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Miscellanea Epigraphica Susiana **Textual observations on some Achaemenid** **inscriptions from Susa**

Abstract

This article presents some new philological observations on three Achaemenid texts from Susa (DSe, DSi, A2Se) based on a new inspection of the inscriptions. These include the edition of previously unpublished fragments and the attribution of previously misplaced fragments to the texts under examination. For each inscription, a brief epigraphic, philological and linguistic commentary is provided.

Keywords

Achaemenid Inscriptions, Susa, Elamite, Old Persian.

Inscriptions achéménides, Suse, Élamite, Vieux perse.

Introduction

In spite of what one may think, new excavations are not the only source from which new epigraphic evidence can come out. This is especially true for a site like Susa, where a great number of archaeological campaigns have taken place and a huge amount of material has been recovered. As partially shown by the most recent works presenting unpublished fragments from Susa, a lot is still to be done in re-examining and publishing the pieces which have already been excavated and lie in the deposits of the Louvre Museum and the “Château” of Susa². In addition, at present day, most

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² Some of the new fragments included in Steve 1987 come from the deposit of Susa and from De Mecquenem's Archive and all of the new pieces published by Schweiger (1998, 2005, 2009) were found by him in the Louvre Museum.



of the published texts coming from Susa can only be checked by means of Scheil's often inaccurate hand-drawn facsimiles (1929, 1933) so that any serious discussion on the readings is made impossible. In this article, I shall present the results of a new inspection of some Achaemenid inscriptions from Susa based on some photographs³.

The final paragraphs of DSe in Elamite

The most recent attempt to reconstruct the overall meaning of the final portion of DSe is due to Steve (1974, repeated with minor changes in Steve 1987, pp. 56-64), who published a new fragment of the Babylonian version (DSe 003) and corrected accordingly the previous restorations of the corresponding Old Persian text. Apart from some minor points of discussion concerning the exact words to be supplied in the lacunas (cf. Schmitt 1992, Schweiger 1998/2, pp. 299-340), the state of the Old Persian and Babylonian texts has not changed significantly since then. As to the Elamite version, the text preserved by the exemplars published so far ends at lines 35-36 (DSe 01, for which cf. Scheil 1929, pp. 71-73 and Vallat 1977, pp. 160-165; and DSe 05 published by Stolper 1980)⁴, and does not include the section dealing with the building of a new fortification nor the final protection formula⁵.

Here follows an attempt of edition of the final lines of the Elamite version of DSe based on some unpublished fragments of stone tablets from the Louvre Museum. Despite being very small, these new exemplars are useful inasmuch as they confirm or disprove the restorations proposed for the parallel versions, which are often highly conjectural. Alongside the commentary of the Elamite text, some passages of the Old Persian version will be discussed as well.

³ All the inscriptions discussed in this article were examined by means of photographs available to the public online between May and June 2021. The photographs coming from De Mecquenem's archive were downloaded from the website <https://www.mom.fr/mecquenem/>. The remaining ones were downloaded from the online catalogue of the Louvre Museum (<https://collections.louvre.fr/en/>). Since I was not granted permission to publish these photographs by the Louvre Museum, I prepared some accurate drawings of the inscriptions. In the future, the whole photographic documentation of the Achaemenid epigraphic material held by the Louvre Museum will be the object of a publication in the framework of a formal collaboration between the Louvre Museum and the DARIOSH project.

⁴ The exemplars are referred to according to the numbering adopted in Steve 1987.

⁵ The exact nature of the building designated by OP *didā-* and Bab. *birtum* in this inscription is uncertain (see Rossi 2010 for an exhaustive discussion on this subject). Since it is not our purpose to discuss the matter, here the traditional translation "fortification" is adopted.



It is unlikely that all the fragments belonged to the same stone tablet, both for palaeographic reasons and because the alignment of the lines does not match perfectly. Therefore, in presenting the text, an alignment based approximately on DSe 01 will be adopted, indicating with a vertical line <|> when a fragment preserves the margin of the tablet. To facilitate the reader, the text from all the available exemplars will be taken into account and the sections published here for the first time will be marked in italics.

- 34 a-ak ^{DIŠ}da-ri-ia-ma-u-iš | ^{DIŠ}EŠŠANA na-an-ri za-u-^rmi¹-in
35 ^{AN}u-ra-maš-da-na ŠU^{MEŠ}-ma ^rhu¹-ut-^rtuk¹-ka₄ ir-še-ik-ki
36 ap-pa ap-^rpu-ka₄ in¹-ni ka₄-te-ma ^rhu¹-ut-tuk-ka₄ [hu-be]
37 [^{DIŠ}ú ka₄-te-ma hu-ud-da-ra] ^rsa¹-ap ^{DIŠ}ú ^rzi¹-e-ia [...]
38 [... mi-iš-nu]-^rka₄¹ ^rhu¹-ut-tuk-ka₄ ^rx¹-
39 [...]^rap¹-pu-ka₄ hu-ut-tuk-[[ka₄ ...]-ha da-a-ki
40 [^{AS}hal-mar-ri]-^riš¹ hu-ud-da-ra | [^{DIŠ}da-ri-ia-ma-u]-iš
41 ^{DIŠ}EŠŠANA na-^ran¹-[ri ^{DIŠ}ú ^{AN}u-ra-maš-da ^{DIŠ}ú-un nu-iš-]
42 [gi]-iš-ni ^{AN}na-[ap mar-be-ip-da i-da-ka₄ ku-ud-da ^{AS}ul-]
43 [hi]^rMEŠ¹-mi ku-ud-[da hi ap-pa tup-pi hi-ma tal-li-ik]

“Proclaims Darius the king. With the aid of Auramazda many handworks which previously had not been properly made, [those I made properly]. When I saw that [...] previously was in ruin, [...] I built another [fortification]. Proclaims Darius the king. [May Auramazda] protect me [together with all the] gods, and my house and [what is written in this inscription]”.

Commentary:

- l. 37: in DSe 01 (Sb 17823, see [fig. 1](#)) the last visible traces are compatible with ^rsa¹-ap ^{DIŠ}ú “when I”⁶ and do not allow to restore the place name Susa as suggested by Steve. Steve’s restoration of the OP and Bab. text – on which Schmitt 2009, p. 126 already expressed some doubts – should then be discarded. The traces at the beginning of the lacuna at line 45 of the OP text (DSe 8 published by Scheil 1933, p. 124, see [fig. 2](#)) could belong to <a>, <d>, <c>, <ç> or <p>. A possible restoration would then be ^ra¹-[c-i-y : a-d-m : a-v-i]-n-m taking OP *aci* as a

⁶ The traces before <ap> show a high horizontal wedge which is quite rare in the Elamite script. The most common signs with this feature are <ni>, <ir>, <kan> and <sa>, among which <sa> is the only one resulting in a meaningful word together with <ap>.

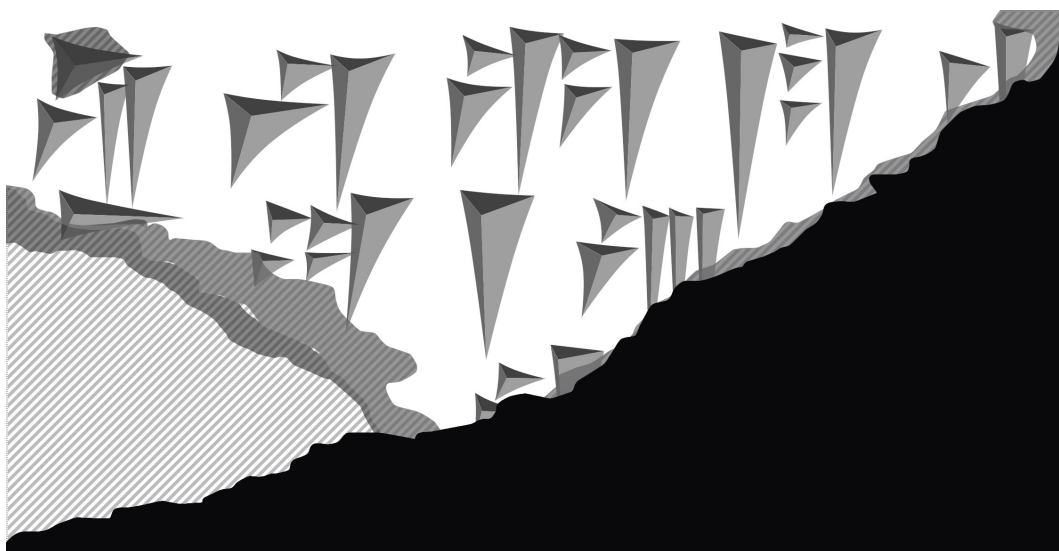


Fig. 1. Detail of DSe 01 (Louvre Sb 17823), end of ll. 36-38.



