



## “سدارپ پرینگ” برادر اردشیر بابکان یا پسر او، کتیبه‌ای دیگر از سدارپ بر بشقاب سیمین موزه ملی ایران سیروس نصراله‌زاده

### چکیده

بر روی یکی از کاسه‌های سیمین ساسانی در موزه پل‌گتی آمریکا کتیبه‌ای به پهلوی ساسانی آمده که شروع نام سدارپ پرینگ/فرینگ برادر اردشیر بابکان را خوانده است؛ در موزه ملی ایران بر ظرفی سیمین، مشابه همین کتیبه آمده است که اتفاقی نادر است. در این کتیبه با اندکی تفاوت مشخصاً سدارپ را پسر اردشیر بابکان نوشته است. در منابع دیگر مثل کتیبه شاپور بر کعبه زردشت در فهرست درباریان اردشیر نام ابرینگ شاه سدارپ آمده اما نسبتش با اردشیر نامشخص است. هر دو ظرف اصل هستند. بر اساس منابع همزمان مثل کعبه زردشت، که فهرست درباریان بابک، اردشیر و شاپور را داده می‌توان به نتایجی رسید. در فهرست درباریان اردشیر نام او در صدر فهرست آمده است. با توجه به نسبت شاهان بعدی و ملکه‌ها با اردشیر، شاید بتوان وی را پسر اردشیر دانست.

واژگان کلیدی: کاسه‌های ساسانی، ظروف سیمین، سدارپ، اردشیر اول، موزه ملی ایران.

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## \*Sadārap [Sadāraf/b] of \*P/Frēnag”, Ardaxšēr ī Pāpagān’s brother or his son<sup>a</sup> Another inscription of \*Sadārap [Sadāraf] on a silver plate in National Museum of Iran Cyrus Nasrollahzadeh<sup>b</sup>

### Abstract

On one of the Sasanian silver bowls in the J. Paul Getty Museum (J.PGM) in the U.S.A., a Sasanian Middle Persian inscription is written in which Skjærvø identified a proper name as “Sadārap [Sadāraf/b] \*P/Frēnag”, Ardaxšēr ī Pāpagān’s brother. Also, in the National Museum of Iran (NMI), there is a silver vessel on which a similar inscription has been written, which is a rare occurrence. This inscription, with only a slight difference, introduced Sadārap as a son of Ardaxšēr ī Pāpagān’s. In other sources, such as the inscription of Šāpuhr on the Ka’ba of Zardušt (ŠKZ), the name of Abrēnag king of Sadārap is mentioned in the list of Ardaxšēr’s courtiers, although his relation with Ardaxšēr is unspecified. Both vessels are authentic.

**Keywords:** Sasanian Bowls, Silver vessels, Sadārap, Ardaxšēr I, National Museum of Iran.

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## Introduction

Silver vessels are among the most typical examples of Sasanian arts and crafts, and are found in various forms. Most of these have inscriptions on them, which are written in MP (Middle Persian), known as pointillé inscriptions (for Sasanian silver vessels; see Harper and Meyers 1981, Harper 1983: 1113-29, Harper 1986, Maisia-Radford 2013: 920-942, and for a complete introduction to the inscriptions with literature, Gyselen 2014: 73-178). One of the earliest Sasanian silver vessel inscriptions, which pre-dates their empire, is a silver bowl that was owned by a person named Wahixšahr, the Vispuhr (prince), who according to Skjærvø, is the brother of Ardaxšēr šāh, the son of Dārāyān, a local king of Pārs.

The inscription on this silver vessel shows that the so-called Sasanian Pahlavi script had been formed long (ca. 200 years) before the rise of the Sasanians. This inscription reads: “This \*hammered (bowl in) gold-and-silver (weighs) 50 staters/ YNGDWN zl KSP/ YNGDWN zarr asēm 50 statērs” (Skjærvø 2000: 93ff. Shayegan 2009: 169-171<sup>2</sup>). There is another silver cup in a private collection with two inscriptions on it, one is related to Ardaxšēr ī Pāpagān weighing 27 statērs (YNGDWN 20 7 MCY) and the other is attributed to Pūhrag (pwhlk) with the same value as the first (YNGDWN 'symy 20 7 MCY). On this vessel, there is a picture of a man wearing a cap accompanied by a woman (Amouzegar 2004-2005/ 1383š: 7-18). Another inscription of this silver bowl is at the J.PGM.

