

Who Was Arakha, Son of Haldita?

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Abstract: One of the most intriguing episodes in the history of ancient Armenia and Achaemenid Persia is associated with Arakha, son of H/Haldita, who seized control of Babylon and proclaimed himself king under the name Nebuchadnezzar IV. Unfortunately, our only primary source regarding Arakha's revolt is the Behistun inscription, which has resulted in various scholarly interpretations—many of which lack coherence or, at times, even contradict the information provided by the primary sources. This article proposes a new hypothesis concerning Arakha's identity, which will be examined in correlation with other source-based references.

Keywords: Urartu, Armenia, Haldita, Arakha, Babylon, Behistun Inscription, Darius I

Introduction

The rebellions that erupted against Darius I between 522 and 520 BC brought the ancient Persian Kingdom to the brink of collapse. Nevertheless, through skillful and decisive actions, the Achaemenid ruler succeeded in suppressing the uprisings led by various self-proclaimed kings and elevated the Achaemenid Kingdom to the zenith of its power during his reign. Among the most resilient of these rebellions was that of the Armenians, whose resistance posed a significant challenge to Darius and was ultimately quelled only with incredible difficulty.

Amidst this period of unrest, an Armenian figure—Arakha, son of Haldita—managed to seize the throne of Babylon and declare himself king. This historical figure is the focal point of the present inquiry.

Source-Based Information

In the Behistun inscription, we read the following (DB III 76-83): “Proclaims Darius, the king: Whilst I was in Persia and Media, for the second time the Babylonians became rebellious from me. (There was) one single man, Arakha by name, an Armenian, the son of Haldita, he rose up in Babylonia—(there is) a district, Dubala by name—from there. He lied to the people thus: ‘I am Nebuchadnezzar, the son of Nabu-na’id’. Afterwards the Babylonian people became rebellious from me (and) went (over) to that Arakha; he seized Babylon; he became king in Babylon”. In the subsequent passage of the inscription, we read (DB III 83-92):

Proclaims Darius, the king: Afterwards I sent forth an army to Babylon. (There was) a Persian, Intaphernes by name, my vassal—him I made their chief. Thus I said to them: “Go forth, defeat that Babylonian army which will not call itself mine!”. Afterwards Intaphernes with the army went to Babylon. Auramazda brought me aid; by the favour of Auramazda Intaphernes slew the Babylonians and led (them) in fetters. In the month Varkazana twenty-two days had passed, then he captured that Arakha who falsely called himself Nebuchadnezzar, and the men who were his foremost followers. I gave orders, (and) that Arakha and the men who were his foremost followers were impaled at Babylon. Proclaims Darius, the king: This (is) what has been done by me in Babylon. (Translations after Schmitt 1991, 67-68; see also Kent 1953, 126, 128; Lecoq 1997, 206; Schmitt 2009, 72-75).

Arakha is also mentioned in another section of the Behistun inscription, where Darius I refers to the self-proclaimed kings. “One (was) an Armenian, Arakha by name; he lied; thus, he said: ‘I am Nebuchadnezzar, the son of Nabu-na’id’. He made Babylonia rebellious” (Schmitt 1991, 68).

These constitute the only direct references we possess regarding Arakha, and numerous scholars have examined them. Yet, as is often the case when available source material is minimal, speculation has more than compensated for the scarcity of factual information.

On August 16, 521 BC, Babylonian documents began to bear dates corresponding to Nebuchadnezzar IV’s first regnal year. The new king of Babylonia succeeded in asserting control over the entire region, including Babylon, Sippar, Borsippa, Uruk, and other important cities (Dandamaev 1989, 122).

The name of Arakha’s father, Haldita, has been interpreted by I. Diakonoff to mean “Haldi is great”, and on that basis, Arakha is considered of Urartian origin, with his designation as an “Armenian” merely indicating that he was a resident of the land of Armenia (Diakonoff 1968, 235; cf. Olmstead 1960, 115; Beaulieu 2014, 18).

However, the Behistun relief depicts Arakha, revealing certain anthropological features typically associated with Armenians. Furthermore, based on Babylonian business documents from the Achaemenid period, it is worth noting that Babylonians also bore similar names

(Eilers 1955, 233; Dandamaev 1989, 123), suggesting the name was not exclusive to Armenian or Urartian contexts.