Fig. 2. Detail of DSe 8, ll. 44-49
(Roland de Mecquenem, Archives de Suse, pl. 1939-XVIII).



temporal conjunction translated by Elam. *sap* (see below on the corresponding main clause)⁷.

The restoration [a-v-i]-n-m in the OP text is confirmed by the attestation of <zí-e-ia> /ziyaya/ “I saw”, which is also noteworthy because of the odd spelling with <e> instead of <ia>. In DNb the same OP verb in the present (*vaināmi* “I see”) is rendered by the variant <zí-ia> /ziya/ with zero ending⁸.

- l. 38: the traces in DSe 01 (see again fig. 1), although very scanty, can be read as the last sign of [mi-iš-nu]-ṛka₄¹. This reading is made strongly plausible by the fact that in Sb 9747, published here for the first time (see fig. 3), the word *huttukka* “made” is found in this position, and there is no way it can fit in the sentence unless it is part of the pseudo-compound *mišnuka huttukka* translating OP *duškr̥tā* “badly made” or “made bad, ruined”. Incidentally, it should be pointed out that in this context the most suitable meaning is the latter, since, at least according to the Bab. version, Darius restored a fortification that was old and decayed rather than badly built in the first place⁹.
- l. 38-39: the lacuna between l. 38 and 39 should contain a short word translating OP *abava* “became” or *āha* “was”, usually restored as the verb of the object clause depending on *avainam*, and a relative *appa* corresponding to OP *hayā*. However, the traces at the end of the third readable line of Sb 9747 (see fig. 3) can be interpreted in many ways and no plausible restoration can be proposed (see below).
- l. 39: the segment *appuka huttukka* confirms the restoration of OP *kr̥tā* at l. 47. However, the following portion of OP text supplied by Kent 1953, Steve 1987 and Schmitt 2009 (who, however, deems it «wenig glaubwürdig») [h-c-a : a-v]-ṛd¹-š is surely wrong because DSe 8 clearly shows a <u> sign at l. 48 (see fig. 2), as Scheil 1933 read in the first place. The word ending in -uš cannot be a place name † *Allanuš* (so Scheil 1933), as Steve 1987, p. 63 has demonstrated,

⁷ The meaning of OP *aci*, only attested in XPf, is debated. According to some scholars it should have adverbial meaning “nonetheless” as Av. *ačit* (Herzfeld 1938, pp. 55-56, also discussing the Bab. translation *alla* whose meaning is equally unclear in this context; Schmitt 2014, p. 125) whereas other scholars take it as a synonym of OP *yadi* “if, when” (Kent 1953, p. 165b; Brandenstein-Mayrhofer 1964: 100; Brust 2018, pp. 96-97 rejecting the etymological comparison with Av. *ačit*).

⁸ Cf. Stolper 2004, p. 79 and Paper 1955, pp. 57-59 on the verbal ending -ya for the 1st person singular in Achaemenid Elamite.

⁹ The only parallel for *duškr̥ta-* is found in XPh 41-43 (*utā aniyašc-i> āha taya duškr̥tam akriya, ava adam naibam akunavam*) in an equally ambiguous expression (*duškr̥tam* could either mean “ill-made” in the first place or “ruined, corrupted” by somebody). Although in Schmitt 2014, p. 173 the only contemplated meaning is “in schlechter Weise [gemacht]”, Schmitt 2009, p. 126 fn. 46 recognized that in DSe it would be more logical to restore *duškr̥tā abava*, which can only mean “became ruined”.



so it could conceal a reference to the old age of the building expressed by Bab. *lābāriš illik* lit. “had gone (= gotten) old” (a -u- stem nominal form such as *āyu- “age, lifetime”, or maybe a form somehow related to Av. *zauruuan-* “old age, senility”; less likely a verb having a present stem with -nu- suffix such as *akunauš*, *adṛšnauš* etc.). Another option is that the lacuna under examination contains a reference to the builder of the former construction: we would then have <[... k^u-u-r]-u-š> *Kurauš* Gen.-Dat. or Abl. of Cyrus’s name. In this case Bab. *lābāriš illik* should be taken as the counterpart of OP *duškṛtā abava*.

Since † *hacā avadaš* “from then” (?) has been ruled out, the word written as <a> cannot be interpreted as a preposition meaning “until, up to” anymore. As kindly suggested to me by M. Maggi, we could be dealing here with a sentence particle rather than a preposition, and namely an OP form *a* corresponding to Av. *aṭ* marking the beginning of the main clause¹⁰. The whole sentence in the OP version could then be restored as ʾa¹-[c-i-y : a-d-m : a-v-i]-n-m : dⁱ-i-d-a : ʾd^u-[u-š-k-r-t-a : a-b-v : h-y]-a : p-r^u-u-v-m [: k-r-t-a : + + + + +]-u-š : a : p-s-a-[v : dⁱ-i-d-a-m :] a-n-i-y-a-m : a-[k^u-u-n-v-m] (the underlined words are assured by the Elam. version).

- l. 42-43: The Elam. version of the *Schutzformel* has been restored following the OP text established by Schmitt 1992.

List of the unpublished fragments:

Louvre Sb 9747 = Roland de Mecquenem Archives de Suse, pl. 1939-XVIII, upper picture¹¹ (fig. 3):

- 36/37 [... hu]-ut-tuk-ka₄ [...]
 37/38 [...] ʾzⁱ¹-e-ia [...]
 38/39 [...] ʾhu¹-ut-tuk-ka₄ ʾx[?]¹-[...]
 39/40 [...]-ha da-a-ki [...]
 40/41 [... da-ri-ia-ma-u-]-iš ^{Diš}EŠŠANA na-ʾan¹-[ri ...]
 41/42 [... nu-iš-gi]-iš-ni ^{AN}na-[ap ...]
 42/43 [... ul-hi]^{MEŠ¹}-mi ku-ud-[da ...]

The traces at the end of l. 38/39 consist in a short horizontal wedge followed by a vertical one, which leave open many reading options.

¹⁰ On this particle in Avestan cf. Kellens-Pirart 1990, pp. 105-125, Skjærvø 2009, pp. 150-151 and West 2011, pp. 94-95 with further literature.

¹¹ The plate is available online: <https://testomekas4.mom.fr/s/mecquenem/item/10649>.



*Fig. 3. Louvre Sb 9747
(Roland de Mecquenem, Archives de Suse, pl. 1939-XVIII).*

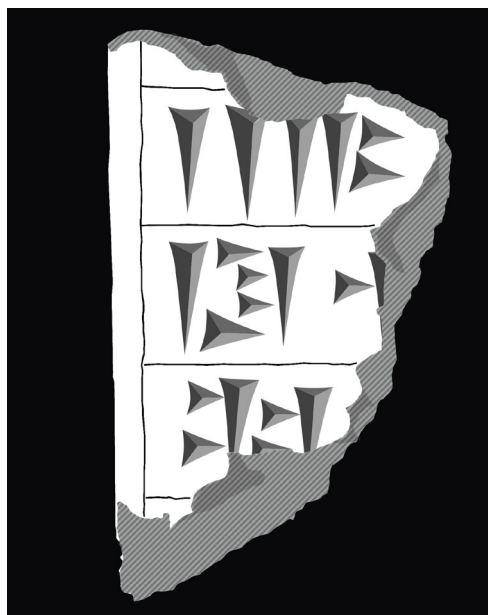


Fig. 4. Louvre Sb 9755.



