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An Unpublished Stone Fragment in Achaemenid Elamite: The Elamite Version of XPl?

In memoriam Badri Gharib (23 August 1929 – 28 July 2020)

Abstract

Description, edition, and identification of an inscribed grey limestone tablet in the reserves of the Persepolis Museum. The author argues that the fragment's text belongs to the Elamite version of XPl. In addition, some problems of the Elamite version of DNb are discussed.

Keywords

XPl, Xerxes, DNb, Persepolis, Achaemenid Elamite.

XPl, Xerxès, DNb, Persépolis, Élamite Achéménide.

Introduction

A recent project of classification and documentation of the inscribed objects and fragmentary inscriptions at the reserves of the Persepolis Museum by the staff of the “Center for Epigraphical Studies” has led researchers not only to revise the previously published epigraphs but also to find several unpublished inscriptions and tablets. As a result, we can improve our understanding of the Achaemenid royal inscriptions in the Fārs Region.

The Persepolis Museum, established by Ernst Herzfeld and his expedition team in 1931-32, holds one of the most significant collections of Achaemenid artefacts. The reserves of the Persepolis Museum includes several hundred fragmentary

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and well-preserved Achaemenid royal inscriptions and administrative tablets. In addition, there are some pre-Achaemenid cuneiform inscriptions in the museum reserves. Persepolis itself is, in fact, one of the few Achaemenid sites where numerous Achaemenid and post-Achaemenid inscriptions are located. The newly established “Center for Epigraphical Studies” is an office within the Persepolis World Heritage Site that hosts epigraphists and cuneiformists who work with the evidence from different periods located or found in the Marvdasht Plain.

For his PhD thesis,² the author studied the Elamite and Babylonian versions of the published inscriptions located or found in the Fārs Region (including the Persepolis Museum). In August 2020, after the “Classification and Documentation Project of the Achaemenid Epigraphical Evidence” began under the supervision of Dr Hamid Fadaei, the director of Persepolis World Heritage Site (PWHS), the author focused on the inscriptional archive at Persepolis. In this project, other staff of PWHS, including Mohammad Jawad Owladhusein, Mohammad Reza Rafei (the curator of Persepolis Museum), Mohammad Ali Mosallanezhad, and Mojtaba Doroodi, are cooperating to document and study the fragments comprehensively. A group of professional conservators from the Department of Preservation and Restoration (PWHS) aided the epigraphists in preserving and restoring the fragments of the inscriptions and tablets.

During the first phase of the classification and documentation project, in August and September 2020, a dark grey stone fragment was found which bears Achaemenid Elamite cuneiform signs on its three preserved surfaces. The minimum thickness of the fragment, the edge of a stone tablet, is 7.5 cm; the maximum thickness of the fragment is 11.5 cm. Other characteristics such as the material (i.e., dark grey limestone) and the average space between the lines (2.4 cm) confirm that it belongs to a stone tablet similar to those attributed to Xerxes found at and around Persepolis and Pasargadae (XPf, XPh/XMa and XPl).³ Along with two other limestone fragments (PM 2932 and PM 2851),⁴ this fragment confirms the existence of more stone tablets at Persepolis.⁵

² “Studies in Achaemenid Royal Inscriptions: Classifications, Royal Scribes, Literacy, and Audiences,” defended on 24.06.2020 at the Institut für Iranistik, Freie Universität Berlin.

³ The maximum thickness of other well-known stone tablets of Xerxes found in the Garrison Quarter (Schmidt, 1957, p. 51a), the Harem (Herzfeld, 1932, p. 117), the northern quarter of Persepolis (Gharib, 1968, p. 54) and Pasargadae (Stronach, 1978, p. 152) varies from 10 cm. (XPl OP.) to 11.8 cm (XPf OP.).

⁴ These two limestone fragments contain some Achaemenid Elamite signs, which could belong to two further stone tablets.

⁵ All fragments found at the reserves of Persepolis Museum have been listed by the author and added to the final version of his PhD thesis (Appendix A), which will be published in 2022.



As shown in Figure 1, the fragment contains parts of nine lines on three surfaces (3+4+2). The surviving text confirms that the surface with three lines is the obverse: the first line includes part of the divine name *Uramašda* and the word *akka*, and the second line includes another use of *akka* and the beginning of the word *bešda*. The preserved edge is therefore the upper edge of the tablet, i.e., the last two lines of the inscription, and the four lines on the other surface are the last part of the reverse.

The inscription begins with the so-called *Gott-Formel* (see Hauri, 1973, pp. 20-23), but the other remaining parts do not fit the Elamite version of XPh (see Cameron, 1959), so the author's initial guess that it was a copy of "XPh El." is ruled out (see below).

Analysis of the remaining parts of the inscription and comparison to what is reflected in the Old Persian and Akkadian versions of XPf made clear that the inscription can be neither XPf nor XPh. One of the few remaining possibilities is that the fragment belongs to an Elamite version of XPl, hitherto unattested. The current article tries to determine if that is so.

The Find-Spot of the Fragment

According to the inventory of the Persepolis Museum,⁶ the fragment was found in 1949 (1328 AH), south of the Palace of Xerxes (west wing of the so-called Harem building). According to the report of Ali Sami (1952, pp. 45-48), his excavation team worked at the southern part of the Palace of Xerxes in 1949,⁷ but there is no detailed report of these excavations. The published finds are limited to some pieces of columns, some golden decorations, and some pieces of the reliefs (ibid., pp. 47-48). There is no indication that he found any inscribed objects. Nevertheless, although the inventory attributes the discovery of the fragment to "Schmidt's excavations," it is likely that as Sami's staff found this piece they might have thought that it was already excavated by Schmidt and deposited at the "West Wing" to be studied later. In general, the old inventory from the 1960s contains inaccuracies in describing find-spots and dates of finding of published inscriptions. The problem of attributing the fragment under discussion to the Oriental Institute excavations is that it does not have a field number, as expected if Schmidt and his team had found it (and as hundreds of other fragments at the museum have).

⁶ Old inventory no. 255, find-spot: a black inscribed stone fragment bearing cuneiform signs, 1949 (1328), south of the palace of Xerxes, excavations of Schmidt.

⁷ Needless to say, E. Schmidt had already excavated this specific part of the Terrace (Schmidt, 1953, pp. 258-263).



