate strictly linguistic data with the information obtainable from extra-linguistic elements such as iconography, the type of media used for the inscription, the monumental context and so on, in order to identify the significant characteristics of the document more precisely and, consequently, to interpret the text and the context in which it was produced more

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[9]   Of particularly significance in this respect are, among others, various works by MANCINI (e.g. 2002; 2012) and POCCETTI (e.g. 2004; 2014), as well as several papers in works edited by ADAMS, JANSE and SWAIN (2002, eds.), and MULLEN and JAMES (2012, eds.) respectively.

accurately, and thus understand which elements are sociolinguistically significant[10]. In fact evidence of multiculturalism is often not limited to the text of the document but emerges, to a greater or lesser extent, from the iconography or architectural features of the monument, as A. Mullen clearly shows in her fine essay of 2012.

To sum up, in order to understand – at least partly – the social and linguistic dynamics of Achaemenid Sardis, a consideration of the various sources, direct and indirect, as well as the appropriate use of philological and sociolinguistic methods, is not merely optional but mandatory. Indeed, only a well-rounded analysis of data obtainable from the various fields of study (archaeology, history of arts, epigraphy) enables us to depict a scenario – even if somewhat vague and in many ways hypothetical – of both the cultural and the linguistic interaction that occurred in Sardis in those centuries, including the role of non-epichoric languages.

4. *Multilingualism and multiculturalism in the urban area of Sardis*

Let us now examine the main data regarding the multiculturalism of Achaemenid Sardis and the city's multi-ethnic character. We will begin with the late period for which there is more information compared to earlier ones. In fact, the multi-ethnic nature of the population of the city and its surroundings in the 4th century B.C. emerges particularly in the so-called 'Inscription of Sacrileges', found in Ephesus which probably date from the period between 334 and 281 B.C., that is, to the end of Achaemenid rule and the very beginning of the Hellenistic era[11]. This Greek inscription contains a list of about fifty Sardians who were sentenced to death for attacking the sacred envoys from Ephesus and for desecrating the holy objects they were carrying. The names are Lydian (from 12 to 15), Greek (from 12 to 14) and Iranian (from 3 to 7); Pierre Briant (2002: 703) also recognizes a Car-

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[10]   This approach is extremely useful in overcoming inconsistencies in textual evidence and allowing the socio-historical background of the available empirical data to be drawn upon, both from the micro-sociolinguistic (POMPEO, 2015) as well as macro-sociolinguistic (BENVENUTO, in press) perspective. See also BENVENUTO and POMPEO (2013), and BENVENUTO, LUCIDI and POMPEO (2015).

[11]   On this inscription, see HANFMANN (1987), MASSON (1987), BRIANT (2000 on the Achemenet site *http://www.achemenet.com/*; for text and translation, 2002: 703-704), DUSINBERRE (2003: 235-236, for translation).

ian name. Since the trades or jobs assigned to the accused are mentioned in the inscription, we also know that they were ordinary people and craftsmen (Briant, 2002: 703). This information on the common man is particularly significant for us since the Sardian inscriptions at our disposal are mostly attributable to members of the elite or those who belonged to the upper classes.

The text reveals some interesting elements which are worth a brief mention.

a) According to some scholars, the number of Greek names might be an indication of increased Hellenization[12]. Even though this is not in itself surprising given the dating of the inscription, it is significant not only if we compare it with the documentary silence of the previous centuries, but above all if we consider the number of Lydian names present in the inscription. Indeed, Greek and Lydian names are almost equal in number. In addition – again exercising the due caution which regards any issues of anthroponomy (see *infra*) – it is worth noting that the text makes reference to the ancestors of the accused (parents, grandparents, uncles and so on), who might have lived in the city and environs of Sardis in an age which predates the time of the inscription, that is, in the late Achaemenid period under consideration here. Although we clearly cannot be certain that the ancestors mentioned in the inscription lived in the same area, the fact that individuals often include Lydian and Greek names or Lydian and Iranian names in their ancestry can be seen as possible evidence of their presence in the multicultural environment of Sardis.

b) Secondly, the variety of anthroponyms attested with regards both the guilty individuals and their ancestors may be evidence not only of the spread of 'foreign' names due to cultural customs, but also of the existence of mixed marriages at least in the late Achaemenid period (cf. Hanfmann, 1987: 2; Briant, 2002: 703).