Louvre Sb 9755 (fig. 4):

- 35/36 [^{PIŠ}EŠŠANA [...]
36/37 [-ma ^hu¹-[ut-tuk-ka₄ ...]
37/38 [-te-[ma ...]

Louvre Sb 9757 (fig. 5):

- 33/34 [... za-u]-^hmi¹-in [...]
34/35 [... hu]-ut-^htuk¹-[ka₄ ...]

Roland de Mecquenem Archives de Suse, pl. 1939-XVIII, lower picture¹² (fig. 6):

- 37/38 [...]-^hx²-da-x²¹-[...]
38/39 [...] ^hap¹-pu-ka₄ hu-ut-tuk-|
39/40 [... hal-mar-ri]-^hiš¹ hu-ud-da-ra|
40/41 [...] ^hú-un¹ [...]

The sequence *appuka huttukka*, translating OP *paruvam kṛtā* “previously made”, is a strong proof of the attribution of this fragment to the final portion of DSe since there is no other context in the known corpus where such an expression would fit.

At l. 37/38, as can be seen in fig. 6, some traces are visible (only <da> is surely readable) which should be located in the lacuna between *ziyaya* and *mišnuka* of the reconstructed text.

At l. 39/40 the first visible trace is a vertical wedge which can be read as part of <iš> in *halmarriš* “fortification”, since the Elamite word translating OP *didā* should occur in this point¹³.

The traces at l. 40/41 cannot be connected easily with the reconstructed text. Most probably, they should be read as ^hú-un¹ (last vertical wedge of <ú> followed by the two vertical ones of <un>) assuming that the line was slightly more crowded than the preceding ones.

DSi: a new edition including some hitherto wrongly attributed fragments.

When Scheil 1929, pp. 42-43 published the inscribed column base usually labelled as DSi (Sb 10062), he did not envisage the possibility that some fragments of the same text could have been found separately from the main exemplar. So, with regard to the state of conservation of the inscription, he stated «la version anzanite est conservée presque en son entier. La version perse ne présente que les premiers mots des lignes,

¹² See above fn. 11.

¹³ See above fn. 5.

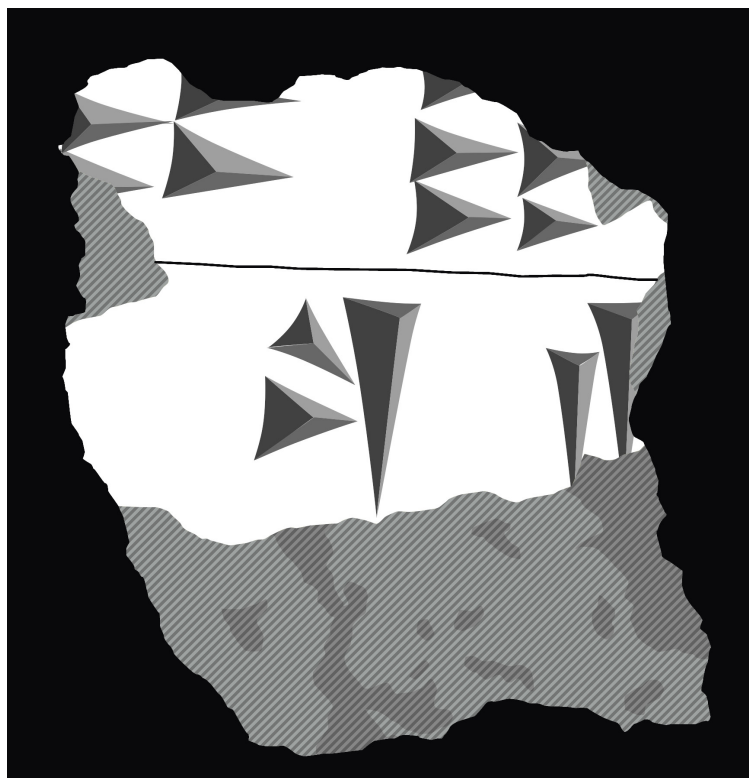


Fig. 5. Louvre Sb 9757.



Fig. 6. Roland de Mecquenem, Archives de Suse, pl. 1939-XVIII.

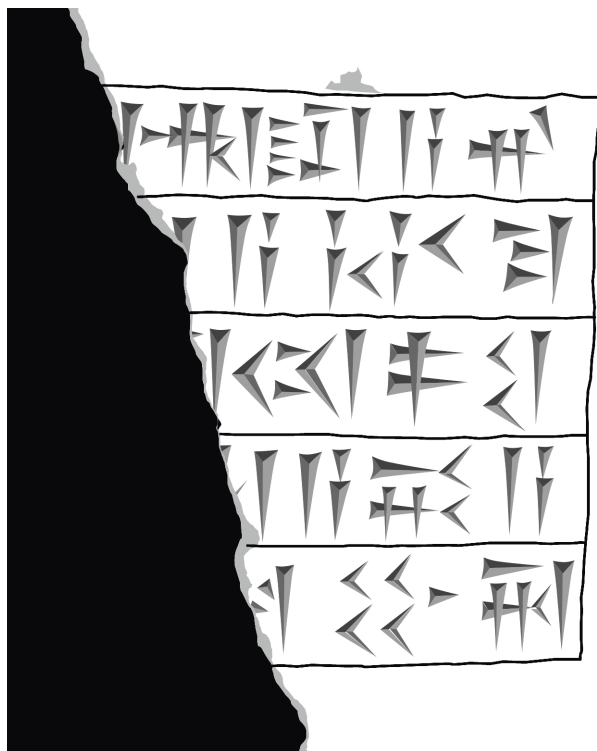


Fig. 7. Louvre Sb 9909.

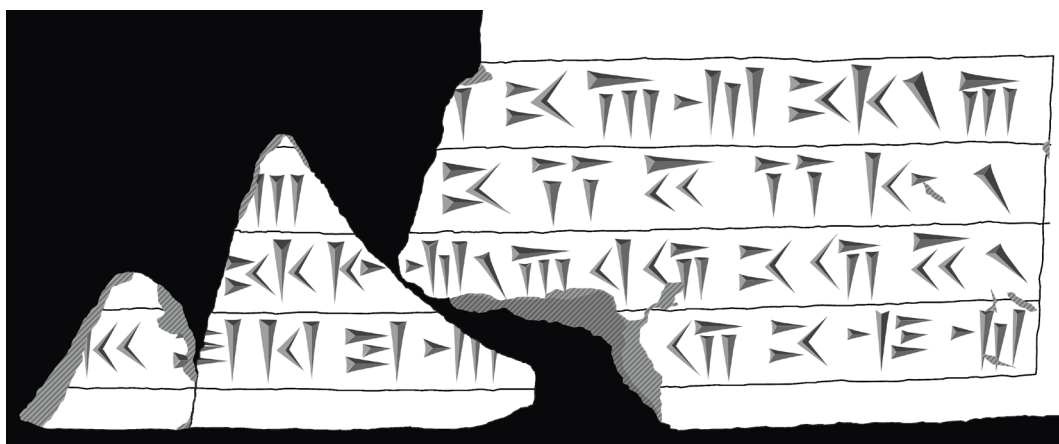


Fig. 8. Louvre Sb 9909 + 9797 + 9845.



la version babylonienne est perdue». Unfortunately, the lack of photographic documentation of the inscription compelled scholars to trust Scheil's opinion and assume that he checked whether some of the fragments he published as independent inscriptions could match with DSi. As a matter of fact, Scheil's evaluation was not correct, and among the fragments he published some pieces of DSi can surely be identified. They are namely two bilingual fragments (Sb 9906 and 9909, edited in Scheil 1929, pp. 84-85) first attributed to Xerxes by Scheil himself and subsequently to Darius II without any strong reason¹⁴, and a small fragment of OP text currently labelled DSp (Sb 9797, edited in Scheil 1929, p. 65, fig. 8). In addition, in the deposit of the Louvre Museum two unpublished fragments are held, belonging respectively to the OP and Elam. version of DSi (Sb 9845 and 9999, fig. 8-9, see below).

