



## The study of artistic aspects of Darius relief in Bisotun

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### ABSTRACT

This article first examines the artistic aspects of Darius in the Bisotun relief. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the artistic aspects of Darius relief beyond the historical documentation to show the art that world is causing this important relief to the world. The method of this article is library documents, which means the necessary information is collected and then precisely will be analyzed. The result shows that the world's first read inscription, Bisotun inscription, is one of the world's most valuable inscriptions that can be seen in its straw Anobanini embossed effect which both of them have been affected by the Assyrian Naram Sin inscriptions. This inscription gives full information to the world, which makes it's worth a hundredfold.

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### Introduction

As we know, art is the artistic reflections of social-political, religious and cultural developments in each era. Throughout history, significant changes and even fast movement occurred in Iranian art, but the art of Iran has always been a way to express the spirit of the Iranian inner world, his national character and temperament, his secular worldview and perceptions.( Parva, Mohammad. 2007)

Concurrent with the formation of the Achaemenid Empire, the beginning of a new era came in Iranian art. Ancient Iranian government under the leadership of the Achaemenid clan elders had a big role in the history of the ancient East. The government subjugate the nations and peoples of many victorious battles and conquests due to successful military operations, became a powerful and top large state of the region. The Empire in the fifth century BC was the apex of its power, which was including not only the Medes, the kingdom of New Babylon, Assyria and Armenia, but also Egypt and Asia Minor and the Middle East were also subject to Indian border reached. The Empire in the fifth century BC reached the pinnacle of progress and power, which were covered not only the land of the Medes, the kingdom of New Babylon, Assyria and Armenia, but also Egypt and Minor and Middle Asia, and the borders of this country reached to India.

Achaemenid often took advantage the cultural heritage of peoples and nations under their rule who were at different levels of economic and cultural development. This reflected both in the economy and their livelihood as well as in the field of religious affairs, art and writing and literature, especially those of cuneiform were taken from Mesopotamia, mechanisms to govern the country from Elam and the Medes, military techniques and methods of exercise of Assyria, building art skills from Urartu. The people of Central Asia, and Middle, including bacteria, residents of Khwarezm, Sogd and saka have played an important role in the formation and stabilization of the Achaemenid culture of Iran.

The first course of Achaemenid art progress was observed in the rule of Great Cyrus.( Rajabi, Parviz. 2008)Although the

Achaemenid took advantages of the achievements of architects and construction actors, art experts and craftsmen of Babylon, Assyria, Urartu, Egypt and Greece plentifully, but the indigenous traditions and accumulated experience of the past was not forgotten in these areas too.( Pakbaz, Roein. 2008) Over time, other cultural elements infiltrated into the Achaemenid art and in it were solved, and the result was that an artistic "empire style" was made and recognized with an expression of symbolic language and with balanced concise comprehensive memorial aspects which was very convenient for displaying royal power and ability and famous architectural monuments of Pasargadae and Persepolis, were examples of which including the Palace of Cyrus, Darius and Xerxes, or inscriptions and petroglyphs such as Bisotun.

Achaemenid architecture in total had an eclectic nature (Eclectic), but during the survival, gradually possessed at least two special properties that fit together and have balance, and also has reflected and demonstrated the power and grandeur of newly empowered empire; on the other hand , represented the building art of different peoples who inhabited in this multinational country. The extensive use of hard stones and using the columns in the building and construction was Among the features of Achaemenid building architecture and totally ancient Persia which was operated separately, with beautiful and heavy bell craft and were often decorated with a bull's head.

In the fifth century BC, there were coffins dug in the rock, including handmade structures common in the Achaemenid Empire which the most famous of those who are relatively well studied were Naqsh-e Rostam tombs located in proximity and distance, a few kilometers from Persepolis where four successive king of the Achaemenid dynasty are buried, including Darius I (486-522 BC), Xerxes I (465-486 BC), Ardeshir I (424-465 BC) and Darius II (404-423 BC). Not far away from this tombs, there is coffin dug in a roughcast stone in there believed to be for the latest generation of Achaemenid kings, namely Ardeshir III (338-359 BC) or Darius III (330-335 BC ).