As far as the previous Achaemenid period is concerned, since we do not have epigraphic records comparable to those mentioned above, we broadened our analysis to take into account a range of documentary sources of different types and natures that we will simply list here briefly, referring the reader to the specific literature on these issues[13]. In particular, a certain cultural syncretism and cohesion among the Lydian-Achaemenid elite – largely

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[12]   See, e.g., HANFMANN (1987: 2).
[13]   For further references and an in-depth analysis of Achaemenid Sardis from a historical and cultural perspective, see DUSINBERRE (2003). For a recent summary regarding the archaeological site of Sardis, see GREENEWALT (2011).

underestimated until a few decades ago – emerges from the analysis of archaeological, historical and artistic data such as:

1) the various types of seal; these are typical Achaemenid artefacts and they play an important role in research into ethnocentricity (see, *infra*, § 6);
2) the iconographic motifs of Persian origin carved on Lydian tombs inscribed with Lydian names;
3) mortuary treatment, where on one hand the architecture and the iconography of the tombs, and on the other the different types of burial reveal the co-presence and interaction of Lydian and Iranian traditions;
4) the many Achaemenid bowls found in Sardis which were probably used by both elite and non-elite classes, while in the earlier period (from the first millennium B.C.) this kind of pottery was exclusively typical of Iran.

As regards traces of Greek presence in the material culture of the city of Sardis, these are well in evidence and can also be seen prior to the Achaemenid period (see, *infra*, § 7).

To conclude, it is worth remembering that historical sources provide evidence that other ethnic groups lived in, or often passed through, Sardis. It is very likely – as mentioned above – that Carians were among them. Indeed, the so-called 'Oxford Para-Carian Inscription' and various graffiti found in an extremely fragmentary state are possible indications of the presence of Carians in the Lydian capital who were active both linguistically and religiously[14].

Let us now briefly examine the data which derives from an analysis of the epigraphic dossier of the city, taking into account the most significant documents.

5. *Lydians in their world*

As regards Lydian presence in Sardis, the abundance of epigraphic source material (compared to other periods) is evidence of the vitality of the epichoric language under the Achaemenids. At the same time, it also reveals the interrelation of two factors: on the one hand, the patterns of identifi-

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[14]   See, among others, PEDLEY (1974); ADIEGO (2007).

cation and integration of Lydian people with their Persian rulers and, on the other, a sort of progressive provincialisation of the «ethno-classe dominante» (Briant, 1987: 12) of Persian extraction.

The Lydian epigraphic dossier consists of 113 inscriptions, 109 of which were exhaustively classified for the first time by Gusmani in his seminal *Lydisches Wörterbuch* (LW) and its supplements (*Ergänzungsbände*, LWE). After fifty years, they remain the essential reference work on the subject[15].

These inscriptions are dated from the end of the 8th to the 2nd century B.C. and they were discovered in the territory of ancient Lydia and, above all, in its capital, Sardis. As for typology, over half of them could not be classified due to their fragmentary state. The remaining source material is composed of mostly private inscriptions, except for some seals and two legal-religious texts. Of the multilingual texts, four are bilingual (although only three of them are actually useful): two are Lydian/Aramaic (LW1 and LW41, both dating back to the 4th century B.C.) and two are very short Lydian/Greek inscriptions (LW 20, 4th century B.C. and LW 40, 3rd century B.C.).

The fragmentary state of the remains as well as the brevity and the scarcity of the material are the main reason why, to this day, it is not possible to understand the texts fully, or indeed, the Lydian language as a whole[16].

From a diachronic perspective, most texts date back to the time of Persian domination (see Gérard, 2005); traces of the epichoric language are frequent in that period, owing to the *laissez faire* language policy under the Achaemenid empire. The very fact that most surviving Lydian inscriptions are dated to this epoch is a strong indication of the enduring prestige enjoyed by the epichoric language under Persian rule and of cohesion among the elite. This is also confirmed by the somewhat 'institutional' use that the dominant ethno-class seemed to make of the Lydian language.