Alternatively, the fragment PM 331 could have been found by some colleagues or even locals either at the Terrace or in the vicinity of Persepolis and handed to the curator of the museum at that time. It was usual to give such pieces to the curator without exact information about the date and actual find-spot in previous decades. If this was the case, a possible find-spot outside of the Terrace would be the vicinity of the find-spot of XPl OP in the northern quarter of the Terrace (for the find-spot see Gharib, 1968, p. 54 and cf. Hinz, 1969, p.45) or at the Fratraka temple where other fragments of XPl were found by Herzfeld (Herzfeld, 1938, p. 4).

Does the Fragment Belong to XPf or XPh?

Since elements of the *Gott-Formel* (such as *Uramašda*, *akka*, and *bešda*) are found on the obverse side (see Fig. 1a), the stone tablets of Xerxes, XPf, XPh, and XPl, immediately spring to mind as parallels.

XPh, however, is an imperfect parallel.

a. (l.2): The sequence *ak-ka₄ be-iš-da* does not occur in the *Gott-Formel* of XPh El. There, the formula reads ^{AN}na-ap-pi ir-šá-ir-ra ^{AN}u-ra-maš-da *ak-ka₄* ^{AŠ}mu-ru-un hi *be-iš-da ak-ka₄* ^{AN}ki-ik hu-be *be-iš-da ak-ka₄* ^{DIŠ}LÚ^{MEŠ}-ir-ra-ir *be-iš-da ak-ka₄* ši-ia-ti-iš *be-iš-da* ^{DIŠ}LÚ^{MEŠ}-ir-ra-na.

b. (l.3): The remaining signs *ku* and *ud* are probably from *ku-ud-da* “and, furthermore” which is not attested in the first part of XPh, but appears first only in line 19.

c. (l.1’): Neither *te* nor *ul* is attested in the second part of the reverse side of XPh.

d. (l.5’-6’): Neither the sequence of *ku-da* nor the word *ku-ud-da* (in the last line) finds a parallel on the upper edge of XPh El., viz, *ku-ud-da hi* ^{AŠ}da-a-ia-’ú ¹iš hu-be ^{DIŠ}ú ^{AN}u-ra-maš-da in su-da-ma-an hu-be-da ^{AN}u-ra-maš-da hu du-nu-iš-ni.⁸

Until now, only two versions of XPf, Old Persian and Babylonian, have been discovered, raising the possibility that PM 331 comes from a hitherto unattested Elamite version.

To consider this possibility, the author has reconstructed the first and the last paragraphs of an Elamite version on the basis Old Persian and Babylonian elements of the text that have Elamite counterparts in other inscriptions of Xerxes inscriptions at Persepolis:

⁸

The attestation of *ku-ud-da* is at the beginning of line 49 (the first line of the upper edge) of XPh El. and cannot lead us to conclude that the upper edge of PM 331 is like the same lines of XPh El.



XPf

§1.

Old Persian (Obv. 1-6):

b-g : v-z-r-k : a-u-r-m-z-d-a : h-y : i-m-a-m : b-u-m¹-i-m : a-d-a : h-y : a-v-m : a-s-m-a-n-m : a-d-a : h-y : m-r-t-i-y-m : a-d-a : h-y : š-i-y-t-i-m : a-d-a : m-r-t-i-y-h-y-a : h-y : x-š-y-a-r-š-a-m : x-š-a-y-θ-i-y-m : a-k^u-u-n-u-š :

Babylonian (Obv. 1-4):

DINGIR GAL-ú^d a-ḫu-ru-ma-az-da-’a šá qaq-qa-ru a-ga-’a id-din-nu šá AN-e an-nu-ú-tu id-din-nu šá a-me-lu-ú-tú id-din-nu šá dum-qí a-na^{lu} ŪG^{mes} id-din-nu šá a-na^m ḫi-ši-’i-ar-ši LUGAL ib-nu-ú

*Elamite:

^{AN}na-ap ir-šá-ir-ra ^{AN}u-ra-maš-da ak-ka⁴ ^{AŠ}mu-ru-un hi be-iš-da ak-ka⁴ ^{AN}ki-ik hu-(ib-) be be-iš-da ak-ka⁴ ^{DIŠ}LÚ^{MEŠ}-ir-ra-ir be-iš-da ak-ka⁴ ši-ia-ti-iš be-iš-da ^{DIŠ}LÚ^{MEŠ}-(ir-)ra-na ak-ka⁴ ^{DIŠ}ik-še-ir-šá ^{DIŠ}EŠŠANA ir hu-ut-taš-da

§5.

Old Persian (Rev. 43-46 and Upper Edge 47-48):

θ-a-t-i-y : x-š-y-a-r-š-a : x-š-a-y-θ-i-y : m-a-m : a-u-r-m-z-d-a : p-a-t^u-v : u-t-m-i-y : x-š-ç-m : u-t-a : t-y : m-n-a : k-r-t-m : u-t-a : t-y-m-i-y : p-i-ç : k-r-t-m : a-v-š-c-i-y : a-u-r-m-z-d-a : p-a-t^u-v

Babylonian (Rev. 34-36 and Upper Edge 37-38):

^mḫi-ši-’i-ar-ši LUGAL i-qab-bi a-na-ku^d a-ḫu-ru-ma-az-da-’a li-iš-šur-an-ni it-ti LUGAL-ú-tu-ja u šá a-na-ku e-pu-uš u šá AD-ú-a i-pu-uš ul-lu-ú^d a-ḫu-ru-ma-az-da-’a li-iš-šur

*Elamite:

na-an-ri ^{DIŠ}ik-še-ir-šá ^{DIŠ}EŠŠANA ^{DIŠ}ú^{AN} u-ra-maš-da un nu-iš-gi-iš-ni ku-ud-da ^{AŠ}su-un-ku-mu-mi⁹ ku-ud-da ap-pa ^{DIŠ}ú hu-ud-da-ra ku-ud-da ap-pa ^{DIŠ}ad-da-da hu-ut-taš-da hu-be-da ^{AN}u-ra-maš-da nu-iš-gi-iš-ni

The first line of PM 331 could be a counterpart of this version of XPf: [^{AN}na-ap ir-šá-ir-ra] [^{AN}u]-’ra¹-maš-da ak-[ka⁴] [^{AŠ}mu-ru-un hi be-iš-da]. In the second line, however, [ak]-’ka⁴ be-’iš¹-’da¹, fits neither XPf nor any of Xerxes’ other inscriptions at Persepolis except for DNb/XPl (see below). Similarly, in the third line ’ku¹-’ud¹-[da] has no attested parallel in the *Gott-Formel* of the Achaemenid royal inscriptions of the Fārs Region except for DNb/XPl (see below).