Here follows a new edition of the OP text and an attempt to reconstruct the Bab. version on the basis of these fragments. It should be pointed out that all the restorations are based on the Elam. version, which is almost completely preserved (cf. Vallat 1977: 176-177). The fr. Sb 9909, 9797 and 9845 were probably part of a single piece which has been reassembled in fig. 8. Note that the text of Sb 9909 and 9906 (formerly D²Sb) shows a different line division than the main exemplar of DSi (θ-a-t-i-y is entirely contained in l. 3) and that Sb 9906 has a copy error in <a-k^u-u-n-š>, which cannot be taken as evidence for a late dating of the text¹⁵. The improvements to the traditional OP text of DSi are marked in italics.

Old Persian:

1. a-d-[m : d-a-r-y]-v-u-š XŠ [: v-z-r-k XŠ XŠ-y-a-n-a-m XŠ DH-y]-u-n-a-m XŠ : a-
2. h-y-^ra¹-[y-a BU-y]-a : vⁱ-i-š-t-^ra¹-[s-p-h-y-a : p-u-ç : h-x]-a-[m]-n-i-š-i-y :
3. [θ]-a-t-i-y : d-[a]-r-y-v-u-š XŠ [: y-θ-a AM : m-a-m] XŠ-y-m : a-k^u-u-n-u-š :
4. a-h-y-a-y-a BU-y-a : v-š-[n-a AM-h : vⁱ-i-s-m :] f-r-θ-r-m [: a]-^rk^u-u-n-v-[m]

"I am Darius, great king, king of kings, king of the countries, king on this earth, son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenid. Proclaims Darius the king. After Auramazda made me king on this earth, with the aid of Auramazda I did everything in an excellent way".

Commentary:

ll. 3-4: it is noteworthy that this new text matches almost perfectly with a passage in XPf *yaθā Dārayavauš xšāyaθiya abava vasai taya fraθaram akunauš* "after Darius became king he made many excellent things".

¹⁴ Cf. Brandenstein 1932, pp. 85-88 unanimously followed by later scholars up to Schmitt 2009.

¹⁵ So Brandenstein 1932, p. 85 fn. b, whereas Schmitt 2009, p. 185 is right in calling it a *Schreibfehler*.



Babylonian:

1. [a-na-ku ^mda-a-ri-ia-mu-uš šá-ar-ri ra-bu-ú šá-ar]-^rri¹ [šá]-ar-ra-a-ni
2. [šá-ar-ri KUR.KUR.MEŠ šá-ar-ri qaq-qa-ri a-ga-ta] ma-ri [^muš-ta-as-pa]
^ma-ḥa-ma-
3. [an-niš-ši-^r i-qab-bi ^mda-a-ri-ia]-mu-uš [šá-ar-ri ul]-^rtu¹ muḥ-ḥiš
4. [šá^a-ḥu-ur-ma-az-da-^r šá-ar-ri a-na-ku i-pu]-uš-šu [i-na qaq-qa]-^rri¹ a-ga-a
5. [i-na ši-il-li šá^a-ḥu-ur-ma-az-da-^r a-na-ku gab-bi bab-ba-nu-ú e]-^rte¹-pu-uš

The translation is identical with the OP one.

Commentary:

- l. 3: the sign doubtfully read as <na> by Scheil 1929, p. 85 in Sb 9909 is rather <tu> (see the traces in fig. 7), needed to restore *ultu muḥḥiš ša* “after that”, “when”¹⁶.
- l. 4: the traces at the beginning of l. 4 in Sb 9909 can belong to a sign <ri> expected from the restoration, so the reading <tu> upheld by Brandenstein 1932, p. 86 (fn. b) should be discarded.

List of the unpublished fragments:

Louvre Sb 9845 (fig. 8, leftmost fragment):

3. [...]
4. [...] ^rf¹-[r-θ-r-m]

The fragment is perfectly joined to Sb 9797 (formerly DSp).

Louvre Sb 9999 (fig. 9):

5. [... mu]-ru-un hi¹ ^ruk¹-[ku]
6. [... ši]-iš-ni-na hu-[ud-da]

The <hi¹> sign at l. 5 is erroneously written with an extra vertical wedge. Since this palaeographic feature is found in the main exemplar as well (Sb 10062, cf. Scheil 1929, p. 42 pointing out this peculiarity), it should be concluded that both exemplars depended on an identical draft copy already containing this error.

¹⁶

Cf. Rössler 1938, pp. 16, 30. Brandenstein 1932, p. 87 fn. 4 explains the form *muḥḥiš* as the expected form *muḥḥi* plus an “adverbial suffix” -iš. To my knowledge, such a form is unparalleled, and I am more inclined to interpret the form as *muḥḥiš(u)* with weakened final vowel or to see in <*muḥ-ḥiš-šá*> as a sandhi orthography for *muḥḥi ša*.

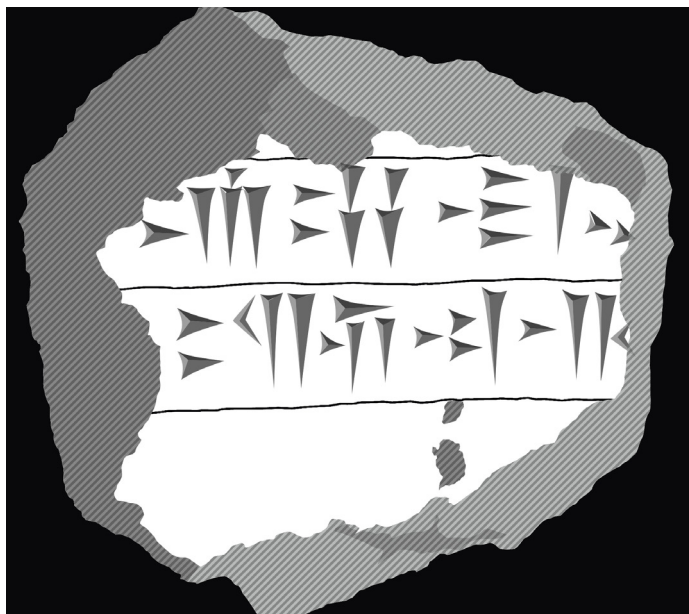


Fig. 9. Louvre Sb 9999.

A²Se: a new Old Persian inscription of Artaxerxes II

Elamite text:

Scheil 1933, p. 127 published a fragment of column base bearing an Elamite inscription of Artaxerxes II. The piece subsequently broke into two parts: the left portion of the inscription was brought to the Louvre Museum (Sb 9986) and the right one remained in Susa and was identified and re-published by Steve (1987, p. 97, pl. XVIII: 7). Among the unpublished fragments kept in the Louvre Museum, there are some which surely belong to the same inscription and preserve new portions of text (see below for a list of the new exemplars). Here follows an edition of the Elam. text in which the improvements to Scheil's edition are marked in italics. The restorations are partly based on the Old Persian version which will be introduced below.

1. [D¹Š¹U¹ D¹Š¹ir-tak-ik-šá-áš-šá D¹Š¹EŠŠANA ir]-r¹šá¹-ir-ra <D¹Š¹EŠŠANA D¹Š¹> EŠŠANA-ip-in-na
D¹Š¹EŠŠANA D¹Š¹da-a-hu-iš-be-na D¹Š¹EŠŠANA AŠ¹mu-ru-r¹un¹ hi uk-ku D¹Š¹r¹da¹ [ri-ia-ma-
u-iš D¹Š¹EŠŠANA šá-ak-ri ha-ak-ka-man-nu-ši-ia na-an-ri]
2. [D¹Š¹ir-tak-ik-šá-áš-šá D¹Š¹]EŠŠANA¹ D¹Š¹LÚ¹MEŠ¹-ir-ra ak-ka₄ hu-be hu-ud-da-ma-ik
ap-pa^{AN}u-r¹ra¹ [maš-da ha-ni-ra ...]



