



DASTGERD

DASTGERD (< **dasta-kr̥ta* “made by hand, handiwork”), a term originally designating a royal or seigneurial estate. It is doubtful that it was used in the Achaemenid period, as it is attested only once, in the restored form [*dasta*]kr̥tam (cf. DSe, ll. 42-43; Kent, *Old Persian*, p. 142). It is widely attested in Middle Iranian inscriptions (ŠKZ Mid.Pers. l. 30, Parth. ll. 16-17, 25, 19-30; NPi Mid.Pers. l. 4, Parth. l. 3, a passage too full of lacunae to permit interpretation of the term; Humbach and Skjærvø, III/1, p. 30, III/2, pp. 31-32) and in Book Pahlavi (cf. *Kār-nāmag* 5.13, ed. Antia, p. 35: *was deh ud dastgird ābādānih kard*). It was also borrowed in other languages of the Sasanian period (e.g., Arm. *dastakert*, Garsoïan, p. 520; Syr. *dstgrd* (?), Payne Smith, col. 930, and *dsqrt*; Bedjan, p. 439).

Although the etymology seems clear and was well understood by the translator of the Pahlavi psalter (cf. Psalm 134:15, where Syr. *ʿbd ʾyd* “the work of the hands” was rendered *dstklty*; Gignoux, 1969, pp. 241-42 and n. 22), the word has been translated in various ways. It is clear from inscriptions, notably that from Maq̥sūdābād in Fārs (de Menasce, p. 424), in which the domain is clearly distinguished from the village, that in the later Sasanian period the word no longer necessarily referred to a “royal” domain, as it had in ŠKZ. The same change is attested in Armenian sources, where the term could refer to the holding of a *naxarar* (a military officer; Garsoïan, p. 520), and from the late Pahlavi sources, where it might simply designate a piece of land (Macuch, p. 243). Such a domain, royal or not, must have included a residence, various other buildings, canals, and the like (Pigulevskaja, pp. 150-53).



The term was also applied to individuals, in phrases like “*dastgerd* of the king” or “of the gods” in ŠKZ (cf. “of God” in Armenian Christian sources; Maricq, repr., p. 56; Perikhanian, p. 460). The rendering *ktisma* in the Greek version of ŠKZ is evidence that the term is correctly translated as “possession” or “creation, creature.” It also became a proper noun and was used both as an honorific and as a toponym. An example of the former is *dastgerd-Šābuhr*, referring to *Dēnag*, queen of Mesene (ŠKZ Mid. Pers., l. 30), erroneously associated by W. B. Henning (p. 355) with Hamazasp, king of Georgia, whose name follows hers in the list of dignitaries. As a toponym it was associated by Arabic authors with Daskara or Daskarat al-Malek, a palace or fortified castle surrounded by walls on the road from *Ctesiphon* to Hamadān, built before the time of Kōsrow II (590-628 C.E.) and destroyed by the Byzantine emperor Heraclius in 628 (Duri, p. 168; cf. Christensen, *Iran Sass.*, pp. 454-55; Pigulevskaja, pp. 151-52). In a Syriac source of the 5th century a village called Dastgard is mentioned (Bedjan, p. 439), and, according to the acts of the Nestorian councils of 420 and 424, a place called Daskarta in Malka was subject to the catholicos (Pigulevskaja, p. 152). A number of places in Iraq also bore this name (Duri).

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