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Or ^{AŠ}EŠŠANA-mu-mi, which is plausible, although not attested.



On the reverse of PM 331, if the damaged *u* and well-preserved *ra* signs of the third line are remains of ^[AN]u¹-*ra*-[*maš-da*], the text could be comparable to the first ^{AN}*u-ra-maš-da* at the beginning of paragraph 5 of the reconstructed Elamite version of XPf, and *da* and *ra* in the following line could be the last signs of *hu-ud-da-ra* (OP *k-r-t-m*, Bab. *e-pu-uš*). But if that is so, then the words between *Uramašda* and *huddara* should be: (^{AN}*u-ra-maš-da*) *un nu-iš-gi-iš-ni ku-ud-da* ^{AS}*su-un-ku-uk-mi ku-ud-da ap-pa* ^{DIS}*ú* (*hu-ud-da-ra*), and lack of space makes this impossible.

It is also impossible to suppose that the third *ku-ud-da* in paragraph 5 of XPf *El. occurs before *hu-ud-da-ra*, i.e. **ku-ud-da hu-ud-da-ra* instead of expected **hu-ud-da-ra ku-ud-da* (OP *k-r-t-m* : *u-t-a*). In addition, the first line of the upper edge contains the signs *ku* and *da*, which cannot be fitted to the last paragraph of the reconstructed XPf El.

Hence, the fragment is clearly not from an Elamite version of XPh and it cannot be realistically reconciled with a likely phrasing of an Elamite version of XPf.

PM 331: The Elamite Version of XPl?

To determine if the fragment contains an Elamite version of XPl requires focus on the Old Persian version of XPl (see Herzfeld, 1938, pp.4-6, Tafel V, Gharib, 1968, and Hinz, 1969, p. 45) and the Elamite version of the closely related DNb (see Hinz, 1969, pp. 53-62), to see if the elements of the remaining part of the stone tablet fit what one could expect from a possible Elamite version of XPl.

The following arguments support ascription of the fragment to a hitherto unknown Elamite version of XPl:

- a. the sequence *ak-ka₄ be-iš-da* (l. 2) which fits OP *haya adā* (XPl OP 1 see above);
- b. the possible attestation of the Elamite translation of the word “a-s-b-a-r” (DNb OP 41f., 44, 45; XPl OP 46, 48, 50) in the first preserved line of the reverse side (l.1’), i.e., ^[DIS]te¹-¹ul¹-[*nu-ra/uk?*] (see below);
- c. the attestation of *ku-ud-da* (OP *utā*) in the last line of the upper edge (l.6’) fits the expected Elamite version of the last paragraph of XPl OP (55-56), *m-a-m : a-u-r-m-z-d-a : p-a-t^u-u-v : u-t-a : t-y-m-i-y : k-r-t-m* (see below).

No Elamite version of XPl has been found, and the Elamite version of the closely related DNb is heavily damaged. The edition given by W. Hinz (1969) relies heavily on the Old Persian and Babylonian versions (the last one edited by R. Borger) for restoring broken parts. It is not entirely reliable and not complete. The problem is



particularly acute in the case of paragraphs 1, 9, and 10 (DNb El. 1-4 and 27-34), which are crucial for considering the beginning and end of PM 331.¹⁰

To give an example, the first line and the beginning of the second line of DNb El. were reconstructed by Hinz (ibid, p. 56) as follows:

1.^{AN}na-[ap ir]-šá-[ir]-ra¹ ^{AN}u-ra-maš-da ak-ka₄ li-iš-da [pír-ra-šá-um hi?] ra¹-
pa¹ li- 2. iš-da zí-ia-ma-ak-ma-na

Such a reading of the first sentence seems to be based on DNb OP (1-2):

b-g : v¹-z¹-r¹-k : a-u-r¹-m¹-z¹-d¹-a : h¹-y : a¹-d¹-d¹-[a] : [i]-m :
f¹-[r]-š¹-m : t-y¹ : v- i¹-n¹-t¹-i¹-[y :]

A re-examination of the first two lines of DNb El. with the help of the photographs taken on 17th of September 2021 by M. A. Mosallanezhad (Fig. 2), reveals that what Hinz read as *li-iš-da*, in the middle of the first line after *ak-ka₄*, is not correct. There is only one sign between *ak-ka₄* and the following *pír-ra¹-[šá-um]* (which is, in fact, partially preserved). The sign following *ak-ka₄* seems to be *hi*: a horizontal wedge followed by three more horizontal wedges. As a result, the first part of the first line may be read *hi pír-ra¹-[šá-um li-iš-da]*. In this, *hi pír-ra¹-[šá-um]* would represent a word-by-word rendering of the OP *ima frašam*.

Next, the second part of the phrase according to Hinz's edition, *ap-pa li-iš-da zí-ia-ma-ak-ma-na* has its own problems:

a. The other versions have a phrase with following elements: “who”+“created”+“this marvel”+ “which”+ “(is) seen” (DNb OP 1f. *haya adadā ima frašam taya vajinatai*; DNb Bab. 1f. *šá id-din-nu bu-nu a-ga-a šá in-nam-ma-ri*). The Elamite version contains, according to Hinz, the following elements: “who” (*ak-ka₄*) + “this marvel” (*hi pír-ra-šá-um*) + “created” (*li-iš-da*) + “which” (*ap-pa*) + “created” (*li-iš-da*) + “(is) to see” (*zí-ia-ma-ak-ma-na*).

b. It is not clear how many signs were carved between the word *pír-ra¹-[šá-um]* and *li*, the last sign of the first line. Just before *li*, there are traces of two vertical wedges that could be a part of *ap-pa*, but other possibilities also exist. In any case, there does not seem to be enough space for the verb *li-iš-da* between *pír-ra¹-[šá-um]* and the aforementioned vertical wedges. Yet another point is that the surface damage at this spot may be ancient and therefore the space may have been left blank, as one can observe elsewhere in DNb El. (see the space between cuneiform signs marked in white in Fig. 2b).