3. [...^{DIŠ}LÚ^{MEŠ}-ir-ra ak-ka₄ hu]-be in-ni hu-ud-da-ma-ik ap-pa^{AN}u-ra-maš-da ha-ni-
[ra¹⁷ ...]
4. [na-an]-^{ri}^{DIŠ}ir-tak-ik-šá-áš-šá^{DIŠ}EŠŠANA^{DIŠ}ú^{AN}[u-ra-maš-da ši-ib-be hu-ud-
da-ma (?) ir-da-ha-zí pí-r-ra-iz-man-nu-ia ...]
5. [...]

“[I am Artaxerxes], great [king], <king> of kings, king of the countries, king on this earth, [son of] Darius [the king, an Achaemenid. Proclaims Artaxerxes] the king. The man who does what Auramazda [desires ... the man who] does not do what Auramazda desires [...]. Proclaims Artaxerxes the king. [I worship (?)] Auramazda [according to Rta reverently ...]”.

Commentary:

- l. 1-2: the traces of <da> in SH 085354 (fig. 10, see below) ensure that the inscription belongs to Artaxerxes II son of Darius II and not to Artaxerxes I or III.
- l. 2: the few characters added by SH 085354 are crucial in revealing that the sentence in this line is perfectly parallel to the one at l. 3. Thus, the restorations proposed by Scheil 1933, p. 127 and Vallat 1977, p. 228 cannot be accepted.
- l. 5: from the drawing in Scheil 1933, p. 127 and from the photograph in Steve 1987 pl. XVIII: 7 it seems that the inscription only had 4 lines. However, I could verify through a photograph that the piece is broken at the bottom and the exact number of lines cannot be determined. On the basis of the comparison with the OP version in 7 lines (see below), one should postulate at least a fifth line for the Elam. version.

The translation given here is different from the ones by Scheil 1933, p. 127 and Vallat 1977, p. 228, inasmuch as it does not force the meaning of the text in the attempt to preserve the passive value of *huttamak*, expected from its conjugation¹⁸. In presence of two arguments which can function as subject and object, it seems difficult to avoid giving a transitive value to the verb “to do”, especially since, if we were really dealing with a passive construction, the agent would be totally unmarked, contrary to the other cases of passive phrases with an agent in the Achaemenid corpus¹⁹. In

¹⁷ On the form *hanira*, rather than Scheil’s (1933, p. 129) and Steve’s (1987, p. 98) † *haniša*, cf. Schmitt 1974.

¹⁸ There is a general consensus that the so-called II conjugation, at least at the time of Darius I, conveyed a passive or intransitive meaning (cf. Hallock 1959, pp. 8-15, Tucker 1998, pp. 184-193 and Stolper 2004, p. 80 with further literature).

¹⁹ The Elam. rendering of OP passive phrases always shows some kind of marking of the agent, mirroring the OP version (DB IV, 51: *avaišām avā nai asti kṛtam* “by them so much was not done” rendered as *hupipe-*



addition, all the comparable passages in the Achaemenid royal inscriptions beginning with sentences like «the man who ...» have an active construction²⁰. The most relevant parallel is XPh v. 51-56:

Elam (ll. v. 42-46): ^{DIŠ}LÚ^{MEŠ}-ir-ra sa-ap hu-be-ma da-ad-da-ma iz-zí-ma-ak ap-pa
^{AN}u-ra-maš-da še-ra-iš-da ku-ud-da ^{AN}u-ra-maš-da ši-ib-be hu-ud-da-man-ra
ir-da-ha-zí pí-r-ra-iz-man-nu-ia hu-be ku-ud-da ka₄-tuk-ra šá-ud-da ni-ma-ak
ku-ud-da hal-pi-ik-ra ir-da-ma ni-ma-ak.

OP. (ll. v. 51-56): m-r-t-i-y : h-y : a-v-n-a : d-a-t-a : p-r-i-y-i-t-<i-y> : t-y : a-u-r-m-z-d-a :
n-i-š-t-a-y : u-t-a : a-u-r-m-z-d-a-m : y-d-t-i-y : a-r-t-a-c-a : b-r-z-m-n-i-y : h-u-v
: u-t-a : jⁱ-i-v : š-i-y-a-t : b-v-t-i-y : u-t-a : m-r-t : a-r-t-a-v-a : b-v-t-i-y

Translation of Elamite text: “If a man proceeds within the law which Auramazda has established and worships Auramazda according to *Ṛta* reverently, he becomes happy in life and blessed when dead”

As should appear clearly from the quoted passage, there can be little doubt that A²Se parallels an expression of this kind. However, unlike what happens in A²Se, the verbs in the Elam. version of XPh behave as expected: the OP verb *pariyaiti*, which is intransitive and construed with an instrumental case, corresponds to the intransitive verb *izzimak* (conjugation II_m) construed with the locative suffix *-ma* (*hupema datama*), whereas the transitive verb *yadatai* is translated by the Elamite phrase *šippe huttamanra* with the III_m conjugation form of the verb *hutta*- “to do”. It is hard to tell whether the employ of conjugation II_m with a transitive value instead of conjugation III_m in A²Se is due to an internal development of the Elamite language or to the Old Persian speaking translator’s bad knowledge of Elamite. In any case, this phenomenon should be included among the few non-standard features attested in late Achaemenid Elamite²¹.

na hi nuppak inni huttak with the “genitive” suffix; DNb 9-10: *taya tunuvā skauθaiš rādī miθa kariyaiš* “that the strong one might be treated badly by the weak one” rendered as *appa ipikra ištukra intukkime surakni* with a postposition meaning “because of”). Tucker 1998, p. 190 n. 45 and Hallock 1959, p. 14 mention the existence of some examples of unmarked agent in a passive phrase in the Persepolis administrative texts to explain the odd construction found in A²Se, but in my view it is not a valid argument both because administrative texts are more likely to show morpho-syntactical simplification and because the quite convoluted OP construction needed to express the agent in such a sentence – something like **hacā tayanā* or **tayahyā rādī* “by whom” is expected – would hardly have been left untranslated in Elamite.

²⁰ Cf. DB I, 21-23; DB IV, 38; DB IV, 65-69; DNb 16-19 (reference to the OP lines) and the passage from XPh quoted in the text.

²¹ The only available survey on Late Achaemenid Elamite is offered by Schmitt 2010. To his morphological and syntactical observations one can add the defective form of conjugation III *melkan* (A²Sa) instead of *melkanra* (A²Ha) and the use of the “genitive” personal pronoun instead of the “accusative” in the expression

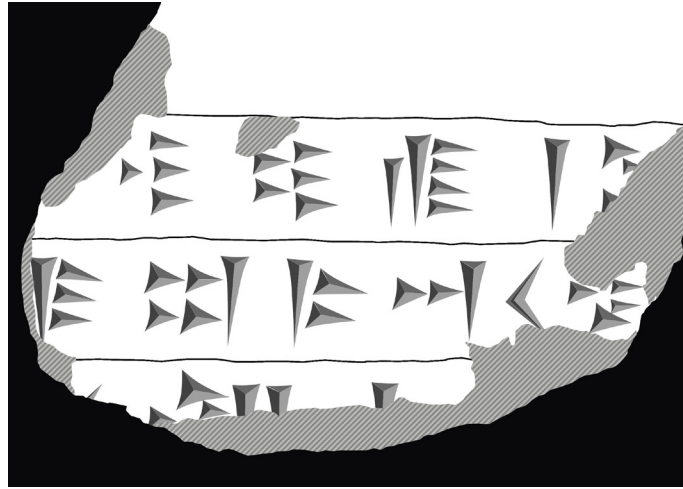


Fig. 10. Louvre SH 085354.

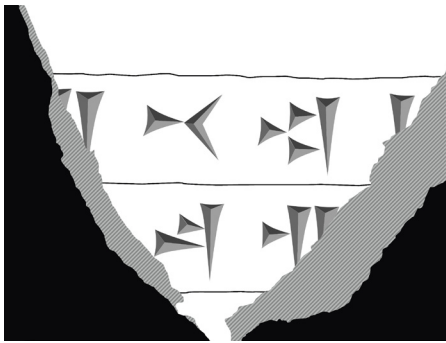


Fig. 11. Louvre Sb 9998.