In this regard, it is quite remarkable that the only two documents dealing with legal-religious as well as economic – therefore public – matters are contracts made by men of Iranian descent (this can be inferred from their names and their filiation) with some local individuals and with the temple of Artemis. These are also the longest texts in the entire Lydian corpus. In particular, at the fifth line of a long decree carved in limestone that was found in

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[15] See also BAKIR and GUSMANI (1993) and GUSMANI and AKKAN (2004). See GUSMANI (1975; 1978; 1981) for further investigations into the Lydian language, and MELCHERT (2004) and RIZZA (2013) for a recent summary of Lydian grammar.

[16] For the epigraphical findings following the publication of Gusmani's *Lydisches Wörterbuch*, see GUSMANI (1981).

the temple of Artemis at Sardis (LW 23), there is mention of a priest called *mitridastaś mitratalis* "Mitridastaś, son/descendant of Mitratas"; this name also occurs several times in a long marble inscription (LW 24) that, in all probability, he himself promulgated: *mitridastaś mitra[talis]*. Both juridical inscriptions are from the 5th/4th centuries B.C. As observed by Gusmani (2007), it is remarkable that a character of Iranian ancestry uses Lydian to enter into an economic contract with the temple of Artemis.

It is interesting to note that Lydian was the language commonly used by the dominant ethno-class also in other contexts. Epigraph 2767 (Gusmani and Akkan, 2004) – which was recovered south of Sardis – is a funerary inscription on a marble stele alluding to the 17th year of Artaxerxes' reign:

(1) *borlλ Ç̣ III III I artakśạẹṛśaλ*
   qaλṁλuλ dāv rạsakaś
   śatrabaṣ̌ kēmēd il fak
   mēmuloś kaṣụlis oĺl

In the first three lines[17], there is mention of a satrap called *Rasakaś* (perhaps corresponding to Ῥωσάκης, a satrap who ruled both Lydians and Ionians around the middle of the 4th B.C. and about whom Greek sources only record the name) as well as a certain *Mēmuloś*, son of *Kasuś*. The text reports that the satrap did, or established, something and that *Mēmuloś* appreciated and announced this event (perhaps on the same stele). Reference to a 'political' stance apart from the dating formula is unusual in funerary epigraphy and is not found in Lydian records. Therefore it is particularly noteworthy that the actions of a satrap are described using the epichoric language and that the celebrative intent – in the first part of the epigraph – is assigned to Lydian.

Although it is known that neither the origin of an anthroponym nor the language of an inscription are sufficient to demonstrate the ethnicity of the person mentioned in a document, and given the fact that – except in rare cases – language, ethnicity and culture are hetereogeneous and non-coincident parameters, it is generally accepted that there are also important social and anthropological factors which determine why a name is given to an individual. These relate to the cultural identity of an ethnic or linguistic community; when reinforced by the presence of an ancestor, the hypothesis of an ethnolinguistic identity is highly plausible to say the least[18].

[17] The epigraph consists of 12 lines.
[18] Regarding Iranian anthroponyms in Lydian epigraphs see, among others, GUSMANI (1971).

As far as the prestige of the epichoric language is concerned, it should be underlined that both inscriptions and seals (see below) seem to confirm the choice of Lydian on the part of both political and religious authorities.

6. *Linguistic evidence of the Achaemenid impact on the local culture*

Even though excavations provide evidence of Achaemenid presence and the material culture of Achaemenid Sardis (Sekunda, 1985), no administrative archives of satrap correspondence or other bureaucratic records (regarding the accounts and the storage of commodities) have yet come to light. We thus do not have epigraphical evidence of the language used or preferred for satrapal or local administration. However, seals found at Sardis, and particularly the short inscriptions on such seals, provide us with some partial information about the nature of satrapal bureaucracy and the Sardian elite. It is worth remembering that in the complex Achaemenid administrative structure seals and seal impressions had an important role «as official insignia» (Dusinberre, 2010: 323) and were also items of prestige. They offered permanent visual information (Kaptan, 2013) as to the identity of the sealer and his involvement in a legal or administrative act/transaction[19].