It drilled in the mountain and in an altitude of about 23 meters above the ground, taken from the outside look like a cross holes, and the upper pillared entrance portal is decorated with petroglyphs great. It drilled in the mountain and in an altitude of about 23 meters above the ground, the view out the cross like to have holes, and the upper input port columns are decorated with petroglyphs great. In one of them depicted Darius who rely on his bow and prays in front of the holy fire, and multiple people, as symbols of nations, countries and subsidiary lands of Iranian government, have taken his heavy stepped bed and organ on their shoulders. Ahura's winged icon at the top of the Shah "peaked" allegedly. Under each tomb on the height of the downstream mountains, later in the Sasanian period, petroglyphs are subject to large dimensions Sassanid victories against enemies, as well as the coronation scene or the divine gift of kings ruling in Iran at that time. To view all the carved tombs and monuments have been made of architectural innovations. To view all the carved tombs and monuments of architecture initiatives have been conducted. Some experts consider Urartuian coffins dug in the rock as the primary samples of these tombs of Naqsh-e Rostam. (Дандамаев Мухаммед, 1980)

The colorful glazed or golden tiles and reliefs of smooth surfaces that cover the walls of the palace and the headquarters of the Achaemenid kings also have high artistic value, although in this work, the effect of Assyrian art is directly visible. If the petroglyphs at the British Museum in London and has been out of the Palace of Darius at Persepolis (Figure 1), we compare the king fighting mythical beasts with a statue of the king of Assyria Assurnazirpal II (Fig. 2), we can easily see their similarities, though obviously Darius characters, especially the hands and folds of his clothes with artistic elegance is further processed.



**Figure 1. Darius pitched battle with mythical animals, Palace of Darius, Persepolis.**



**Figure 2. Second Assurnazirpal sculpture.**

Referring to the stone engravings petroglyphs dating back to the Achaemenid era and particularly Bisotun Inscription as the problem, Roman Ghirshman pointed out that so-called they have failed to portray an incomplete manner rid the size of the human body.( Ghirshman, Roman. 1961) Unless he has seen in the petroglyphs Inscription of Darius tall and robust (their frame is close to normal measurements: 180 cm) of his soldiers and prisoners (between 120 and 150 cm tall), of course, the comrades of king, in turn, are taller than prisoners. Courtier and empire art of the Achaemenid kings has certain qualities and characteristics of its own, such as the uniformity and monochrome imaging, regular military, the size of the mirror or parallel implementation measures for innovation, repeatedly initiatives and stencil landscapes, presented scenarios and the position and movements of the portrayed characters.( Darmesteter, J. 1975)

Bisotun inscriptions and petroglyphs and its supplement relief are parts of the famous masterpieces of Achaemenid art (Pictures 3 and 4). Inscription in the historic "Baghestan" has been called, the location of the gods. Other names include "Behystan", "Benestan", "Bistan" and finally "Bisotun" that is popular today.



**Figure 3. Bisotun, Darius inscriptions and petroglyphs.**



**Figure 4. Darius petroglyph at Bisotun, painting.**

For a long time, the main sources of ancient history were the information provided by the Greek and Roman authors of the Old Testament in which there are many errors and contradictions. Even in the Avesta, any name of the Achaemenid kings is not mentioned. In written sources from the Sassanid era left more than 200-year history of the Achaemenid mentioned only one is available that is relevant to the victorious campaign against Darius III, Alexander the Macedonian. Instead of pointing to the strength of Cambyses, Darius, Xerxes and other Achaemenid kings and their glorious victories, Kayanids legendary series is remembered. Therefore, before decoding ancient cuneiform inscriptions, it is not possible to provide an adequate explanation of the history of that period. But about two hundred years passed before Europeans become familiar with the cuneiform inscriptions and read to them. And finally the old writings

were decoded with the continuous efforts of a group of foreign scientists and routine Achaemenid history and at least their general characteristics were revived. The names of these scientists never be erased from the memory of Iranian nation.