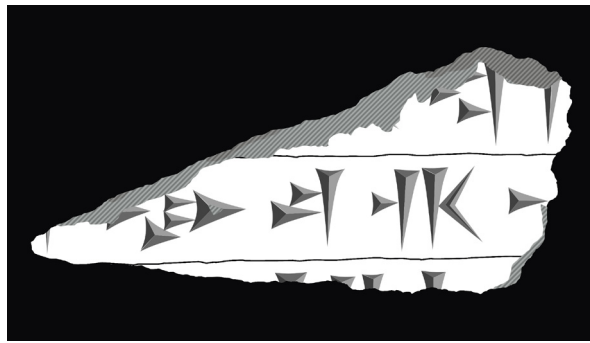


Fig. 12. Louvre Sb 10040.

List of the unpublished fragments:

Louvre SH 085354 (fig. 10):

1. [...^{DIŠ}da-a-hu-iš-be-na ^{DIŠ}EŠŠANA ^{AŠ}mu-ru-un] hi uk-ku ^{DIŠ}fda¹-[ri-ia-ma-u-iš
^{DIŠ}EŠŠANA ...]
2. [...^{DIŠ}LÚ^{MEŠ}-ir-ra ak-ka₄ hu-be hu-ud-da-ma]-[ik¹ap-pa ^{AN}u-¹ra¹-[maš-da ha-ni-ra ...]
3. [... ak-ka₄ hu-be in-ni hu-ud-da-ma-ik ap-pa ^{AN}] ¹u-ra-maš¹-[da ha-ni-ra ...]

The alignment of the preserved text is slightly different from that of the main exemplar (Sb 9986).

<ú-ni-ni un-na-iš-gi-iš-ni> /unini un-nəšgišni/ “may he protect me” (A²Ha) on which see Fattori 2022a, pp. 382-383.



Louvre Sb 9998 (fig. 11):

1. [...^{DIŠ}da-a-hu]-^{ṛiṣ}be-na ^{ṛDIŠ}[EŠŠANA ^{AŠ}mu-ru-un hi uk-ku ^{DIŠ}da-ri-ia-ma-u-iš ...]
2. [...^{ir-ra} ak]-ka₄ hu-[be hu-ud-da-ma-ik ap-pa ^{AN}u-ra-maš-da ha-ni-ra ...]

This fragment was probably part of the same exemplar as SH 085354.

Louvre Sb 10040 (fig. 12):

1. [...^{DIŠ}da-a-hu-iš-be]-na ^{ṛDIŠ}[EŠŠANA ^{AŠ}mu-ru-un hi uk-ku ^{DIŠ}da-ri-ia-ma-u-iš ...]
2. [...^{MEŠ}ir-ra] ^{ṛak}ka₄ hu-^{ṛbe}[hu-ud-da-ma-ik ap-pa ^{AN}u-ra-maš-da ha-ni-ra ...]

The fragment preserves approximately the same portion of text as Sb 9998, so it must come from a third exemplar. This confirms that A²Se, despite being very badly preserved, was engraved in multiple copies.

Old Persian text:

The Old Persian text of this same inscription can be reconstructed starting from some already published fragments. The two main exemplars were edited by Scheil 1929 and attributed to Darius I (DSs, Sb 9794, fig. 13) and Xerxes (XSc, Sb 9907, fig. 14) respectively, even though no personal name is attested in the fragments. Another important piece, although almost completely overlapping with Sb 9794 (formerly DSs), is Sb 9793 (fig. 15), first published by Schweiger 1998/2, pp. 435-440²². Lastly, among the unpublished fragments held in the Louvre Museum, I could identify a small piece which can be joined with Sb 9793 (Sb 9827, fig. 15, upper-left corner) and a fragment of the left part of the inscription (Sb 9784, fig. 16). In addition to having a perfectly compatible line spacing (approximately 2,5 cm except Sb 9794 which is slightly bigger) and palaeography, these fragments share some remarkable common features supporting their attribution to the same inscription. Firstly, they do not contain logograms whereas almost every other inscription from Susa does. This causes the lines to be very long (ca. 70 signs per line), and the fact that the restoration of the first lines matches perfectly with the preserved text in all the fragments is a strong argument supporting the proposed reconstruction. Furthermore, all the fragments where <u> is preserved show a very peculiar form for this sign, with the upper horizontal wedge covering the Winkelhaken. This palaeographic feature is not elsewhere attested in the Old Persian corpus except for a small fragment from Babylon (Weissbach 195, p. 48 n. 4, pl. 26c, most probably dating to the reign of Artaxerxes II)²³, and thus makes the attribution of all the above-mentioned fragments to the same inscription very likely.

²² Schweiger already suspected on palaeographic basis that the inscription labelled DSs could belong to the late Achaemenid period.

²³ On this matter cf. Vallat 1989.



Fig. 13. Louvre Sb 9794.

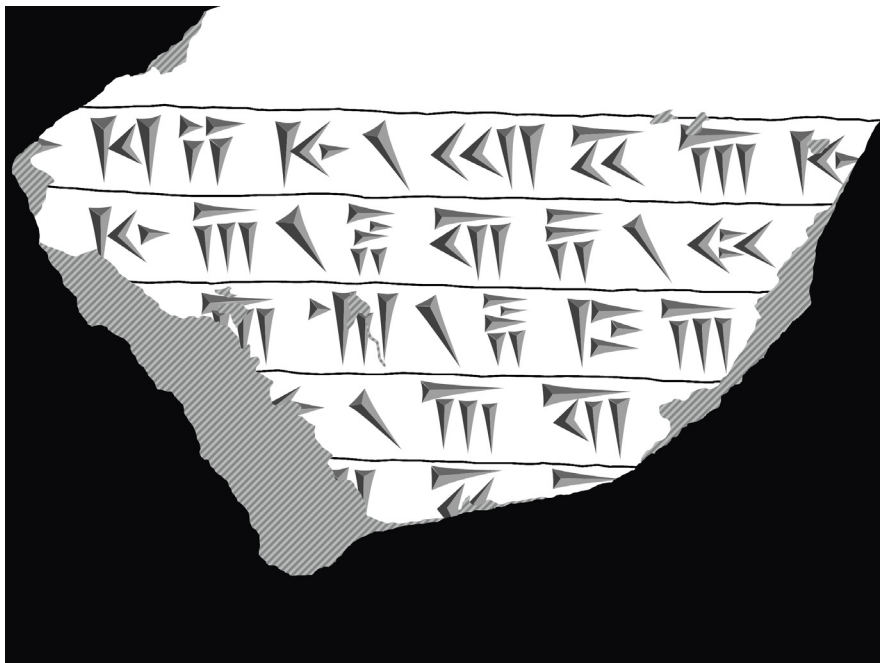


Fig. 14. Louvre Sb 9907.

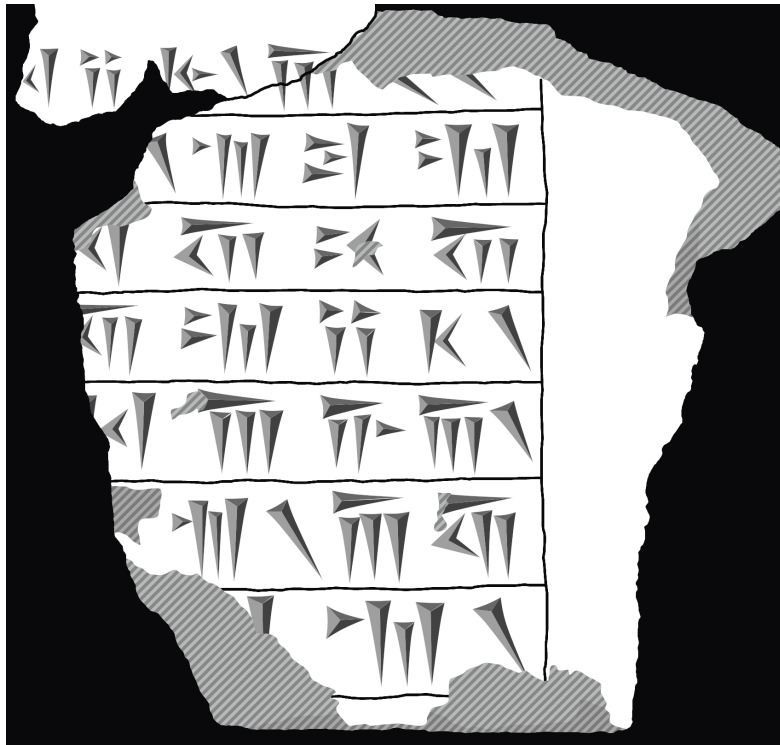


Fig. 15. Louvre Sb 9793 + 9827.