The thirty-four seals excavated from the tombs of the Sardian elite comprise pyramidal stamp seals, scarabs and metal rings made of high-prestige materials such as gold and chalcedony. As pointed out by Dusinberre (2003; 2010), from an iconographic point of view the seals from Sardis, despite their various artistic styles, «demonstrate the cohesion of the Achaemenid elite and the overwhelming adoption of Achaemenid ideology» although they do not allow us to discern the ethnicity of the user of the seal (Dusinberre, 2010: 323). In this respect, however, it is worth noting that the language choice for an inscribed seal can offer some clues that provide a clearer picture of the Sardian elite, and, to some extent, its linguistic identity. As a matter of fact, besides anepigraphic seals, there are thirteen which bear Lydian inscriptions (Boardman, 1970; 1998), only two of which were found in Sardis (see below, nos. 2 and 3), while the others are of unknown provenance. The language chosen is often associated with the Lydian personal proper name of

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[19]   On the functions and meanings of seals in the Achaemenid empire, see Kaptan (2007) and Dusinberre (2003: 158-171). In the development of Achaemenid Empire studies, seals and seal impressions from all over Asia Minor have received much scholarly attention; see, among others, Boardman (1970; 1998), Dusinberre (2010), Kaptan (2002; 2013).

the seal user/owner, as in (2), but also occasionally with the Iranian personal proper name, as in (3):

(2) *bakivalid samlid* (Boardman, 1970: no. 2; LW 51)
     "Of Bakivas (the son) of Sams."
(3) *mitrataliś eś sadmēś* (Boardman, 1970: no. 1; LW 74)
     "This is the sign of Mitratas."

It is also notable that the seal with the Lydian name *manelid* "of Manes" is accompanied by typical examples of Achaemenid iconography: the lion griffin rampant with raised paw (Boardman, 1970: no. 4) and the two royal sphinxes seated (Boardman, 1970: no. 5).

Lydian onomastic material, where the patronymic is also found, as in (2), suggests the sealer's ethnic Lydian origins. In contrast, the presence of Iranian onomastic elements is scant, and the lack of indications of filiation prevents us from knowing the ethnic identity of the seal user/owner. Indeed, the Iranian anthroponym, as already seen above, cannot be said to have a direct correspondence with the actual Iranian origin of the individual. However, these data do provide some evidence of an exchange between the two ethnolinguistic groups: Lydians and Iranians had the same sealing practices and both used Lydian.

All this seems to suggest that a) people of Lydian ethnic origin had important roles in the administration of Sardis, and b) the members of the upper social hierarchy, probably irrespective of ethnic affiliation, publicly associated themselves with the use of Lydian, as stated above (see § 5). This scenario is confirmed by Greek literary sources. For example, we know from Herodotus (III.122; V.121) that the satraps of Sardis had many Lydians among their collaborators, such as Myrsus, son of Gyges, active between the time of Cambyses and the beginning of the Ionian revolt (Briant, 2002: 502).

As far as Aramaic is concerned, epigraphic material provides some evidence of its occasional use in private documents, and also the probable existence of bilingual officials. As is well known, the various local diasystems in the Achaemenid empire maintained their epichoric varieties, which were flanked by, without ever being subjugated to, the use of the Aramaic language/script. This was a highly standardised language (Gzella, 2015), specifically used in supra-regional administrative communication (Schmitt, 1993)[20].

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[20] How important and active the use of Aramaic was is becoming increasingly clear with the

In Sardis, however, the scarce epigraphic data demonstrate the use of Aramaic for a different function and domain, that is, within the restricted domain of funerary inscriptions[21]. Moreover, the significant fact that the local elite, rather than Persians or Arameans, might use Aramaic in private documents seems to suggest that it enjoyed a certain prestige among non-Iranian people. In fact, among the tomb inscriptions is a bilingual Lydian-Aramaic one (LW 1), dated to the tenth year of Artaxerxes' reign, this most likely being (on palaeographical grounds) Artaxerxes III Ochus (Lipiński, 1975)[22]. Unfortunately the inscription, of a familiar funerary type, was not found in its original context and thus cannot be linked to individual tombs or associated finds that might provide information about the ethnic background of the occupant of the tomb (Dusinberre, 2003: 116-117). The inscription, however, might reflect some aspect of the cultural and linguistic interaction in the Achaemenid administration. In particular, it is a text that betrays the desire of local elites to be assimilated in an Achaemenid cultural identity, especially when compared with other Aramaic funerary inscriptions and related texts from Achaemenid Anatolia (Hanson, 1968). Indeed, the other Aramaic funerary texts from western Asia Minor, with the exception of the Greek-Aramaic tomb inscription at Limyra, are monolingual and contain actual Semitic ethnical and linguistic elements such as the Semitic anthroponym of the person buried as well as the Semitic patronymic and a list of Semitic deities in the imprecation formula.