2. Shayegan has read what Skjærvø has hesitantly interpreted as AH'yn/\*brādā-y-in: “our brother” as \*ahīyān meaning “descendents”, and he, Ardaxšēr šāh, has been known as son of Dārāyān (II), a descendent of Dārāyān(I) and brother of Wahixšahr, The Vispuhr. This Wahixšahr, according to his coin, is the brother of Ardaxšēršāh and the son of the Dārāyān (II). He called this local Pārsian dynasty, already known as Persed, Dārāyānid (Shayegan 2009:171). In fact, three local dynasties can be distinguished in Pārs. First, those with the title prtrk'/fratraka (prtrk' zy lhy') who are 5 and whose exact title is not known; Then the family with the title of šāh (MLKA) to which the present inscription belongs, and finally, Pābag's family, involving also his two sons, Šāpuhr and Ardaxšēr, who added the title of bgy, and of whom Ardaxšēr later established the Sasanian dynasty.

## - Sadārap [Sadāraf/b] of \*P/Frēnag, Ardaxšēr ī Papagān's brother or his son

At the J.PGM, a silver bowl, numbered 81.AM.84.26, is simple in form and it is without decorative drawings. Skjærvø (1993: 181ff) read the inscription, which runs almost the entire periphery, as follows:

ZNE MANE st'rp plynk MLKA npšt AE mzdysn bgy Y 'rhtštr MLKAn MLKA 'yr'n MNW ctry MN yzd'n YNGDWN 'symy 20 MCY

ēn jām \*Sadārap [Sadāraf?] \*P/Frēnag šāh nibišť brād mazdēsn bay ī Ardaxšahr šāhān šāh Ērān kē čīhr az yazdān YNGDWN asēm 20 statēr.

\*Sadārap [Sadāraf?] king of \*P/Frēnag? inscribed this cup, the brother of Mazdayasnian Majesty Ardaxšahr, king of kings of Ērān whose seed is from the gods. \*Hammered silver, 20 staters.

INM keeps a silver plate numbered 5118/20694 (figs. 1-2), which is brought from Mr. Atiqeh-chi's private collection. This plate has a silver foot ring and repeating elongated lobe decorations and there is an inscription on the exterior part. There is no doubt of the authenticity of this plate and its inscription confirms this. The inscription is almost identical to the J.PGM bowl inscription (see below). On both vessels, there is a branch sign or a tree symbol. This is the first time that almost the same inscription has appeared on two vessels of the Sasanian period. The inscription on the silver plate of the INM is as follows (Figs. 3-12):

ZNE MANE st'rp plynk MLKA BRE mzdysn bgy 'rhtštr MLKAn MLKA 'yr'n MNW ctry MN yzd'n W YNGDWN 'symy 20 10 MCY ZWZN 2

ēn jām \*Sadārap [Sadāraf/b] \*P/Frēnag šāh pus mazdēsn bay Ardaxšēr šāhān šāh Ērān kē čīhr az yazdān ud YNGDWN asēm 30 statēr drahm 2.

\*Sadārap king of \*P/Frēnag (inscribed) this cup, the son of Mazdayasnian Majesty Ardaxšēr, king of kings of Ērān whose seed is from the gods. and Hammered silver 30 staters, 2 drahms.