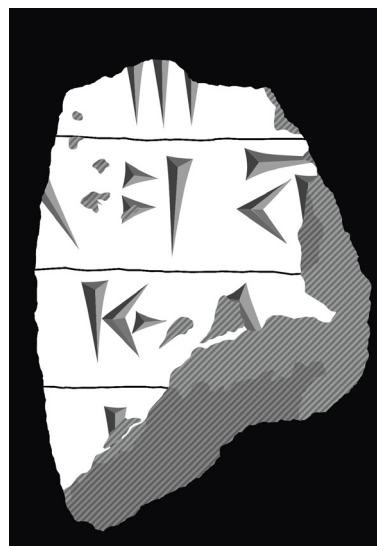


Fig. 16. Louvre Sb 9784.



Here follows an edition of the text restored according to the Elamite version. Once again, the unpublished portions of text are marked in italics. Where no parallels were available from the late Achaemenid corpus (e.g. the genitive <d-a-r-y-v-u-š> instead of <d-a-r-y-v-h-u-š>), the restored forms have been inflected according to the Old Persian standard. Obviously, it is likely that some typical late Achaemenid features were present in the lost text.

1. [a-d-m :] ¹a¹[r-t-x-š-ç-a : x-š-a-y-θ-i-y : v-z-r-k : x-š-a]-y-θ-i-y : x-š-a-y-[θ-i-y-a-n-a-m : x-š-a-y-θ-i-y : d-h-y-u-n-a-m : x-š-a-y]-θ-i-y : a-h-
2. [y-a-y-a] : b¹u¹[mⁱ-i-y-a : d-a-r-y-v-u-š : x-š-a-y-θ-i-y-h]-y-a : p-u-ç : h-[x-a-m-n-i-š-i-y : θ-a-t-i-y : a-r-t-x-š-ç-a : x-š-a-y-θ-i]-y : m-r-t-
3. [i-y : h]-y ¹y¹[a-v : k^u-u-n-u-t-i-y : t-y : a-u-r-m-z-d-a-m : k]-a-m : p-s-a-[v : ... ca. 30 signs ...] : k^u-u-n-u-
4. [t-i]-¹y¹[: u-t-a : m-r-t-i-y : h-y : a-v : n-i-y : k^u-u-n-u-t-i-y : t]-¹y¹ : a-u-[r-m-z-d-a-m : k-a-m ... ca. 20 signs ... k^u-u-n]-u-t-i-y :
5. [... ca. 25 signs ... θ-a-t-i-y : a-r-t]-¹x¹-š-¹ç¹-[a : x-š-a-y-θ-i-y : a-d-m : a-u-r-m-z-d-a-m : y-d-i-y (?)] : ¹a¹-r-θ-a-c-a :
6. [b-r-z-m-n-i-y : ... ca. 55 signs ...]-¹m/t¹ : m-a-m : a-u-
7. [r-m-z-d-a : p-a-t^u-u-v : h-c-a : vⁱ-i-s-p-a : g-s-t-a : ... ca. 30 signs ... t-y : m-n-a] ¹:¹k-r-t-m :

“[I am] Artaxerxes, [great king], king of kings, [king of the countries], king on this earth, son of [Darius] the king, an Achaemenid. [Proclaims Artaxerxes] the king. The man who [does that which Auramazda] desires, then [...] does [... The man who does not do that] which Auramazda [desires ...] does [... Proclaims] Artaxerxes [the king. I worship (?)] Auramazda according to R̥ta [reverently ... May] Auramazda [protect] me [from all evil ... and what I have] done”.

Commentary:

Despite being very fragmentary, this new text is quite interesting and unique. First of all, it is the longest known inscription of Artaxerxes II, and the only one which does not celebrate a new building but – at least according to the readable sections – conveys a political-religious message similar to the ones contained in many of Darius’ inscriptions at Susa. The fact that Artaxerxes II chose the epigraphic medium for this purpose shows that in the late Achaemenid period monumental epigraphy was not only practised to decorate architectural elements as a tribute to the older tradition, but was still perceived as a tool of moral and political expression. In addition, a so strongly “Mazdean” inscription (note the affinities with XPh quoted above) coming from a king otherwise famous for having introduced religious innovations directed



towards the enlargement of the official pantheon is an element of some weight with regard to the religious history of the late Achaemenid period²⁴.

Among the few preserved words, some demand a brief commentary. Further notes on the readings and the reconstruction of the text will be offered while discussing the single exemplars (see below).

ll. 3-4: the preserved signs at ll. 3-4 allow to reconstruct the complete verbal form *kunauti* “does”. The attestation of a correct indicative present form under Artaxerxes II should not pass unnoticed, especially since it is not embedded in a common formula which could be mechanically copied from older texts²⁵. This new attestation, together with the imperative *vidītu* found in A²Sa²⁶, challenges the widespread idea that in late Old Persian all final syllables had been completely lost, since the final vowel is clearly relevant in defining the morphological function of such verbal forms. In my view – but the matter deserves to be treated separately elsewhere – it is more economical to assume that late Old Persian was undergoing a process of morphological simplification affecting individual endings, especially in the nominal declension (e.g., formal syncretism of nominative and accusative as in *mām ʔtaxšaça xšāyaθiya akunauš* in A³Pa) rather than a generalized phonological change indiscriminately affecting all final syllables²⁷.

l. 5: as can clearly be seen in fig. 13 (Sb 9794), the traditional reading ¹u¹-r-θ-a-¹c¹-[a] based on Scheil’s drawing is wrong and should be corrected in ¹a¹-r-θ-a-¹c¹-[a] with initial <a>. As a consequence, all the previous attempts to restore the text involving the ghost-word † *uraθā* “having good chariots” as an adjective referred to the land, are to be discarded. The word written as ¹a¹-r-θ-a-¹c¹-[a] is obviously *ʔtācā*, part of the religious expression *ʔtācā brazmaniya* (here translated “according to ʔta reverently”, but its interpretation is debated)²⁸ only attested in XPh after the verb *yad-* “to worship”. The spelling with <θ> instead of <t> cannot be taken as evidence of a phonological change because the ele-

²⁴ On Artaxerxes II’s religious policy cf. Boyce 1982, pp. 209-263 and Schmitt 1986.

²⁵ Actually, the verb *kunauti* is only attested one time in DNb and XPl.

²⁶ Cf. Fattori 2022a.

²⁷ Some further considerations on this problem are offered in Fattori 2022b, pp. 24-32, where forms from A³Pa are discussed.

²⁸ Cf. Kent 1953, pp. 170-171, 201, Skjaervø 1999, pp. 41-43, Schmitt 2000, p. 95, Schmitt 2009, p. 167 fn. a – whose interpretation is not followed here – and Brust 2018, pp. 120-121, 272-273 for literature on this matter. Here the solution proposed by Henning 1944 is accepted, according to which *ʔtācā* should be regarded as a contracted form of **ʔtā hacā* (to be compared with Av. *ašāt hacā*) “following ʔta” and *brazmaniya* as an adjective corresponding to Ved. *brahmanyā-* “religious”.



ment **rta-* is well attested in Middle Persian in the form *ard-* without spirantization of old **-t-*²⁹. Also, it is part of the name Artaxerxes (OP *Ṛtaxšaça*) which is consistently written with <t> in the late Achaemenid texts. This phenomenon should rather be compared with spellings such as <mⁱ-(i)-t-r> instead of <mⁱ-i-θ-r> (A²Ha, A²Hb, A²Sd) and attributed – as I proposed in Fattori 2022b – to the incorrect transposition into cuneiform of a draft copy written in Aramaic script³⁰. Unfortunately, the fragmentary state of the text prevents from understanding the context where this expression occurred. In light of the strong affinity of this inscription with XPh, a form of the verb *yad-* was restored immediately before *ṛtācā*, where, according to l. 4 of the Elamite text, a sentence having Artaxerxes as subject and Auramazda as object is expected.