G. Kapantsyan's view that Arakha was Darius I's deputy in Babylon and sought to support his fellow countrymen in rebellion does not hold up under critical examination (Kapantsyan 1947, 211).

Due to the lack of additional source-based evidence, the hypothesis that Arakha fled to Babylon following the suppression of the Armenian revolt and initiated a new uprising against Darius I cannot be confirmed (Weissbach 1908, 638).¹

Some scholars have suggested that the name Arakha was not a proper name but rather an Armenian title meaning "crown prince" and that Arakha's actual name was Nebuchadnezzar, the son of the deposed Nabonidus, who came to Babylon to assert his claim to his father's throne (Schedl 1965, 245). Some have also identified Arakha with the Nebuchadnezzar mentioned in the Book of Judith (Brunner 1959, 121). However, M. Dandamaev rightfully rejects these interpretations (Dandamaev 1989, 123).

It is possible that Herodotus's account (Herodotus 1928, 184-195) also refers to Nebuchadnezzar IV's revolt and the Persians' siege and capture of Babylon; however, it is difficult to confirm with certainty that Herodotus had this specific uprising in mind (Dandamaev 1989, 124).

In the Babylonian (Akkadian) version of the Behistun inscription, Arakhu, son of Haldita, identified as an Uraštian, is said to have led a rebellion in the city of Ur, located in Babylonia (von Voigtlander 1978, 60; Malbran-Labat 1994, 118). Using the ethnonym "Urartian" in Babylonian is an anachronism and is effectively equivalent to the ethnonym Armenian (in Armenian: *huy/hay*). It should be noted that in the Old Persian, Elamite, and Babylonian versions of the Behistun inscription, the term "Armenian" indicated solely ethnic origin and should not be understood to mean that the inscription refers to a person who was a resident of Armenia or of the country called Armenia. Furthermore, it should be emphasized that Cyrus the Great conquered the Armenian Kingdom, which at the time was a vassal of Media. This historical reality is significant because it suggests that the inhabitants of Armenia could have already begun to identify themselves, at least to some extent, as Armenians, regardless of their local or provincial affiliations (Khorikyan 2011, 154-163; cf. Xenophon 1980, 310).

The Issue of Identifying the Terms "Armenian" and "Urartian"

In the Behistun inscription, "Urartian" does not carry an ethnic connotation. Instead, it persisted in use due to the strength of written tradition within some areas of the Achaemenid Kingdom, particularly in Mesopotamia, the ancient cradle of civilization, where the country name Urartu was used to refer to the region known to the Persians as

¹ The claim that Arakha ascended the Babylonian throne with the support of the Urartians is likewise highly implausible (see Hmayakyan 1998, 11).

Armina (Armenia). Notably, the first recorded battle between the Armenian rebels and Vaumisa, a general of Darius I, took place in the district of Izalā (Kent 1953, 122), which belonged to Assyria. However, according to the Babylonian version of the Behistun inscription, Izalā is mentioned as part of Uraštu (Urartu), with no reference to its connection to Assyria (Malbran-Labat 1994, 98, 114). This indicates that geographically, Izalā was considered within the bounds of Assyria, but politically, it was situated within Urartu-Armenia. Therefore, the rebels were fighting within the territorial boundaries of Armenia. This information is sufficient to demonstrate that the country name Uraštu/Urartu had a political significance during the Achaemenid period.

In Old Persian, the country name Armina fully corresponds to Harminu in Elamite (Hallock 1969, 692). For comparison, let us note that Herodotus's term "Armenians" (Ἀρμενίων) can also be translated as "Armenias" (Khorikyan 2024, 65)², meaning that we cannot assert that, in the context of ancient Greek geographical thought, the term "Armenian" explicitly referred to a resident of the country Armenia, rather than to the ethnos by whose name the country itself was called. Accordingly, we do not share the view that the names Urartu and Armina in the Behistun inscription were used solely based on their geographic localization (Areshian 2019). To illustrate, while the Scythians were called Sakas in Old Persian, in the Babylonian version of the Behistun inscription, they were still referred to as Cimmerians (von Voigtlander 1978, 12, 22, et passim) due to historical tradition. This does not mean that the Sakas and Cimmerians lived in different regions during the time of Darius I, but rather that the difference in names comes from how neighboring peoples in different languages referred to them. Moreover, it must be remembered that the administrative system of the Achaemenid Kingdom was organized on an ethnic or tribal basis, as demonstrated by the formation of satrapies and the organization of the imperial army (Herodotus 1928, 117; 1938, 375, 377, 403).