Without going into a detailed discussion[23], the bilingual inscription from Sardis raises issues which are useful to our discussion: the text records the Lydian proper name of the tomb owner and his Lydian lineage (*manelid kumlilid silukalid* "Manes, son of Kumli, of the family of Sirūk" and its Aramaic counterpart *mny kmly srwky'*). Manes was an extremely common name in Sardis[24] and is also associated with the seal with the Achaemenid

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emergence of new documents from the extreme periphery of the Achaemenid Empire. For an updated overview of Achaemenid documentation in Aramaic, see GZELLA (2015: 157-211). A substantial number of Achaemenid texts in Aramaic are available – unfortunately with no translation or commentary – in the recent collection of Achaemenid texts in Aramaic (SCHWIDERSKI, 2004).

[21] For a detailed analysis of Sardian tomb reliefs and paintings the reader is referred to DRAY-COTT (2007).

[22] Another Lydian-Aramaic inscription found in the Kaystros valley lacks the Aramaic text except for part of the last line. See LW 41 and BUCKLER (1924: no. 41).

[23] Aramaic texts with full commentary and translation can be found in TORREY (1918) and LIPIŃSKI (1975) among others.

[24] In Herodotus I, 94; 4, 45 Manes is the name of the mythical first king of Lydia. For Lydian personal names, see ZGUSTA (1964).

iconography (above). Moreover, both Lydian and Aramaic versions of the imprecation formula mention the name of local goddesses twice: Artemis the Ephesian and Artemis the Koloean. Finally, the Aramaic text includes a Lydian loan word (Aram. *sprb* from Lyd. *śfarva-* probably meaning "monument"), while there is a linguistic error regarding gender agreement (feminine noun *m'rt'* "burial cave" with masculine demonstrative *znh*), perhaps due to the lack of distinction between masculine and feminine in Lydian (Lipiński, 1975: 159). These linguistic features of the Aramaic version are slightly awkward (Lemaire and Lozachmeur, 1996; Lipiński, 1975: 153-161) and, in our opinion, could indicate a sort of 'accommodation' (Adams, 2003: 295-296) of Lydian to Aramaic. A bilingual epitaph may thus provide some clues of the bilingualism of the deceased, but above all it may have been a means of rendering explicit a facet of his socio-cultural identity. In other words, Aramaic in Sardis was potentially a language that was symbolically chosen to satisfy the need for Achaemenid self-identification and pride. All these observations reconfirm the existence of an integrated local elite and its Achaemenid acculturation, as well as the use of Aramaic language and script in the representation of Achaemenid identity.

7. *Greek and Greeks in Achaemenid Sardis*

The well-established close ties between Sardis and coastal Greek cities continued during the Achaemenid period, favoured by their common inclusion in the wider Achaemenid world which allowed for regular contact and communication, including the movement of mercenaries, craftsmen and intellectuals, within the Persian Empire. In this period a noticeable growth of Greek style can be found in various forms of material culture, gems and seals especially. Perhaps the most interesting example of this growth in Helleno-Persianization is a series of coins struck by mints in Asia Minor. As is well known, with the conquest of Lydia the Persians acquired the use of metal coinage as a means of economic exchange[25]. In his administrative and financial reorganization of the empire, Darius replaced the Lydian system (of gold croeseids) with gold darics and silver sigloi, probably minted at Sardis, and characterized, among other things, by the Greek legend ΒΑΣ or ΒΑΣΙΛ for ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ which identified the Royal coinage. There was also satrapal

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[25]   See the general surveys of BIVAR (1985) and ALRAM (2012).

coinage produced by various mints, characterized by a so-called tiarate head (Dusinberre, 2002) in full Greek style. The Lydian satraps 'presented themselves' on their coins with legends in Greek: Tissaphernes (ΤΙΣΣΑ) satrap in Sardis under Artaxerxes II; Autophradates (ΟΑΤΑ), satrap of Lydia under Artaxerxes III and Spithridates (ΣΠΙΘΡΙ) satrap of Lydia under Darius III.