Complete list of the fragments (published and unpublished):

Louvre Sb 9794 (Scheil 1929, p. 66; here [fig. 13](#))

1. [... -θ-i-y-a-n-a-m : x-š-a-y-θ-i-y : d-h-y-u-n-a-m : x-š-a-y-θ-i-y :] ṛa-h^l
2. [... : h-x-a-m-n-i-š-i-y : θ-a-t-i-y : a-r-t-x-š-a : x-š-a-y-θ-i-y : m-r-t-
3. [... ...] : k^u-u-n-u-
4. [... a-u-r-m-z-d-a-m : k-a-m : k^u-u-n]-u-t-i-y:
5. [... : a-d-m : a-u-r-m-z-d-a-m : y-d-i-y (?) :] ṛa^l-r-θ-a-ṛ^l[a :]
6. [... ...]-ṛm/t^l : m-a-m ṛ^l : a-u^l
7. [... ... t-y : m-n-a :] k-r-t-m :

As was mentioned above, this fragment shows a larger spacing between the lines than the other exemplars. It is likely that the different copies of this inscription had different sizes and were inscribed on different architectural elements.

The sign <ṛa^l> at the beginning of line 5 cannot be confused with <u> which, in this particular inscription, would have shown a much longer horizontal wedge. The fact that every scholar so far had to follow Scheil's erroneous drawing – he probably

²⁹ Cf. Durkin-Meisterernst 2004, pp. 51-52. The Pahlavi form *ahlaw* “righteous”, which shows the same outcome of the ancient cluster **-rθ-* (e.g. MP *Pahlaw-īg* “Parthian” < OP *Parθava-* + suff. *-iyaka*), does not directly descend from OP *ṛtāvan-* “righteous”, but is rather a loanword from Avestan *ašauuan-* in which the grapheme <š> renders the peculiar outcome of inherited **-árt-* and **-řt-* when accented (cf. Cantera 2003 and Di Giovine 1989, p. 7 fn. 15, 15-16 fn. 34 with further literature). In this context, MP *-h-* does not continue OP **-θ-* but is rather the pre-aspiration of the voiceless trill developed in Avestan when **-ár-* or **-ř-* were followed by a voiceless plosive (Hoffmann-Forssman 1996, p. 92). Instead, the regular outcome of OP *ṛtāvan-* is MP *ardāy*.

³⁰ The influence of Aramaic on such spellings has already been taken in consideration by Gershevitch 1964, pp. 33-34 and Schmitt 2014, p. 215.



copied at l. 5 the same <u> of l. 4 – is a good example of the inadequate state of documentation of the Susa inscriptions.

At the beginning of l. 6 three vertical wedges are preserved which could belong to <m> or <t>. It should be noted that the typical *Schutzformel* found in the inscriptions by Artaxerxes II is *Auramazdā, Anāhitā utā Miθra mām pāntu* whereas here the sequence *mām Auramazdā* suggests that no mention of Anahita and Mithra was made, confirming the markedly “Mazdean” character of this text.

Louvre Sb 9793 (Schweiger 1998/2: 435-440) + Louvre Sb 9827 (fig. 15)

1. [... -θ-i-y-a-n-a-m : x-š-a-y-θ-i-y : d-h-y-u-n-a-m : x-š-a-y]-θ-i-y : a-h-
2. [... : h-x-a-m-n-i-š-i-y : θ-a-t-i-y : a-r-t-x-š-ç-a : x-š-a-y-θ-i-y] : m-r-t-
3. [... ... :] k^u-u-n-u-
4. [... a-u-r-m-z-d-a-m : k-a-m : k^u-u-n]-u-t-i-y :
5. [... : a-d-m : a-u-r-m-z-d-a-m : y-d-i-y (?) : a-r]-θ-a-c-a :
6. [... ... m]-a-m : a-u-
7. [... ... t-y : m-n-a : k-r]-t-m :

This piece was accurately described by Schweiger, who, however, was not aware of publishing it for the first time. The spacing between lines varies between 2,2 and 2,5 cm just like the other fragments except Sb 9794. Therefore, there is reason to believe that this fragment together with Sb 9907 and maybe also Sb 9784 were part of the same exemplar.

The lucky preservation of the small fragment labelled Sb 9827, joined with Sb 9793 (see fig. 15), is crucial to establishing the correct restoration of the first lines and, consequently, the length of the lines of the whole inscription. The previous attempts of restoration (see Schweiger 1998/2, pp. 438-439) were all based on the assumption that the inscription started with the opening invocation *baga vazrka Auramazda* etc. and therefore should be discarded.

Louvre Sb 9907 (Scheil 1929, p. 86; here fig. 14)

1. [... x-š-a]-r¹y¹-θ-i-y : x-š-a-y-[θ-i-y-a-n-a-m : x-š-a-y-θ-i-y : d-h-y-u-n-a-m ...]
2. [...-θ-i-y-h]-y-a : p-u-ç : h-[x-a-m-n-i-š-i-y : θ-a-t-i-y : a-r-t-x-š-ç-a : x-š-...]
3. [...-d-a-m : k]-a-m : p-s-a-[v :]
4. [...-u-t-i-y : t]-r¹y¹ : a-u-[r-m-z-d-a-m : k-a-m :]
5. [...-t-i-y : a-r-t]-r¹x¹-š-ç¹-l[a : x-š-a-y-θ-i-y : a-d-m : a-u-r-m-z-d-a-m ...]

One only has to compare the previous attempts of restoration of the text formerly labelled XSc to see that the textual segments preserved by this fragment cannot be easily traced back to any of the typical formulas found in the Achaemenid corpus (see again Schweiger 1998/2, pp. 471-472). For example, at l. 3 before *pasāva* the most obvious thing to expect is a verbal form, as rightly noted by Brandenstein 1932, p. 80



fn. b. This led Kent 1953, in absence of a plausible alternative, to conjecture **akunām*, which Schmitt 2009, p. 179 rightly calls «eine Unform [...] wohl besser aufzugeben». The expression *Auramazdām kāma*, required by the Elam. version, efficiently solves the problem. The fact that the restoration based on the Elam. version fits perfectly with non-trivial sequences of signs is one of the strongest arguments supporting the whole reconstruction.

Louvre Sb 9784 (fig. 16)

- 1 [a-d-m:] a-[r-t-x-š-ç-a : x-š-a-y-θ-i-y : v-z-r-k : x-š-a-y-θ-i-y: ...]
- 2 [y-a-y-a] : b-^ru^l[mⁱ-i-y-a : d-a-r-y-v-u-š : x-š-a-y-θ-i-y-h-y-a : p-u-...]
- 3 [i-y : h]-y^r : ^l[a-v : k^u-u-n-u-t-i-y : t-y : a-u-r-m-z-d-a-m : k-a-m ...]
- 4 [t-i]-^ry^l : u-t-a : m-r-t-i-y : h-y : a-v : n-i-y : k^u-u-n-u-t-i-y : t-y : a-u-...]

In light of the small line-spacing (ca. 2,5 cm) the association of this small fragment to A²Se rather than to a foundation tablet is not straightforward at first glance. However, the space between the signs is way too large in comparison to all the other exemplars of the inscriptions on foundation tablet (DSe, DSf, DSt, DSz) and the <u> sign with the Winkelhaken covered by the upper horizontal wedge at l. 2 in the word <b-u-mⁱ-i-y-a> (written without logogram!) unambiguously points to A²Se.

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