

In 330 and 329 BC, despite Macedonian occupation of the Iranian heartland and the death of Darius III, many of Persia's surviving satrapal families had grounds for optimism. Dozens of nobles received their conqueror's clemency, and those who decided to follow Alexander rather than the Persian usurper Bessos preserved titles and status. In 329, at least twelve ethnic Iranians served as satraps for Alexander, governing almost all of the territory east of the Levant. By 324, though, most had disappeared, the majority removed abruptly from office, some dead of natural causes but not fortunate enough to be succeeded by their sons. In most cases, Macedonians or Greeks replaced Persians in power. Modern scholarship on the subject has shed considerable light on episodes of satrapal resistance, as well as Alexander's motives for limiting the role of the empire's former elites (Bosworth 1980; Brosius 2003).

Less attention has been given to the phenomenon of Persian noble collaboration in the aftermath of conquest (Briant 1996, 865-71 and 888-91, examines early defectors but spends little time on later events of Alexander's reign). While the scarcity of written evidence from 4<sup>th</sup>-century Iran prevents full illumination of the Persian perspective, this paper analyzes evidence in the Alexander historians for common patterns of behavior among the last of the *Bandakā*, the Iranian nobles bound by loyalty to the person of the King, as they attempted to establish new allegiances and preserve their influence under Alexander's regime.

At the time of Alexander's death, three Iranians remained in control of major satrapies: Oxyartes in Bactria, Phrataphernes in Parthia, and Atropates in Media. While their small number attests to the difficulty of maintaining authority as ethnic outsiders in the new distribution of power, their careers also shed light on the strategies that Persian elites could pursue for survival. Oxyartes was fortunate enough to profit from his daughter's marriage to Alexander, probably causing resentment among other satraps robbed of the ultimate opportunity to preserve their power (cf. Carney 1996, 575-6). Short of direct marriage alliance with the King, though, other satraps like Phrataphernes and Atropates kept their satrapies by falling back on traditional methods for the pursuit of status under the Achaemenids: not only military service and physical demonstrations of loyalty, but also competitive denunciation of rivals, and the courting of influential patrons among the King's inner circle. The former may lie behind the purge of Macedonian generals in Media after Alexander's return from the east; the latter tactic helps to explain Persian participation in the Susa marriages of 324, which allowed Atropates, for example, to prolong his satrapal tenure through a marriage link to the leading general Perdikkas. Through such careful maneuvering, the most successful representatives of the Achaemenid nobility managed to hold onto positions of power for more than a decade after their empire's fall, and in the end were only marginalized by the shifting politics of the Macedonian Successor Wars.