

# Darius Versus Xerxes: The images of Darius I And Xerxes In Old-Persian texts and in the works of Aeschylus and Herodotus

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## Abstract

© The Author(s) 2017. This article considers the development of the images of Persian Kings Darius I and Xerxes in Persia and Ancient Greece. The authors deal with self-representation of these monarchs in their inscriptions as well as perception of them in the ancient tradition represented by Aeschylus and Herodotus. They come to the conclusion that though Darius and Xerxes represented themselves as equals, they were perceived in ancient tradition as contrasting persons. It was most evident in Aeschylus' Persians who idealized Darius and represented Xerxes as the person mainly responsible for all misdeeds and failures of the Persians in their campaign against the Greeks. Herodotus contrasted Xerxes with Darius only on a few specific occasions, so the opposition between two Persian kings in his work is less evident than in Aeschylus' play. At the same time Herodotus' image of Xerxes is much more prejudiced and negative than that of Darius. However, there is a similarity in the representation of both Persian kings by Aeschylus and Herodotus: Darius is depicted as an administrator more than a warrior, Xerxes was a warrior par excellence.

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## Keywords

Aeschylus, Darius, Herodotus, History, Image, Representation, Xerxes

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