Fig. 1. Silver Plate in National Museum of Iran



Fig. 2. Silver Plate in National Museum of Iran



Fig. 3. ZNE MANE



Fig. 4. plynk MLKA BRE mzdý





Fig. 5. BRE mzdysn bgy



Fig. 6. bgy MLKAn MLKA

As it is seen, except in a few places, the inscriptions are similar. In the first inscription, Skjærvø (1993:188, no. 4) read npšt/ inscribed, which in this type of inscriptions, must structurally be NPŠE/ xwēš, noted by Skjærvø himself too. In the second inscription, neither this word nor the word NPŠE/ xwēš is mentioned. In the first inscription in the phrase mzdysn bgy Y 'rhtštr, the interposition of Y/ ī is unusual. In the inscription of INM, conj. W/ ud is mentioned before YNGDWN, but it is not present in the first inscription. In the second inscription, due to the different weight of this vessel, the phrase 2 dirham is mentioned. There is no consensus on the Iranian equivalent of the heterogram YNGDWN. In his detailed description of this term, Skjærvø suggests the meaning to be 'hammered'. The heterogram YNGDWN appears on silver vessels with the lapidary alphabet and has not yet been seen on vessels with the cursive alphabet, indicating that it belongs to a specific period. This heterogram is usually accompanied by asēm or sometimes with two words zl KSP/ zarr asēm. zarr and asēm can either refer to the vessel material or assign a monetary value (Gyselen 2014: 87).

Henning (1961: 353-56) proposed to read the only extant letter from the almost wholly erased inscription on the Armazi Silver Bowl as TGLWN, which seems to him a graphic deformation of \*TKLWN, its Iranian equivalent of which is saxt "weighed". Frye and Brunner assumed the meaning of MN ZWZN 'symy as "of silver drachms" and "of drahm- silver".

Harmatta read it as TKLWN 'symy and gave its meaning "le poids de l'argent" for the first time. In his last reading, Gignoux read it just as 'symy. Gyselen seems to accord with reading YNGDWN 'sym in her commentary (see Gyselen 2014: 87, 117, no. 10). On another vessel from the Foroughi collection in INM this phrase was read as tgdwn 'symy by Frye and Brunner, and TGDWN 'symy by Gignoux and Bivar. Frye and Brunner translated it "to weigh" and together with 'symy, Gignoux translated it as "argent ciselé/ repoussé" (see Gyselen 2014: 132, no. 26). On another vessel from the same collection, in INM, heterogram TGDWN is solely seen which Gignoux translated first as "pesé" and somewhere else as "ciselé" (Gyselen 2014: 150, no. 45). Skjærvø primarily read it as YNGDWN and compared it with the Semitic verbal root ngd, which has an obscure meaning related to manufactured vessels peculiarly in this language. In Aramaic and Syriac examples, ngd has been used to mean past participle "chased", or "laminated". In Jewish, Syriac, and Talmudic Aramaic texts, ngd means "to draw, pull". Skjærvø believes that "YNGWN asēm may mean "stretched → sheet silver" that is "silver hammered into a sheet" and "refers to a special kind of silver, which in view of the related Semitic words, probably was "sheet silver" and by implication "hammered silver" as opposed to "cast silver" or "double shell silver. Why it was considered necessary to indicate on a specific vessel that it was made from hammered silver ..." (1993: 187f). An Iranian equivalent is not offered for YNGWN. The Middle Persian term for stretch/pull is kešīdan for which there hasn't appeared a heterogram in the Farhang ī Pahlawīg. In the case of taking "to beat" or "to hammer" meaning into consideration, the Middle Persian equivalent term will be kōftan, ac-



Fig. 7. MLKA



Fig. 8. MNW ctry MN

cordingly, the relevant heterogram is DKLWN. In Mani's Book of Giants, the term applied for working on gold is *zadan* "to strike" (Skjærvø *ibid.*: 188). Amouzegar (2004-5: 10) chose the equivalent term \**kōft*<sup>3</sup>, reading the inscriptions on two silver vessels of Ardaxšēr I.