Pietro Della Valle (1652-1586) brought the first designs of ancient Persian cuneiform inscriptions to Europe in the seventeenth century but European scientists were not successful for a long time to read those writings. First attempts were used by Carsten Niebuhr (1815-1733) to decode them in the late eighteenth century but he had no success. He could only prove that the simpler and more ordinary writing system is consists of 42 cuneiform alphabet symbols.

Cuneiform writings of Georg Friedrich Grotefend (1853-1775) as well as the famous Norwegian East scholar Christian Lassen (1876-1800) and Eugene Burnouf (1852-1801) have played a bigger role in the field of decoding that they have managed to identify and specify all the ancient Persian alphabets. But more significant achievements in this regard, have been earned by Henry Rawlinson (1895-1810). He traveled to Iran in 1835, risked his life, come down with a rope from the rocky peak and has produced a copy of which has been able to decipher inscriptions of Bisotun about 300 Syllabics including tags in the form of letters of conscience. After careful study, with the help of Irish, English and French East scholars Edward Hinkes (1866-1792), Edwin Norris (1872-1795) and Jules Oppert (1905-1825), he would finally provide an opportunity for professionals to read and translate this extremely important text about the history of ancient Iran (Rawlinson, Henry Creswicke. 1846)

The long text, including the 1139 lines, carved on Bisotun Mount is the most famous and most important examples in the number of not so much cuneiform inscriptions belong to the reign of the first Achaemenid dynasty's kings. (Koch Hyde, Marie. 1997) The inscription of Darius king of the Persians in detail tells how after the death of Cambyses II in 520-521 BC history, he stood up riots and repression in the country, destroyed all the rebels, started victorious campaign against Sakais and revived integrity of the Iranian government. After praising and worshipping Ahura Mazda, also it has been talking about the victory of Magi, rebellious priest, Gumatay to Darius. All this information not only confirms, but complement and determines the historical accuracy of Herodotus wrote about the events. List of countries, territories and provinces included in the composition of Inscription on the wall of the Achaemenid Empire have been preserved in the writings and also inscriptions of Naqsh-e Rostam located near Persepolis.

Inscription of Great Darius is essentially equivalent to the stone engravings and sketches and diagrams of the oldest texts which have been created throughout history. The Bisotun inscription has been carved on the vertical wall of rock on the road to Kermanshah, Hamedan, at an altitude of 105 meters. Inscription has a height of about 7 meters, a width of about 22 meters. Petroglyphs also has, in turn, a height of over 3 meters and a width of 6.5 meters. Written in cuneiform, includes several sections of text that is written in the languages of the ancient Persian which were the language familiar to Darius, Akkadian, the language of the Babylonians and Assyrians, and Elamite, i.e. languages are more common in the Achaemenid Empire. The writings and petroglyphs can be seen today only from a distance, unable to see it up close.

After finishing the course, the masters have scabed deliberately lower part of the mountain and have made it

smooth so that no one misses to the building damage. Perhaps that is why relatively well-preserved monument of Bisotun and centuries no one has come in it yet. But it has also backfired and people soon forget where what is written and what is depicted. The Greek geographer and physician Konsius who is engaged in the Iranian court in the early fourth century BC, attributed the monument of Bisotun to Queen Semiramis of Babylon. (Ghirshman, Roman. 1961)

According to the cuneiform text Inscription, to campaign against the Egyptians in 526 BC date, Cambodia secretly ordered to kill his brother, Bardiya. Then the priest Magu Geumatai has established himself as the victim, Bardiya, and seized the throne. Cambodia died in strange circumstances while returning from Egypt accelerated to Iran (according to other sources, committed suicide) and Gumatay has declared himself as king. But in September 522 BC, the ancient Iranian tribe men flocked to the hall of the king and killed the self-appointed king. Then a distant relative of Cambyses, Darius, 28-year-old son of Vishtasb (Gystasb, Gydab), Parthia satrap governor was seated on the throne. Some contemporary historians and East, for example, Alfred Goldschmid, believe Darius has given the order of the murder Bardia, not Cambodia, and he calls him Magi Geumatai in order to be king himself. (Goldshmid, Alfred. 2010)