c. Considering the remaining signs and spacing, a reconstruction with a single verb *li-iš-da* is possible, i.e., *ak-ka₄ hi pír-ra¹-[šá-um] ap¹-pa¹ li¹-iš¹-da¹ [zí-ia-ma-ak]-ma-na¹*. This, however, makes little sense in syntactical terms.

d. Finally, Hinz's restoration *zi¹-ia¹-[ma-ak]-ma-na* is also problematic. Although the new photographs (see Fig. 2) show the traces of *zí*, (second) *ma*, and *na*, there is no space for the suggested sequence *ia¹-[ma-ak]*, especially if one considers the “natural cracks” of the panel (see the space between the signs *ir* and *ra* in the first line and *ad* and *du* in the third line). Also, the form *zi¹-ia¹-[ma-ak]-ma-na*, apparently based on *zí-ia-ma-ak* (Conj. IIm form of *ziya-*) in XPa 15, poses morphological problems such as the inexplicable repetition of the suffix *-ma* (see below).¹¹

A further series of problems emerges when comparing the new photographs with Hinz's reading of paragraphs 9 and 10 of DNb El. The same is true for the reading given by Vallat (1977, p. 157) of the same passage, lines 32-34.

Hinz (1969, p. 58) reads paragraph 10 (the second half of line 32, and all of lines 33-34) as:

32. [...]

33. [.....]-ma ku-ud-[da ...za-u]-mi-in ^{AN}u-ra-[maš-da-na ap-pa hu-ud]-da-

34. ra i be-ut-ni i-[da-ka₄ hu-ud-da-ra ap-pa] ^{AN}[u-ra-maš-da ^{Diš}ú uk-ku da-áš]-da

According to Hinz, line 32 is illegible and, although some traces are visible, restoration seems at present impossible. According to the OP version (DNb OP 45-46) the following elements should be present in line 32 of DNb El.: “these” (OP *imā*; El. *i* or *hi*), “skills” (OP *ūnarā*; El. *be-pi-x-āš*/MEŠ¹, see below), “which” (*ap-pa*), “Ahuramazadā” (^{AN}*u-ra-maš-da*), “upon me” (^{Diš}ú *uk-ku*).

Next, the reading *be-ut-ni* (in lines 34 and 36) proposed by Hinz (corresponding to OP *ūnarā*) seems to be unlikely. The new photographs (see Fig. 3b-c) confirm that the word begins with *be*, but what follows is a sign similar to *pi* (traces of a horizontal wedge can be seen after the vertical wedge) and not *ut* (cf. *ud* in the third line, Fig. 2b). The third sign contains at least two horizontal wedges (probably a *hi* or a deformed *ni*).¹² The last sign of the word has the following elements: a vertical wedge and three

¹¹ See Hinz and Koch, 1987, p. 1309. The problem of spacing might be resolved by assuming *mak₀* (KUR) for *ma-ak* but there is not a single attestation of the value *mak₀* in the Achaemenid royal inscriptions in the Fārs Region.

¹² However, the third sign of the same word in line 36 contains at least some elements of *ni*, but there is a horizontal wedge on the left side of the sign which makes it difficult to conclude whether the third sign of the word is *ni* or *hi* or even other possibilities.



horizontal wedges. It can be either an áš or a MEŠ, indicating that the word might even be a loanword or a logogram.

A comparison between Hinz's reading and the new photographs results in a revised transliteration as:

33. ʾin¹ ʾnu¹ ʾti¹ ʾx¹ ʾbaʔ¹ ʾku¹-ʾud¹-[da x-x-x-(x) za-u]-ʾmi¹-ʾin¹ ʾAN¹[u-ra]-ʾmaš¹-[da-na] ʾap¹-ʾpa¹ [hu-ud]-ʾda¹-

34. ra i ʾbe¹-ʾpi¹-ʾx¹-ʾáš/MEŠ¹ [i-da-ka₄ hu-ud-da-ra ap-pa^{AN}u-ra-maš-da^{Dišú}] ʾuk¹-[ku da-áš]-ʾda¹

This revision must be provisional as long the inscription has not been collated from the rock.

Happily, the last paragraph of XPl OP (l. 55-56), which appears to correspond to the last part of the first line and the whole second line of the upper edge of the fragment under discussion, is less complicated. Its restoration is greatly aided by known parallels of the OP sentence *mām Auramazdā pātu utā tayamaḡ kṛtam* and its Elamite versions in other inscriptions of Xerxes at Persepolis, i.e., XPc and XPd:

OP m-a-m : a-u-r-m-z-d-a : p-a-t^u-u-v : ... u-t-a : t-y-m-i-y : k-r-t-m¹³

El. Dišú^{AN}u-ra-maš-da (Dišú^u-)un nu-iš-gi-iš-ni ... ku-ud-da ap-pa hu-ud-da-ra¹⁴

Edition

Museum No.: PM 331

Box (museum reserves): 21

Previous inventory no.: 255

Find-spot (according to the Museum Inventory): south of the Palace of Xerxes (west part of the Harem)

Date of discovery (according to the Museum Inventory): 1949 (1328)

Dimensions: 9x9.4x11.5 (min. thickness 7.5, max. thickness 11.5)

Weight: 1.480 kg

Material support: stone tablet (grey limestone)

Average space between lines: 2.4

Language: Achaemenid Elamite

Group: XPl (?)

¹³ XPc⁰¹⁻⁰² 12-13; XPc⁰³ 20-22; XPd⁰¹⁻⁰² 17-19; XPd⁰³⁻⁰⁴ 25-28.

¹⁴ XPc⁰¹ 11-12; XPc⁰² 11-13; XPc⁰³ 19-22; XPd⁰¹⁻⁰² 11-12; XPd⁰³ 20-23.



Textual Analysis

Transliteration

Obverse

1. [ANna-ap ir-šá-ir-ra] [ANu]-ra¹-maš-da ak-[ka₄] [hi pír-ra²-šá²-um² ap-pa be-iš-]
2. [da zí-ia-ma²-na² ak]-ra⁴ be-iš¹-da¹ [ši-ia-ti-um^{DIŠ}LÚ^{MEŠ}-ra-na]
3. [ak-ka₄ kur-ra-ad-du-um] ku¹-ud¹-[da har-ma-iš-tam^{DIŠ}ik-še-ir-šá]
4. [DIŠEŠŠANA uk-ku da-iš-da-ra ...]

About 18 lines missing

Lower Edge

Two lines missing.

Reverse

About 18 lines missing.