Even though these coins raise many questions, above all because they are characterized by short repetitive texts influenced by standardization, they also reflect the linguistic competence of the craftsmen and mint workshop that should be taken into account when assessing the language used in a multilingual region. In other words, even though the royal/satrapal commissioner of the work might not have known the language of the final product, and the languages that were used were closely linked to the type of artifact produced, the craftsmen who worked in the mints of Sardis, as in the rest of Anatolia, must have had some knowledge of Greek.

In order to understand how common the Greek language was in Achemenid Sardis, we should thus contextualize the epigraphical material using different strategies, evaluating the monolingual and the bilingual inscriptions separately.

7.1. *Monolingual inscriptions*

There are only three Greek monolingual inscriptions dating from the Achaemenid period: the earliest of them (Buckler and Robinson, 1932: no. 102) is a funerary inscription dating from the middle of the 5th century B.C.; probably more recent than this, but again dating from the 5th century, is another short, and much damaged, funerary inscription in iambic verse (Buckler and Robinson, 1932: no. 103). The type and text of both inscriptions are consistent with the Greek tradition, the first being based on the 'speaking-object' model (4) and the second, from what can be surmised from the scant remains, on the epigram model.

(4)   Λεωμάνδρ-
       ο εἰμί
       "I belong to Leomandrus."

The name *Leomandrus* in (4), with the ionic genitive (Ο spellings for original /ō/ and /ou/), is attested only once in this inscription and belongs to the well-known type which includes names like *Athenomandrus* and *Anaximandrus*. The use of Greek and Greek onomastics, as well as the pri-

vate nature of the document, suggests a strong link between ethnic identity and language choice. In fact the funerary genre is particularly useful for deducing information regarding the identity of the deceased and his linguistic identity. Thus the monolingual funerary inscriptions testify to the presence of Greek speakers in Achaemenid Sardis.

The third Greek monolingual inscription is a Roman period copy comprising three parts: a dedication and two prohibitions[26]. The text of the dedication, commissioned by the Persian official (ὕπαρχος) Droaphernes, is actually quite independent; a carved leaf also physically separates it from the subsequent sections. In Briant's view (1998), only the dedication text (lines 1-5) can be dated to the Achaemenid period with the name of Achaemenid king, Artaxerxes, mentioned in its dating formula. According to Briant, with this inscription Droaphernes son of Barakes dedicates a statue of an anthropomorphic figure to Zeus of Baradates; the latter was the man who in all likelihood founded the cult.

(5)   1. ἐτέων τριήκοντα ἐννέα Ἀρτα-   "In the thirty-ninth year of Arta-
       2. ξέρξεω βασιλεύοντος, τὸν ἀν-   Xerxes' being king, Droaphernes
       3. δριάντα Δροαφέρνης {vac.}   son of Barakes, hyparch of Lydia
       4. Βαρ<ά>κεω Λυδίης ὕπαρχος   [is donating] a statue
       5. Βαρα-δατεω Διί. (leaf)   to Baradates Zeus." (leaf)

While we cannot provide an extensive discussion of this text, we will limit ourselves to pointing out that: a) Droaphernes has a typical Iranian name (*Druva-farnah- "solid-prosperity") as yet not attested elsewhere; b) the other personal name can also be traced back to Iranian etymology: Barakes (*Bara-ka-) and Baradates (*Bara-data- "bearer of the law") (Bouzid-Adler, 2014); c) although the word *hyparkhos* does not allow us to determine the precise rank, it must indicate a high level of satrapal administration; d) as stated by Briant (1998), Zeus refers to a local god here; e) the inscription starts with the typical Iranian opening date formula. Given all these factors, we can conclude that Droaphernes, a member of the Persian *ethno-classe dominante* performed an act of devotion in honour of a local Lydian god[27]. This was typical, as Briant (1987: 21) points out, of «la provincialisation

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[26]   The text was first published and interpreted by Louis ROBERT (1975). See among others also CHAUMONT (1990), and GSCHNITZER (1986). However, for a revised interpretation of this inscription, see BRIANT (1998), which also contains further references.