In New Persian the terms *talā/noqrē-kūb*: "gold/silver beating", *noqrē-kārī*: "silver-working", *sīm-kūft*: "silver-smiting", *čakuš-xur*: "malleable" are used in this area. In the case of Wahixšahr's inscription, in which YMGDWN *zl KSP/ zarrasēm* is inscribed, gold is added in the center to which probably the term *talā-kūb*: "gold beating" fits. The value stated on these silver vessels seems to be related to the silver used in it and to its manufacture. But accepting the translation of "ciselé/ repoussé", it would be construed as related to its performance and technical aspects. The latter case can be rejected since no decorations were added to these vessels. Therefore, the most likely interpretation is *kōftan*: "hammered". However, the controversial heterograms are AE in the first inscription and BRE in the second inscription. The first word indicates that the person in question is the brother and the second indicates that he is the son of Ardaxšēr ī Pābagān.

In the INM inscription, unlike the other inscription, the letter "b" is clearly visible. It is similar to the heterogram BRE in the inscription on the pre-Sasanian silver vessel, which was read previously by Skjærvø (2000: 95, fig. p. 97). In the INM inscription, the letter "b" in the word *bgy/bay* is similar. Hence, there is no doubt about the reading of BRE/ "son" in INM

inscription. But who is this Sadārap? A similar name is mentioned in ŠKZ. This name comes in the first place in the list of courtiers of Ardaxšēr, in which lamb, bread, and wine are devoted to the pious foundation, which indicates a higher rank. His name is mentioned in three narrations as follows: Middle Persian: *st'lpY ZY 'plynk<sup>4</sup> MLKA*; Parthian: *st'rp 'prynk MLKA*; and Greek. *Σαταροπτα βρηναχ βασιλέως*. According to Back's transcription (1978: 259), the word is Sadāraf/b or Sadārap<Old Iranian. \**sata-tapara-* and it means "hundert Axte habend". Gignoux transcribes it as *Satārup* (1986: 157, no. 832) and *Sadārap* (2003: 58, no. 297). Huyse following MacKenzie's oral hypothesis, suggests \**Sadāluf*, derived from Old Iranian \**sata-(a)rdifya-* "hundert Adler habend". In the Parthian version of Narse's inscription at Paikuli, it states *s'trpdwnb'w[ntš]/ s'trp* of Dumbāwand<sup>5</sup> (Huyse 1999.2: 130-131; see also Schmitt 2016: 190, no. 434).

Concerning Brīnag / Frīnag, in ŠKZ, it can be said that the close word *Abrīnag*, is disputed as a toponym. Nevertheless, taking it for granted, the question remains where *Abrīnag* is located and how important it is since the name of Sadārap is placed in the first position among the kings. Up to now, the toponymy of it has not been known for sure. Sprengling first assumed it to be *Abaršahr* or present-day *Neišābour*. *Abaršahr* is thought to mean the 'country of Aparak' (Parni, one of the three Dahae tribes, founders of the Parthian dynasties (Sprengling 1940: 399; Henning 1958: 95 No. 1, Maricq 1965: 77; Huyse 1999.2: 130f, Chaumont 1975: 118-119, nos. 151- 154).

However, there is no consensus on the equivalence of *Abaršahr* with *Abrīnag*. As this name is mentioned in the first list of Ardaxšēr's

3. Nyberg proposed the heterogram DKR-WN, DKK-WN for *kōftan*, *kōb* (Nyberg 1988: 99, no. 16). Mashkour proposed heterogram DQRWNtn for *kōftan* and heterogram TQLWNtn for *saxtan* (1968/ 1346š: 68 and 159). MacKenzie translated *saxtan* as "weigh" (MacKenzie 1971: 74).

4. In both silver vessels it is written as a form of *plynk* and in ŠKZ it is a form of *'plynk* (the omission of the initial "p") is also seen in other proper nouns. See Skjærvø *ibid.*: 186).

5. On new-found blocks from Paikuli, there is a reference to *Satārap*, as "Lord (*xwadāy*) of Dumbāwand", in two versions of Middle Persian and Parthian, which according to Cereti and Terribili (2014: 382) can be reconstructed in this way: "(Middle Persian: ... *Y dwnb'(n) cy MROHY*, Parthian: ... *s'trp dwnb'w[ntš]*: *Satārap ī Dumbāwand xwadāy*."