- 1'. [x-x-x-(x) ku-ud-da^{DIŠ}] te¹-ul¹-[nu-ra/uk² i(hi) be²-pí²-x-x ap-pa^{ANu}-]
- 2'. [ra-maš-da^{DIŠ}ú uk-ku da]-iš¹-da¹ [ku-ud-da x-x-x-(x)]
- 3'. [x-x-x-(x) za-u-mi-in^{AN}] u¹-ra-[maš-da-na x-x-x-x-(x)]
- 4'. [x-x-x-(x) ap-pa hu-ud]-da¹-ra [i(hi) be²-pí²-x-x i-da-ka₄ hu-ud-da-ra]

Upper Edge

- 5'. [ap-pa^{ANu}-ra-maš-da^{DIŠ}ú uk]-ku da-[iš-da^{DIŠ}ú ANu-ra-maš-da^{DIŠ}ú-]
- 6'. [un nu-iš-gi-iš-ni] ku-ud-da [ap-pa^{DIŠ}ú hu-ud-da-ra]

Synoptic Presentation

OP 1f. b-g : v-z-r-k : a-u-r-m-z-d-a : h-y : a-d-a : i-m-{m} : f-r-š-m : t-y :

El. 1f. ANna-ap ir-šá-ir-ra ANu-ra-maš-da ak-ka₄ hi pír-ra²-šá²-um² ap-pa be-iš-da

OP 2f. v-i-n-t-i-y : h-y : a-d-a : š-i-y-a-t-i-m : m-r-t-i-y-h-y-a :

El. 2. zí-ia-ma²-na² ak-ka₄ be-iš-da ši-ia-ti-um^{DIŠ}LÚ^{MEŠ}-ra-na

OP 3ff. h-y : x-r-t^u-u-m : u-t-a : a-r^u-u-v-s-t-m : u-p-r-i-y : x-š-y-a-r-š-a-m : x-š-a-y-θ-i-y-m : n-i-y-s-y :

El. 3f. ak-ka₄ kur-ra-ad-du-um ku-ud-da har-ma-iš-tam^{DIŠ}ik-še-ir-šá DIŠEŠŠANA uk-ku da-iš-da-ra^{DIŠ}ik-še-ir-šá



OP 49f. u-t-a : p-s-t-i-š : u-t-a : a-s-b-a-r :

El. 1'. ku-ud-da x-x-x-(x) ku-ud-da ^{DIŠ}te-ul-nu-ra/uk?

OP 50 ff. i-m-a : u-n-r-a : t-y-a : a-u-r-m-z-d-a : u-p-r-i-y : m-a-m : n-i-y-s-y : u-t-a-dⁱ-i-š : a-t-a-v-y-m : b-r-t-n-i-y :

El. 2'ff. i(hi) be²-pi²-x-x ap-pa ^{AN}u-ra-maš-da ^{DIŠ}ú uk-ku da-iš-da ku-ud-da x-x-x-(x) x-x-x-(x)

OP 52ff. v-š-n-a : a-u-r-m-z-d-h-a : t-y-m-i-y : k-r-t-m : i-m-a-b-i-š : u-n-r-a-b-i-š : a-k^u-u-n-v-m :

El. 3'f. za-u-mi-in ^{AN}u-ra-maš-da-na x-x-x-x-(x) x-x-x-(x) ap-pa hu-ud-da-ra i(hi) be-pi-x-x i-da-ka₄ hu-ud-da-ra

OP 54f. t-y-a : m-a-m : a-u-r-m-z-d-a : u-p-r-i-y : n-i-y-s-y :

El. 5' ap-pa ^{AN}u-ra-maš-da ^{DIŠ}ú uk-ku da-iš-da

OP 55f. m-a-m : a-u-r-m-z-d-a : p-a-t^u-u-v : u-t-a : t-y-m-i-y : k-r-t-m

El. 5'f. ^{DIŠ}ú ^{AN}u-ra-maš-da ^{DIŠ}ú-un nu-iš-gi-iš-ni ku-ud-da ap-pa ^{DIŠ}ú hu-ud-da-ra

Translation

1. [The great god] Ahuramazdā who [created this (which is) marvellous which]

2. can be seen], who created [happiness for man]

3-4. [who wisdom] and [ability upon Xerxes, the king bestowed ...]

...

1'. [and on foot and] as a rider. [These (are) skills which]

2'. [Ahuramazdā upon me] bestowed, [and]

3'. [... with the effort of] Ahuramazdā [...]

4'. [...that] done [with these skills...]

5'. [which Ahuramazdā] upon [me] bestowed. [Me Ahuramazdā]

6'. [may protect] and [what I built]

Commentary

1. *ir-šá-ir-ra*: This is the most common orthography in the whole corpus of the Achaemenid royal inscriptions in the Fārs Region (at least 76 attestations of such a form).

hi pír-ra²-šá²-um²: word for word translation of OP *ima frašam* attested in DNb OP 1 and XPl OP 1f. As pointed out above, DNb El. appears to have the same order, i.e., *hi*



pír-¹ra¹-[šá-um]. Alternatively one might assume *pír-šá-um* if there were two verbs *be-iš-da* (DNb *li-iš-da*) in the first sentence.

be-iš-da: OP *adā*. Despite the attestation of *li-iš-da* in DNb El. (OP *adadā*). The attestation of *be-¹iš¹-¹da¹* in the second line confirms the use of the same word in the first line of the fragment.

2. *zī-ia-ma-na*: OP *vāinatai* (DNb OP 2, XPa OP 16, XPl OP 2). This reconstruction is based on DNb El. 2 *zī¹-¹ia¹-[Ø]-ma-na* and assumes the infinitive of Conjugation III with auxiliary *-ma-* in “purpose clauses” (see Stolper, 2004, p. 88 with references), “for seeing” hence “to be seen.”¹⁵

ši-ia-ti-um: the same form occurs in DNa El. 3, DNb El. 2, and XPC⁰¹⁻⁰² 3, XPC⁰³ 5. The most frequent form in Xerxes’ inscriptions at Persepolis is, however, *ši-ia-ti-iš* (XPa 3, XPb 4, XPd⁰¹⁻⁰² 3, XPd⁰³ 5, XPh 3).