On the left side of this massive rock, Darius the Great depicted as a full-height and above all while his left foot is placed on the chest of the traitor Magi Geumatai. Nine captive rebels, chained to the neck with closed hands, which are the protector rulers of Geumatai and Scythian leader Sekunkhai, and stand in a row against the powerful king. The king whom top Zoroastrian god Ahura Mazda, a symbol of goodness and wisdom, whose name first indicated in the Bisotun inscription, indeed Hormuz or Aramazd, from the sky with the right hand blessed the coronation of him. Two soldiers stand beside Darius, Lancer Gubri and shooter Aspatin.

Darius returned to half, for stand silhouette, serrated crown on her head. Twisted his mustache, and beard, but the beard that looks like the Assyrian kings, is rectangular in shape, with wavy rows that are carefully manicured. Darius's thick dense hair and how to make hair made up in the same way carefully and memorial thought and decorative line leaves behind. His forehead is tight and his nose is flat. Shirt with his long skirt emphasized on stout, broad-shouldered and athletic limbs of young man to cover just them His wrists that have come out of flared sleeves of her dress, are muscular and wide. His shoes with straps are short and are bound together. We see a pulled bow in his left hand which is a symbol of masculinity, power and empowerment. (Golzari, Masoud. 1977) Under the Shah's foot, Geumatai fallen on the back, begging and pleading extended his hands toward Darius. Ahura Mazda, who can be seen from the lightful sun, has rectangular beard like Darius and is wearing a shirt with long skirts. A refulgent crown drawn on top of her head that symbolizes the divine power granted to Darius and Creator-friendly behavior. (Jackson, William. 1970)

Bisotun Inscription as well as other similar monuments petroglyphs were created in the Achaemenid era, made it possible for us to conclude that these are not ultimately relieve the effects of Assyrian art in terms of subject matter and character imaging system, a combination of approaches, style and artistic expressions yet. Surely professors who triggered Inscription Rock paintings of Bisotun have been familiar to the mentioned Anobanini work, though it is clear that the

Bisotun construction leaves a memorial thought more and more glorious in the eyes of the viewer.

In the Naramsin, king of Akkad's plaque that noted before (Figure 5), the king compared to other characters with larger body, which represents his divine excellence, strength. The appearance of Darius in the building of Bisotun is also larger than the others. It is true that at the top and front of Naramsin, there is no God besides Sun, the symbol of greatness and power of the king. While in the Bisotun inscription, as mentioned, Ahura Mazda is visible from the sun. But in both cases, the aim of the applied symbols is praising and glorifying and God-calling the king, what is special not only artistic culture of the Akkadian or Assyrian, but also was ancient East in general. The evidence of this is that the Tablet famous Narmer which was created in about 3100 BC in Egypt, (Figure 6).



Figure 5. Victory Tablet of Naramsin.



Figure 6. Narmer Tablet.

### Conclusion

Among the remained petroglyphs and cuneiform inscriptions of the Achaemenid era, Inscription carved on the Bisotun rocks is considered as the most impressive and

imaginative inscriptions both in terms of significant historical and ideological content and artistic value. Its characteristic features are: memorial hard power, its internal and external matched rhythm, the obvious effects which is particularly visible in the position, posture, Darius gestures, his comrades and captured enemies, folds clothes and a series of other data.

Some consider that Darius who wrote the Bisotun Inscription is the first Persian historian. Historical events and characters and geographical names have a history of 2,500 years and are left as precious mementos. The importance of this inscription is also the reason by which modern historians have the ability to approve or reject the little and often mutually contradictory and sometimes denied information provided by Greek historians including Herodotus, Xenophon and others.

This work recorded and inscribed on the holy mountain of Bisotun near the highway linking East with West countries, has always been and will remain a source of pride to Iranians, and always will attract the attention of not only Iranian but non Iranian historians, archaeologists and art experts.

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