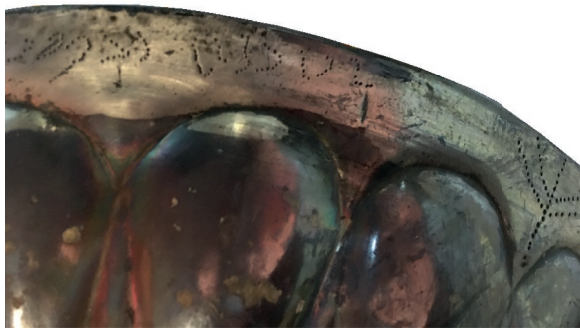


Fig. 9. W YNGDWN



Fig. 10. ymy 20 10 MCY ZWZN 2

courtiers in the ŠKZ, it shows that this obscure geographical name is important (Shahbazi 2009/ 1389š: 246 and 269-270; Nasrollahzadeh 2005/ 1384š: 134). In Šāpuhr's list of courtiers, there is no location with this geographical name, Ardaxšēr ī Nodšīragān šāh comes in first place, instead.

One of Ardaxšēr ī Pābagān's brothers was Šāpuhr šāh ī Pābagān, a local king of whom we have a coin, and his name is also mentioned in the list of Šāpuhr I's family, after Sāsān ī xwadāy and Pābag šāh and before Ardaxšēr šāhān šāh in ŠKZ. This person is mentioned in Tabari's history, as well as in Bal'ami and Ibn Athir's works, both of which were influenced by Tabari. This Šāpuhr was the eldest son of Pābag. In Bal'ami and Tabari's history, and also in Al-Nihāyah, in addition to Šāpuhr, Ardaxšēr's other brothers are referred without naming them (for details, see Shahbazi ibid: 96f, 270f.). In ŠKZ, Valaxš, the Vispuhr, Pābag's son (MP: wrd'hšy ZY BRBYTA ZY p'pk'n; Parth: wlgšy BRBYTA p'pkn; Gr. Οὐαλάσσου τουεγ βασιλέωνσιού Παβάκου) is mentioned, besides, in the list of Šāpuhr's courtiers; the fifth place belongs to him. This can be a reason that the person in question is Ardaxšēr's brother<sup>6</sup> (Nasrollahzadeh ibid: 79f).

According to Tabari's report, conquering Kirman, Ardaxšēr appointed his son of the same name as the king of Kirman (Shahbazi

ibid: 250). Šāpuhr was the most famous among Ardaxšēr's sons. His other sons may have been Pērūz, the Vispuhr, Ardaxšēr Kirmān šāh, Pērūz Tūrān šāh, Narsēh, the Vispuhr, Mihršāh king of Mēšān (see Shahbazi ibid: 250, 270-71 and 295.; See also Nasrollahzadeh ibid: 60, 98, 186 and 189 ;and aforementioned literature). There is a special order in the list of Ardaxšēr's courtiers as following: The first four persons have the title of šāh, and then come Dēnag, mother of Pābag šāh, Rūdāg, Ardaxšēr's mother, and Dēnag, Pābag's daughter, as bānbišnān bānbišn (the queens of queen). After that, the names of the family members are mentioned. At the head of Ardaxšēr's list, the names of four kings are mentioned, and then it follows immediately with his family members. Thus, leading us to assume those four kings were also Ardaxšēr's family members. According to Tabari, Ardaxšēr, king of Kirman, was son of Ardaxšēr ī Pābagān, and probably this name is the same name mentioned in the second place in Šāpuhr courtiers list (for sources see Nasrollahzadeh ibid: 60-61). Henning (1954: 43, no. 5) considers Ardaxšēr, king of Merv and Ardaxšēr, king of Saka as the sons of Ardaxšēr (for an opposite opinion, see Shahbazi ibid: 296). Being compared with Ardaxšēr, king of Kirman, the first four persons of the list with the title of šāh, can be the sons of Ardaxšēr, therefore Sadārap can be identified as Ardaxšēr's son as well (Figs. 3-12).