An additional observation is also of interest: in Aramaic documents discovered at the military colony of Elephantine, the Jews (Judeans) are referred to with dual ethnic identifications: as Jews and as Arameans. This duality is explicable because the Jews in question were considered Arameans due to their origin from the land of Aram (Syria), i.e., the Achaemenid satrapy of Ebirnari. At the same time, they were also identified as Jews based on narrower territorial and religious criteria (Toorn 2016). In these same Elephantine papyri, alongside the names of individuals from different peoples, their ethnic designations are also indicated, such as Magians, Medes, Khwarezmians, Cilicians, Caspians, and others (Driver 1957, 26, 28, 36; Porten 1996, 157-158, 187, 215-217, 219, 222, 247-248; Becking 2017, 822-824, 827-829). These examples demonstrate that for the Achaemenid administration, the term armen/hay (Armenian) likewise carried a clear ethnic significance.

² The phrase "kingdom of the Armenians" is also used in the *Cyropaedia* (see Xenophon 1960, 236), which would be unintelligible if one were to interpret it as referring to a "kingdom of the inhabitants of Armenia" rather than to an ethnic designation.

Let us reiterate: Arakha and Dādarshi were Armenians, not merely inhabitants of Armenia. Moreover, for the ancient Persians, “Armenian” and “inhabitant of Armenia” were interchangeable in meaning. In the Babylonian version of the Behistun inscription, Dādarshi is referred to as a Uraštian, and Armenia as Uraštu/Urartu (von Voigtlander 1978, 24–27)³, which signifies that the Babylonian scribe replaced the Old Persian term “Armenian-hay” and the country name “Armina-Hayastan” with the name of the Urartu state and its people, known in that area in earlier times. Even in this case, there is no basis for speculating about the precise geographic placement of Armina and Urartu within the Armenian Highlands. In the geographic worldview of the Old Persians, the Armenian Highlands were collectively referred to as Armina. At the same time, the land north of Mesopotamia was traditionally known to the Babylonians as Urartu. In another instance, Darius I refers to Dādarshi, the satrap of Bactria, and his other generals as “Persians” (Kent 1953, 125), meaning their tribal affiliation. By designating his close commanders as Persians (Kent 1953, 130), Darius again emphasizes their ethnic origin. The same interpretive approach applies to instances in the inscription where individuals are described as Medes, Sagartians, or Margians (Kent 1953, 122, 125)—each indicating tribal lineage, not geographic residence. Darius I, who considers himself Aryan⁴, refers to his ethnic origin when he calls himself a Persian, the son of a Persian, not a resident of Persia or the son of a resident of Persia, which is understandable in one way or another, and before tribal affiliation, he mentions his patrimonial descent-Achaemenian (Kent 1953, 137, 141). Ultimately, the Achaemenids organized their administrative system not in cooperation with the “inhabitants of Armenia” but with the Armenians themselves, and the 13th Satrapy was officially designated Armina, preserving the name of the ancient kingdom (Khorikyan 2022, 219-237). The conclusion is clear: across all versions of the Behistun inscription—Elamite, Old Persian, and Babylonian—the country names Armina, Uraštu, and Harminu are equivalent and refer to the same territory.⁵ Therefore, based on the incorrect theory of Armenian late migration, the claim that the Urartians rebelled against Darius I, and that the rise of the Armenians in the Caucasus began only after 521–518 BC, is entirely unsubstantiated. According to this flawed view, the Armenians were allies of Darius I, supposedly fighting against the Medes and Urartians (Daryaei 2018).⁶ However, contrary

³ In the Aramaic version of the inscription, Urartu is rendered as *rrt*, and Urartian as *rrty* (see Greenfield and Porten 1982, 24, 28, et passim). In the Hebrew text of the Bible, the form *rrt* was translated into Greek and Armenian as “Ararat” (see Holy Bible 2014, 461), a translation rejected by some scholars (see, e.g., Diakonoff 1951, 215n6; Piotrovsky 1959, 112). A detailed examination of this issue, however, lies beyond the scope of the present article.

⁴ For a discussion of the term Aryan, see Asatrian 2012, 25-26; Khojaeva 2022.