[27]   This personal honouring of local gods by the Persian elite is not unusual in the Achaemenid world. For other Persian dedications to local cults, see KUHRT (2007).

de l'ethno-classe dominante». In our opinion, this observation can be further supported by the consideration of the whole socio-historical context which emerges from an analysis of the entire epigraphical corpus including non-Greek inscriptions. Indeed, in this respect the Mitridastas inscriptions discussed earlier are consistent with the cultural intermingling which took place in Sardis and with the aforementioned provincialization of the dominant ethno-class.

As regards the choice of Greek, it is worth considering that the inscription is a copy of a text, not an original, and this means that we are not fully aware of its context, e.g., if the original inscription was bilingual or monolingual. At any rate, the choice of language seems to have been motivated more by religious concerns than by a desire to convey identity.

7.2. *Bilingual inscriptions*

Mention should be made of two Greco-Lydian bilingual texts: we shall not dwell on no. 40, an Alexandrian inscription discovered at Pergamon, although it does provide remarkable evidence of the survival of the Lydian language.

Bilingual text LW no. 20[28], on the contrary, is a votive dedication which was found in the temple of Artemis at Sardis, and dates back to the second half of the 4th century BC:

(6) *nannaś bakivalis artimuλ*
    "Nannas son of Bakivas to Artemis."

    Νάννας Διονυσικλέος Ἀρτέμιδι
    "Nannas son of Dionysikles to Artemis."

This epigraph is perfectly preserved and legible. Unfortunately, the direction of the 'translation' is unclear, as it is difficult to determine with certainty which is the source language and which is the target[29].

There is evident equivalence between the indigenous patronymic *bakivalis* and the Greek Διονυσικλέος as well as between the theonym *artimuλ* and Ἀρτέμιδι. As for *Bakiva-*, Gusmani (LW 75; LWE 40) simply

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[28] See Buckler (1924: 38) and Buckler and Robinson (1932: 91). The anthroponym *bakiva-* is also attested in epigraphs 10₂₂, 21 and 51 of the Lydian corpus.
[29] For a further epigraphical example of contact between Greek and an epichoric language such as Lydian, see Gasbarra and Pozza (2015).

observes a correspondence between the Greek and the Lydian name, without making assumptions as to which lexeme might have generated the other. The importance of Lydian, however, can be inferred from its position, which precedes the Greek. The use of Greek has been explained by assuming that this dedication was made by the Lydian child of a Greek father (cf. Adiego, 2014) and that it was later translated into Greek for non-Lydian speakers (Schürr, 1999: 170) with the subsequent 'Hellenisation' of the indigenous name *Bakivaś* (Gusmani, 2007: 15).

The Lydian anthroponym *Bakiva-* also occurs in two epigraphs of the 5th/4th century B.C. (LW 21, nom. *bakivalis*; LW 10_{22} dat.-loc. *bakivalλ*), on a seal from the Achaemenid period (LW 51_1 = Boardman, 1970: no. 2, nom.-acc. *bakivalid*) and in a funerary epigraph from the late 4th century carved into the pediment of a marble stele recovered just outside Sardis (LW 108 *bakiv*[*alis?*] *miχalis* "of Bakivaś [son], of [...]mi.aś"[30]).

Until now, it appears that it has never been noted that the dedicator's name, *Nannaś*, is a typical Anatolian anthroponym (see Zgusta, 1964): it is attested in various areas of southern Anatolia (Caria, Phrygia, Pisidia, Lydia, Lycaonia, etc.) both in its single form *Nanaś* and in its geminate form *Nannaś* (the geminate form is relatively rare in Lydian, although the alternation of single and geminate sonorants is frequently recorded, cf. LW 34 ff.). It also appears on a Lydian seal (LW 78) displaying a clear Iranian iconography. The same is true for the anthroponym *Bakiva-* which, as stated above, was attested on a seal dating back to the Achaemenid era. It therefore appears reasonable to assume that in both instances these individuals were members of the administration, and of the Lydian-Achaemenid elite.