^{DIŠ}LÚ^{MEŠ}-*ra-na*: The reading is based on a restoration in DNb El., where the narrow space available does not allow for a longer form. The form ^{DIŠ}LÚ^{MEŠ}-*ra-na* is known elsewhere (XPa 4), although the most frequent attested form is ^{DIŠ}LÚ^{MEŠ}-*ir-ra-na* (DNa 4, DNb 2, XPb 4, XPC⁰¹⁻⁰² 3, XPC⁰³ 5, XPd⁰¹ 3, XPd⁰² 3f., XPd⁰³ 6, XPh 3).

3. *kur-ra-ad-du-um*: OP *xratum* (XPl. 3); *xraθum* (DNb. 3). The reconstructed form is based on the same word in DNb El. (l.3) *kur-[ra-ad-du]-um* (see Fig 2b).

har-ma-iš-tam₆: OP *aruvastam* (DNb, XPl. 4). The reconstructed form is based on the same word in DNb El. (l.3) *har-ma-¹iš¹-¹tam₆¹* (see Fig 2b).

1'. ^{DIŠ}*te-ul-nu-ra/uk²*: OP *asabāra* (DNb, XPl. passim). Due to the damage in DNb El., it was impossible to find the Elamite rendering of the word. The remaining signs of *te* and *ul* in the first preserved line of the reverse side of the fragment indicate that the word should have contained at least five signs. How to reconstruct the Elamite rendering of OP *asabāra* is another challenging issue. The attestation of ^{DIŠ}*te-ul-nu-ip* in DB El. can be helpful in this regard (see Hinz and Koch, 1987, p. 320) The problem is that this form can be analysed as [tel.nu.(k).p] or as [tel.nu.p], the first being a II.Conj. middle voice form, the second an agent noun. According to W.F.M. Henkelman (personal communication) it should be first option, which means that the singular would

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The administrative terms *šarama(n)na* and *dama(n)na* used in the Persepolis administrative tablets are good examples of the same structure: “III. Conj. supines (or to-infinitives), with the modal extension *-ma* attached directly to the verbal root: [šara.ma.na] and [da.ma.na]” (Garrison and Henkelman, 2020, pp. 183f). In the context of Achaemenid royal inscriptions, XV (23-24) could be a helpful example to show the same structure: “^{DIŠ}ú še-ra ^{AŠ}DUB^{MEŠ} tal-li-ma-na (‘I ordered to write the inscription/ the inscription to be written’)” (ibid).



be *telnuk*, [tel.nu.k.ø] (the second option would give *telnura*, [tel.nu.r] for the singular).¹⁶ Hence, there are two plausible options in reconstruction this word in XPl. El.: either ^{Diš}*te-ul-nu-uk* or ^{Diš}*te-ul-nu-ra*. As mentioned above, the signs *te* and *ul* are critical elements in reconstructing the text according to XPl/DNb.

i: OP *imā* (DNb 45, XPl. 50). The reading *i* is based on the attestation of the same form in DNb El. 34, 36, but El. *hi* is also attested corresponding to OP *imā* in the Elamite versions of DNa (13) and XPh (11).

2'. *da-iš-da*: OP *niyasaya* (DNb 5, 46, 49; XPl. 5, 51, 59). The well-preserved signs *iš-da* in the third line of the reverse side together with the preserved sign *da* in the first line of upper edge compel this reading, *da-áš-da* attested in the Elamite version of DNb: ¹*da*¹-¹*áš*¹-¹*da*¹-¹*ra*¹ (3); [*da-áš*]-¹*da*¹ (34).

5'f. ^{Diš}*ú-un*: reconstructed on the basis of ^{Diš}*ú-un* in DNa El. (42), and XPc El. (XPc⁰¹ 11; XPc⁰² 12; XPc⁰³ 20). However, there are other possible forms like *ú-un* (DPf 20) and *un* (DPh 7, XPa 17, XPb 17, XPh 47).

Concluding Remarks

This preliminary study of a stone fragment deposited at the museum reserves of Persepolis for decades sheds light on the tablet's content, and reconstructs the text of the fragment as far as possible.

All textual evidence supports the idea that the fragment here discussed could belong to an Elamite version of XPl and not any other known stone tablets such as XPf or XPh. At the same time, the remaining parts of the fragment show similarities and but also some differences from the Elamite version of DNb.

These results demonstrate that documenting and studying the entire corpus of published and unpublished inscriptions, especially the fragments and inscriptions kept in the reserves of the Persepolis Museum, remains a worthwhile exercise.

¹⁶ *telnup* can also be comparable to the Elamite term *šarnuppu*, attested in a Neo-Babylonian letter (ABL 281 rev. 12, 15, 18). According to M. W. Stolper (1978, pp. 263f.), **šarnup* can be analysed as “verb-stem *šar(a)*- + formative *-nu-* + animate plural marker *-p*”, meaning “who are entitled to apportionment.” As a result, one might consider the exact formation of the word *telnup*, i.e., ME verbal stem *tel(a)*- + *-nu-* auxiliary + animate plural marker *-p*.