⁵ Within this context, certain scholars’ views raise at least a degree of skepticism—those who, relying solely on the Babylonian version of the Behistun inscription, classify Arakha as Urartian without critical analysis, interpreting the term as a reference to his tribal identity (see Nielsen 2015, 56).

⁶ A similarly unfounded position can be found in Salvini 2021, 359.

to all available sources, the proponent of this theory fails to explain how the Urartians could have preserved any political power in the Caucasus (!) as late as the end of the 6th century BC. Nor does the author account for the implausibility of the Armenians, indigenous to the Armenian Highlands, being unable to have rebelled against Darius I, especially given that Cyrus the Great had already incorporated Armenia into the kingdom.

The Revolt of Arakha

From the Babylonian version of the Behistun inscription, we learn that the losses Arakha (Arakhu) suffered amounted to 2,497 men. In the Elamite version of the inscription, Arakha (Harakka) is identified as Armenian, and the location of the revolt is referred to as Duibba[la], situated within Babylonia (Hinz 1974, 131; Vallat 1977, 123-126; Grillot-Susini et al. 1993, 54).⁷ A city named Dubal is also mentioned in a text discovered in Sippar, and based on this, Dubāla has been geographically located north of Babylonia (Stolper 1987, 396; Beaulieu 2014, 18).⁸ However, this does not account for the fact that in the Babylonian version, we also find mention of the city of Ur.⁹ This discrepancy suggests that Ur and Dubāla should be identified as the same place or, more plausibly, that the settlement or military colony known as Dubāla was located within the region of Ur. It is also conceivable that Dubāla was an administrative unit encompassing Ur, or Ur served as its administrative center.¹⁰ Consequently, it is reasonable to assume that Arakha may have held the position of military commander (*šaknu*) of a unit stationed in the Dubāla district or in Ur itself. Notably, during the Achaemenid period, the governor of Nippur also bore the title *šaknu* (Dandamaev 2009, 87).

⁷ Notably, in the Elamite version of the text, Dubala has been translated both as a city and as a district (see also Weissbach 1911, 55).

⁸ It is highly implausible to seek a connection between the land referred to in cuneiform sources as Tabal—located in what would later become Cappadocia—and Dubala, suggesting that Arakha launched his revolt in Tabal and subsequently captured Babylon (see Karagyozyan 2001b, 274). Most scholars agree that the principal area of insurgency for the two self-proclaimed kings of Babylon—Nidintu-Bēl and Arakha—was in northern Babylonia, although their control extended as far as Uruk (see Rollinger 2021, 439). It should be noted that the Persian army's assault on Babylon must have proceeded from the north, which makes the self-proclaimed kings' northern sphere of operations more significant strategically.

⁹ The ancient city of Ur continued to play a significant role in maritime trade with India through the late 6th century BC. However, beginning especially after 400 BC, the city gradually lost its economic importance due to a dramatic shift in the course of the Euphrates River, ultimately leading to its abandonment by the local population. The irrigation infrastructure essential to sustaining the urban area became inoperable, and the harbors silted up with sand deposits (see Dandamaev and Lukonin 1980, 218).

¹⁰ The toponym Dubāla may be connected to the name of the Dubla-mah temple located in Ur (see von Voigtlander 1978, 37).

The fact that Arakha was in southern Babylonia, specifically in Ur, effectively rules out the assumption that he arrived in Babylon and led a revolt against Darius I following the suppression of the Armenian uprising. It is highly unlikely that, after the defeat of the Armenian rebellion, Arakha would have retained sufficient military resources to declare himself king in Babylon. Moreover, it is difficult to imagine that Arakha, fleeing from Armenia¹¹, would bypass Babylon, proceed as far south as Ur, and then return northward to capture Babylon. Arakha's revolt began in August 521 BC, whereas Dādarshi inflicted a third defeat upon the Armenians on June 21, 521 BC. This chronological proximity makes it improbable that Arakha could have reached southern Babylonia, gathered forces, and launched a revolt in such a short period. The uprisings of the Armenians and those of Arakha were separate events (Movsisyan et al. 2020, 35) and should be regarded as unrelated episodes.