7.3. *The sacred temple as a linguistic environment*

On the basis of restricted written evidence, the choice of Greek can be related to three main domains: the domestic/private sphere of the cemeteries, the mint workshop and the religious sphere.

With regard to the latter, the Greek Droaphernes, Nannas and Mitridastas inscriptions provide some glimpses of religious life in Sardis, with two languages used side by side: Lydian and Greek. As is well known, the Lydian religion was based on a polytheistic pantheon which was partly Anatolian and partly Greek (Hanfmann, 1983). Thus the language choice of the Lyd-

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[30] Gusmani (1985: 82).

ian-Achaemenid elite could have been influenced by the gods and goddesses worshipped, as well as the cult practices of the sanctuary. In this respect, the bilingual Nannas inscription might not, in our opinion, be evidence of widespread Greek-Lydian bilingualism in Sardis society, but a proof of accommodation in religious dedications. In this regard, the 'Hellenisation' of the indigenous patronymic Bakivaś, as seen above, provides the strongest evidence of linguistic accommodation regarding Greek. This is consistent with the well-known practice of translating personal names which is frequently used, for example, by Herodotus (Harrison, 1998).

8. *Concluding remarks*

To sum up, the data examined here suggest the following reconstruction of the socio-linguistic scenario of Achaemenid Sardis, which – to quote Winter (1999: 82) – must be based on «intelligent guesswork within the limits of good common sense». Indeed, given the nature of the evidence itself, it is inevitable that any such reconstruction is to a certain extent speculative.

First of all, the strong ethno-cultural cohesion of the Lydian-Achaemenid elite which emerges from archaeological evidence is confirmed by an analysis of both the epigraphic dossier and Achaemenid seals. It is likely that this elite was multilingual, even though we cannot determine precisely to what extent. In this context, the vernacular variety of Lydian is associated with both public and official spheres, and it maintained its status alongside Persian and Aramaic. On the other hand, Aramaic language and Aramaic script must also have been of high prestige for local people. This is reflected in the fact that in the epigraphic dossier of Sardis, Aramaic – the language of the supra-regional administration – appears in private documents (funerary inscriptions).

Bearing this in mind, the strong ethno-cultural cohesion which characterized the Lydian-Achaemenid elite seems to be the result of two distinct but convergent processes. On the one hand, as has been observed with regard to the inscribed seals with Lydian and Iranian anthroponyms, there was the progressive provincialisation of the Achaemenid *ethno-classe dominante* which led to the incorporation of Lydian cultural and linguistic features by the Persian rulers; on the other, as the material culture and Aramaic-Lydian funerary inscriptions testify, that same local Lydian elite desired integration

with the prestigious linguistic and cultural dimension of the Achaemenid. Consequently, in this complex scenario where various cultures and ethnic groups interacted, the dynamics of the relationship between identity and otherness, as well as their linguistic representation, varied from time to time according to the type of process involved, although they all represent the wish to belong to the Lydian-Achaemenid elite. It thus follows that in various contexts, Lydian, as well as Aramaic, could become an important symbol of such belonging. Archaeological evidence (above all Achaemenid bowls) seems to suggest that an innovative drive, originating with the new elite, also involved the lower classes. In this respect, however, linguistic evidence is all too scarce, even though the variety of anthroponyms attested in the 'Inscription of Sacrileges' seems to support the hypothesis that Achaemenid culture spread to all levels of Sardian society.

Secondly, the different languages – Lydian, Greek and Carian – used in private documents which can be dated to different centuries of Achaemenid rule, suggest that in addition to the Lydian majority, other ethnic groups or minorities lived in, or often passed through, the city. This, of course, is to be expected for an important political and commercial urban centre such as Sardis.

Finally, as far as the role of Greek is concerned, the evidence available, albeit scarce, suggests the ethnolinguistic vitality of this language. In particular, the choice of Greek in the written documents that are available to us seems to be associated with extremely specific domains such as religion, involving determined cult practices, and, as is seen with coinage, with certain activities and professions.

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