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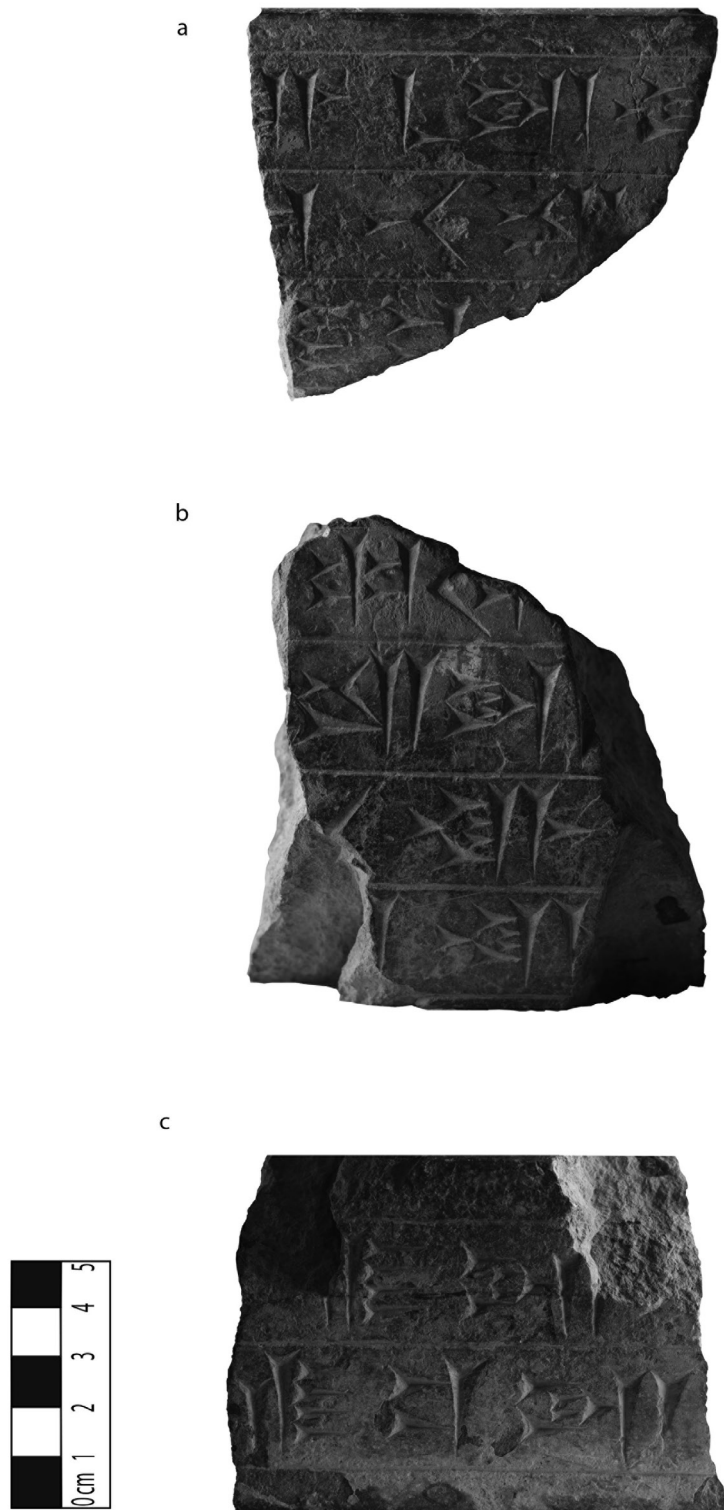


Fig. 1. Three sides of the fragment PM 331: a. obverse, b. reverse, c. upper edge (Photograph by M. A. Mosallanezhad).

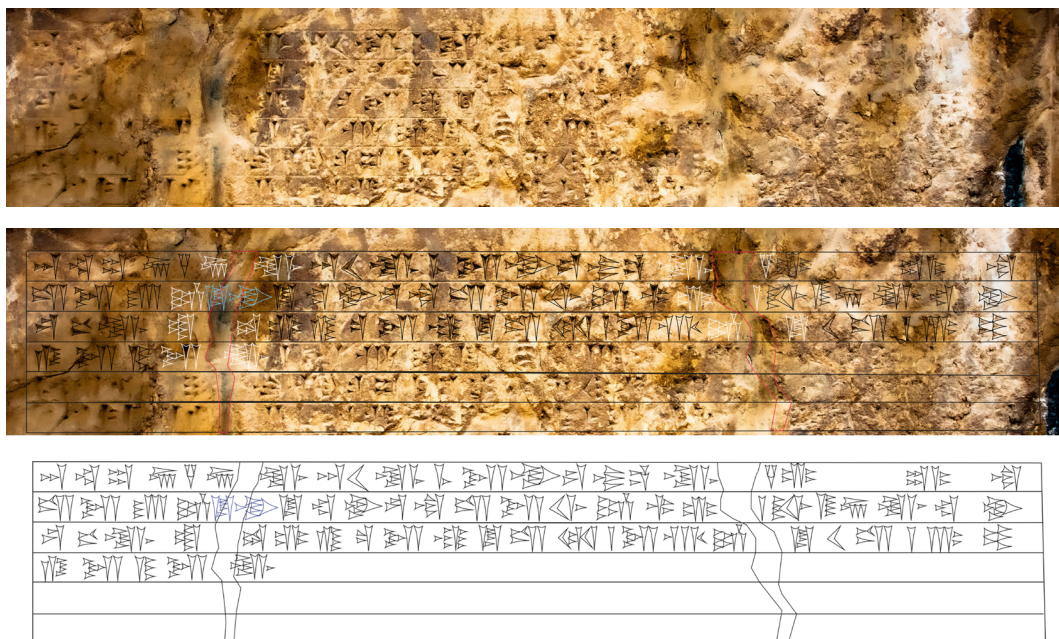


Fig. 2. a. photograph of lines 1-6 of the Elamite version of DNb (Photograph by M. A. Mosallanezhad), b. cuneiform signs on the first paragraph (two cracks are marked with red colour), c. drawing of cuneiform signs (Drawing by Soheil Delshad).



Fig. 3. a. photograph of lines 30-37 of the Elamite version of DNb (Photograph by M. A. Mosallanezhad), b. cuneiform signs on lines 33-34 (five further signs representing the same word on line 34 can be seen on the line 36), c. drawing of cuneiform signs (Drawing by Soheil Delshad)