Weight of two vessels:

INM vessel	PGM vessel
30 stēr × 4: 120 drahm + 2= 122 drahm, 449.48 : 122: 3.68 g	20 stēr × 4: 80 drahm, 326.4 g : 80= 4.08 <sup>7</sup> g

6. The Late Shahbazi has complained that the absence of the title of šāh for Pābag/k is surprising (1389: 246); In the same inscription, only his son Šāpuhr and his daughter Dēnag are mentioned as Pābagān; But for Babak's mother, has come as the title of šāh. It seems there hasn't been the same style applied to introduce loyal family relatives or levels.



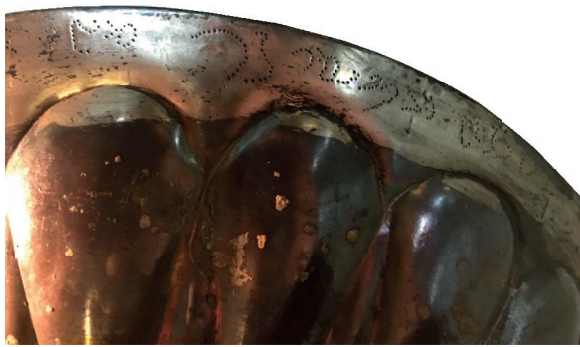


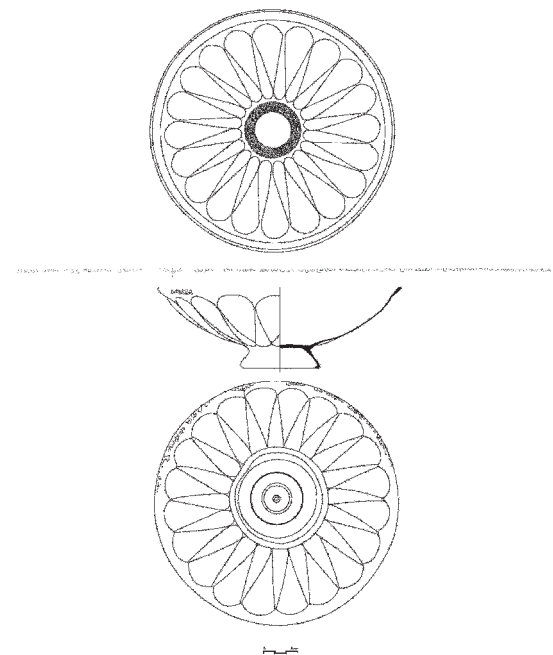
Fig. 11. YNGDWN



Fig. 12. 20 10 MCY ZWZN 2

## Conclusion

Similar inscriptions on different Sasanian silver vessels has not yet been attested. The early Sasanian period, which was mostly known through coins and inscriptions, has come now into the light even in a vaster area from the time before this dynasty up to Ardaxšēr via the advent of several silver vessels of this timeline. It is proven that the production of this type of Sasanian art began already before the Sasanian dynasty and that the so-called Sasanian lapidary writing system was adopted two centuries before the start of Sasanian rule. These two silver vessels, which are undoubtedly original, belong to the same person. In Skjærvø's reading of the J.PGM inscription, Sadārap is introduced as Ardaxšēr's brother while I believe him to be Ardaxšēr's son according to the INM vessel inscription. In ŠKZ, there is only a single reference of Sadārap in the list of Ardaxšēr's courtiers. Whether he is Ardaxšēr's brother or his son cannot yet be proven beyond a doubt. But whoever he was and which relation he had with the king, he had apparently so much power

Fig. 13. Drawing and inscription of the vessel  
Inscription design by: Marziyeh Zarekhalili

er to immortalize his name on two royal vessels, which is never seen in Sasanian history.

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7. Gyselen cited this 4.33 g. wrongly (Gyselen *ibid*: 166).

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