Commentary

We have cited the relevant source-based evidence concerning the subject in question, and below we shall attempt to offer a few interpretative comments while remaining within the boundaries of that evidentiary framework. First, it is evident that after suppressing the initial revolt in Babylon, Darius I remained in the city. Arakha launched his rebellion only after Darius had departed from Babylon. This implies that Arakha must have been a figure of considerable stature, likely commanding organized military forces. In the Old Persian version of the Behistun inscription, the people of Babylon sided with Arakha, while in the Babylonian version, the Babylonian army is specifically said to have joined his cause. In Old Persian, the term *kāra* may denote both “people” and “army” (see, e.g., Schmitt 2014, 201-202).

Arakha's rebellion was suppressed on November 27, 521 BC, meaning he ruled for approximately four months under the regnal name Nebuchadnezzar IV. M. Dandamaev rightly draws attention to the fact that Arakha had lived in Babylonia for a considerable period, acquiring such a command of the local language that he could convincingly present himself as the son of Nabonidus (Dandamaev 2009, 340). It is not unlikely that Arakha may have been born in Babylonia itself, which would further explain his fluency in Babylonian traditions and language. These factors likely contributed to his acceptance by the Babylonian populace.

It is worth noting that Herodotus also attests to economic ties between Babylonia, Assyria, and Armenia (Herodotus 1975, 245), indicating that Armenian merchants may have settled in Babylonia even before the Achaemenid period.

Furthermore, during his military campaigns against Uraštu (Khorikyan 2015, 51-53) in the late 7th century BC, Nabopolassar, the king of Babylon, is known to have resettled

¹¹ At one time, it was even suggested that Arakha may have engaged and dispersed Vaumisa's army, subsequently advancing and capturing Babylon (see Karagoyzian 2001a, 248).

many captives in Babylonia. It is plausible that descendants of those deportees later became supporters of Arakha's revolt, forming part of the sociopolitical context in which his rebellion emerged.

We had previously drawn attention to an intriguing historical detail: Armenians also performed military service in Babylonia. According to a Babylonian document dated to the reign of Darius II (423-404 BC), a military colony under the command of Šameš-barakku, located along the Euphrates River near Nippur, included troops identified as "Urašťians and people of Milidu" (for a detailed discussion, see Khorikyan 2017, 174-180). In Babylonian texts from the Achaemenid period, the designation Urašťu or Urašťians should unequivocally be understood as a reference to Armenia and the Armenian people.¹² The term Milidu or Miliduians denotes a much broader geographical region than that of Melitene alone. In our view, Milidu corresponds in a broader sense to Pactyice and may be regarded as its Babylonian equivalent. Milidu was also likely the residency of Hyparch (sub-governor) of Western Armenia.

The foregoing considerations permit the formulation of a hypothesis according to which Arakha may be regarded as the commander of an Armenian military unit stationed in the region of Ur in Babylonia. Even if he did not specifically command an Armenian unit, he likely served as the military leader of a contingent of soldiers recruited from another subject population of the Achaemenid Kingdom. The military forces under Arakha's command made it possible for him to rapidly attract the Babylonian populace's support. Arakha's role as an army commander should not be viewed as surprising, particularly given that during the same period, Dādarshi, another general of Armenian origin, served in the army of Darius I. In essence, the closest associates executed alongside Arakha were most likely his fellow soldiers, drawn from the same military unit. Herodotus may be referring to these very companions when he writes that Darius, upon capturing Babylon, "impaled about three thousand men that were chief among them" (Herodotus 1928, 193, 195). While it remains theoretically possible that Arakha held a non-military office, the argument favoring his military leadership is more compelling in explaining his initial success. There is little doubt that Arakha belonged to a prominent noble lineage, and his background supports the supposition that his mother may have been a member of the deposed Babylonian royal family—a plausible scenario given that intermarriage between ruling elites of different ethnic origins was a widespread phenomenon within the Achaemenid Kingdom. It is particularly noteworthy that Arakha initiated his revolt in Dubāla and only later gained the support of the Babylonians, who ultimately permitted his entry into Babylon, where he proclaimed himself king.

¹² Xenophon appears to have been unfamiliar with a land or people known as Urartu or the Urartians, despite having personally traveled through Armenia and referring explicitly to Armenian tribes. This suggests that the references to Urašťu and the Urašťians in Babylonian sources were already anachronistic, serving as equivalents for Armenia and the Armenians.