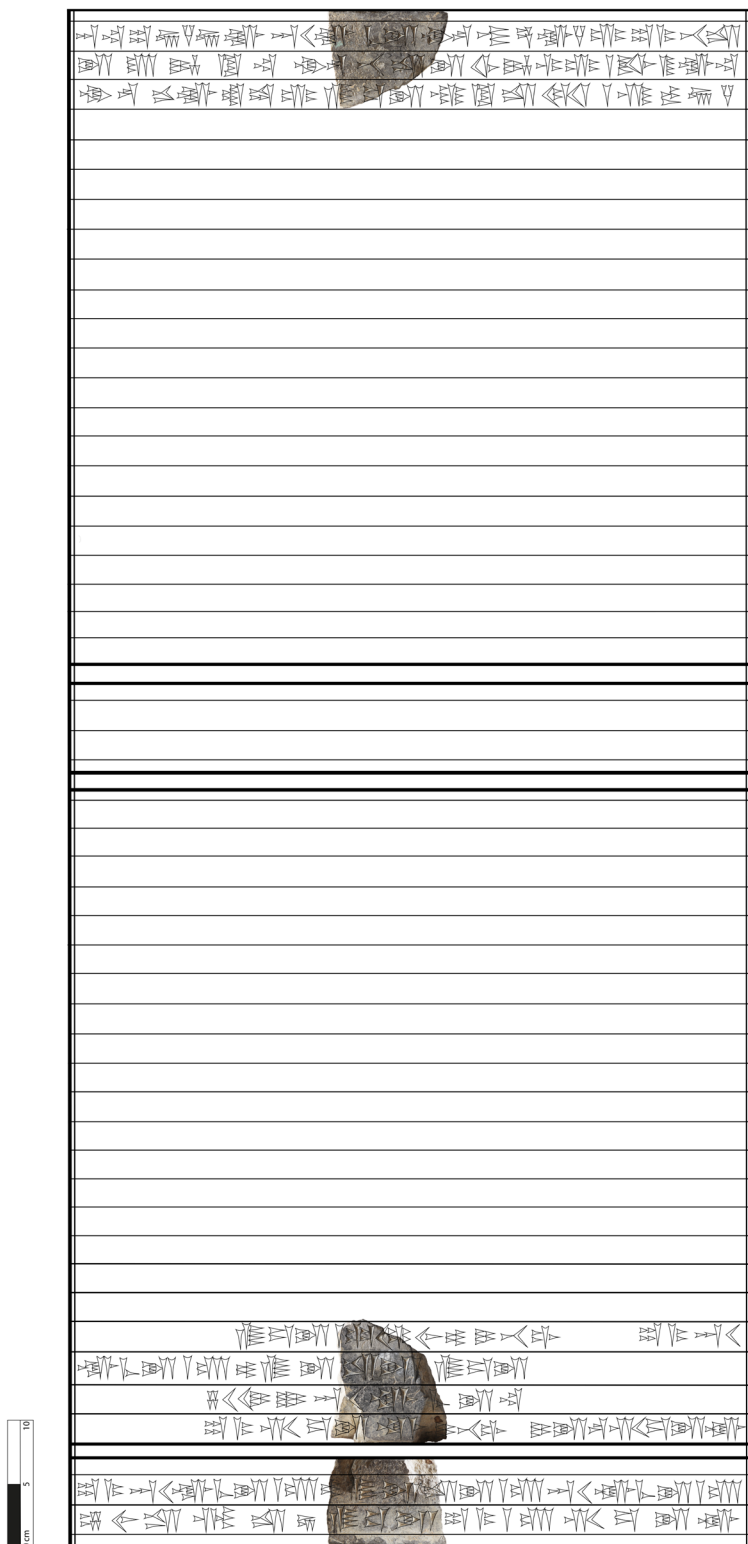


Fig. 4. Locating the fragment in the stone tablet (Drawing by Soheil Delshad).

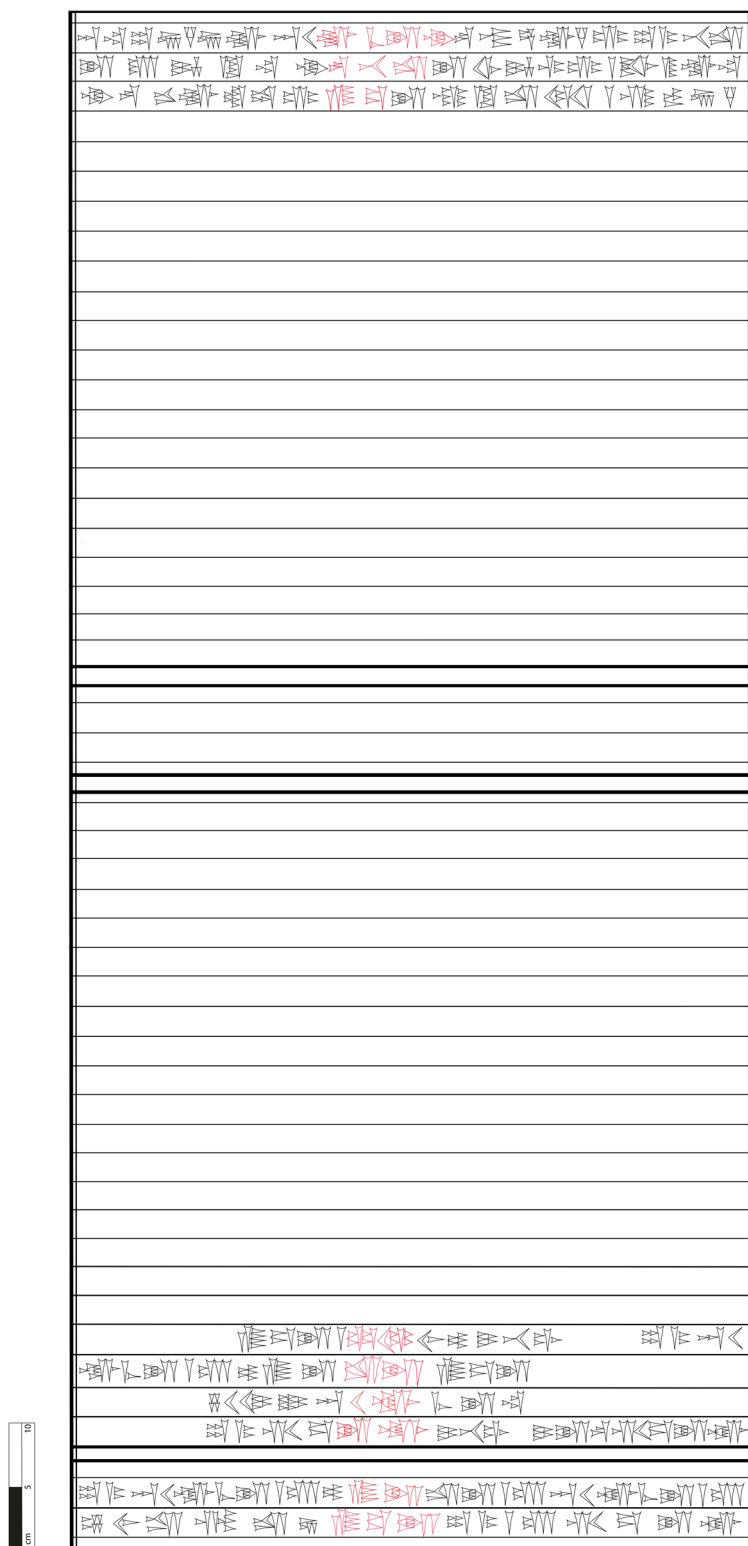


Fig. 5. Drawing of the reconstructed text of XPL EL; preserved signs are marked with red colour
(Drawing by Soheil Delshad)

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