Let us also draw attention to a significant observation based solely on analyzing information found in the Behistun inscription. When Darius I refers to self-proclaimed and false kings, he does not always mention their patronymics. However, Darius explicitly cites his father's name, which was crucial for a newly established Achaemenid monarch to emphasize the nobility of his lineage. From this, we may reasonably infer that the mention of patronymics in the case of certain so-called "false kings" indicated their notable origin, even though they were falsely associated with the legitimate royal lines of their respective regions. In this context, the reference to Arakha's father, Ḫaldita, may suggest that Darius I intended to signal Arakha's noble—or possibly priestly—heritage. Following this line of reasoning, Arakha may have belonged to an Armenian royal house, whose members could have resided at the Achaemenid court, either in the capacity of political hostages or as part of a military service arrangement (Xenophon 1960, 220). It is worth recalling that in the Sasanian court, Armenian *nakharars* (nobles) served in military roles along with their retainers, even participating in campaigns such as those against the Hephthalites. These precedents testify to the long-standing traditions of military service and obligations imposed upon subject peoples within ancient Iranian imperial structures.

It is difficult to assert with certainty that the name Ḫaldita, attested in the late 6th century BC, reflects the continued worship of the god Ḫaldi among the Armenians (Movsisyan et al. 2020, 34)¹³, nor can the name alone confirm that its bearer was Urartian by origin (Daryae 2018, 39).¹⁴ The individual in question may have adopted the name Ḫaldita at a later stage, having changed his original name. For instance, a Babylonian document from the time of Nabonidus discovered in Uruk refers to a person identified as Armenian (Uraštian) who bore the Babylonian name Nergal-uballit ("Nergal, keep [him] alive"; see Dandamaev and Lukonin 1980, 294).¹⁵ Thus, it would be methodologically incorrect to consider this individual a Babylonian solely based on his theophoric name, as worshiping foreign deities, regardless of ethnic origin, was a common phenomenon, and individuals could change their names accordingly (Dandamaev and Lukonin 1980, 291-292, 300, 304). Moreover, personal names incorporating the name of the god Ḫaldi appear in Akkadian sources as early as the late second millennium BC, and it was King Ishpuini of Urartu (ca. 830–820 BC) who formally introduced the cult of Ḫaldi (Petrosyan 2018, 177) into the Urartian religious system. Hence, the name Ḫaldi was not exclusive to Urartu and unknown in Mesopotamia. It is also conceivable that an ancient Urartian colony had once existed in Dubāla, where the cult of Ḫaldi persisted. Within this context, it is

¹³ It is worth noting that scholars have considered the suffix *-ita* in the name Ḫaldita to be of Iranian origin, and it is possible that Armenian personal names containing the suffixes *-it* or *-ut* may likewise derive from Iranian linguistic influence (see Jahukyan 1987, 410n1).

¹⁴ Identifying Arakha as Urartian solely on the basis of his father's name, Ḫaldita, constitutes a flawed approach.

¹⁵ It should be noted that the Mesopotamian deity Nergal and Ḫaldi shared certain cultic parallels (see Petrosyan 2018, 179).

plausible that Arakha's father¹⁶, an ethnic Armenian who had served in a military or administrative capacity for many years, may have adopted the name Իaldita, perhaps as part of religious or political integration. It is worth noting, incidentally, that the proposed etymological link between the name Arakha (previously read as Arkha) and the Armenian word *ark'a* ("king") remains problematic and requires further scrutiny (Ačaryan 2006, 265).¹⁷

Conclusion

In summary, based on the analysis conducted, it may be concluded that there was no connection between the Armenian revolt and the uprising led by Arakha against Darius I. Arakha appears to have been the commander of an Armenian or another ethnic military unit stationed in Babylonia. Taking advantage of the political instability, he initiated a revolt and proclaimed himself king of Babylon. His rebellion received support from the Babylonian populace, and for approximately four months, Arakha ruled Babylon under the regnal name Nebuchadnezzar IV.

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¹⁶ Simultaneous military service of father and son was a common phenomenon in Achaemenid Persia. For instance, in the neighbouring military colonies of Egypt, Vidranga and Naphaina, a father and son, are attested as holding high-ranking military positions (see Porten 1996, 146).

¹⁷ There is no basis for identifying Arakha with Arayan Ara, mentioned by Movses Khorenatsi (see Hmayakyan 1998, 11). The proposed etymological connection between the name Arakha and the Armenian word *erakhay/erekhay* ("child") is likewise uncertain (see Mayrhofer 1979, II/14).

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