



HERZFELD, ERNST III. HERZFELD AND PERSEPOLIS

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Herzfeld first visited Persepolis in November 1905 during his return from the Assur excavation (see above, [HERZFELD i.](#)). Back in Berlin Eduard Meyer introduced him to Friedrich Sarre; their work together resulted in, among other projects, the outstanding publication *Iranische Felsreliefs* (Berlin, 1910). This book profited much from Herzfeld's work in Persepolis (see pls. 14-25 and a plan of the Apadana, p. 116, fig. 49). Here for the first time an identification of the thronebearers on the royal rock tombs was presented (pp. 14-56), although with the erroneous assumption that the first of the 30 figures was Median rather than Persian; consequently there were other mistakes in the first 13 relief figures. Herzfeld later corrected the error (see below).

Herzfeld returned to Persepolis during his expedition to Persia, Iraq, and Afghanistan, which lasted from February 1923 to October 1925. It was financed partly by the Notgemeinschaft der Deutschen Wissenschaft (Emergency Association of German Science), partly by the munificence of an American and a German friend and additionally by a rich donation of a group of Parsee gentlemen from Bombay for research particularly in Fārs province (Herzfeld, 1926; idem, *Illustrated London News* [ILN], 19 November 1927, p.



926; cf. Upton, 1968, p. 17). Herzfeld spent six weeks on the terrace of Persepolis, 26 November to 23 December, 1923, and March 2 to 15, 1924 (Herzfeld, 1926, pp. 247-49, 251 respectively). He drafted a plan of the whole structure and provided a complete photographic record on about 500 negative plates (Herzfeld, 1929-30, p. 17).

In the name of the Persian government, which had supported these activities, the governor general of the province of Fārs, Noşrat-al-dawla Firuz Mirzā, wrote a letter to Herzfeld asking for a detailed report on Persepolis with particular reference to the following points: (1) description of the actual state of the remains; (2) measures for the conservation of the existing ruins; (3) estimate of the costs and the duration of work; (4) plan of the ruins and essay of reconstruction. In his reply Herzfeld reckons two years for the period of excavation and proposes a structure to be built for the accommodation of the team and a museum for the objects found. As the place for such a building he suggests the Palace of Darius (Ta-čara). The application for the working permit, written in French, is dated 4 January 1924, when Iran nominally was still under Qajar rule. Probably due to the subsequent transfer of political power in Iran, the translation into Fārsi took three years and was completed only at the beginning of Reza Shah's reign (cf. Herzfeld, 1929-30, pp. 2.17-38); for the first time an exception was made to the French prerogative to excavate in Persia.

In 1928 the architect Friedrich Krefter joined Herzfeld in Persia, in an expedition sponsored again by the Notgemeinschaft der Deutschen Wissenschaft, to complete the mapping of Pasargadae and also to take control measurements in Persepolis (Krefter, 1979, pp. 13-18). Excavations were begun on 1 March 1931, now under the auspices of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. This was the result of the initiative of Professor J. H. Breasted, famed Egyptologist and founder of the Institute (Wilber, 1969, pp. 108 f.; 2nd ed., 1989, p. 115). An American patroness, who wished to remain anonymous, made it financially possible for the project to be realized (Schmidt, 1939, pp. VII-IX). As representative of the Persian Government, Moḥammad Taqī Moştafāvi came to Persepolis from the Susa excavation (Krefter, 1979, pp. 21-23), and he remained in this office for some time after the departure of Herzfeld. Moştafāvi was later to become director of the Antiquities Service in Tehran.

The excavation team consisted of Herzfeld, Krefter, and three Iraqi foremen, who were secured from the German Babylon (Hilleh) excavation (Krefter,



1979, pp. 19-25). Accordingly, work started at three different points: (1) the Southeast Building (the 'Harem'); (2) the north side of the Apadana and palace G; (3) the eastern door of the 'Gateway of all Lands.'

For F. Krefter work on the 'Southeast Building' was of particular importance, since he had convinced Herzfeld that, instead of the Tačara, the 'Harem' would be the better place for a combined museum and excavation building. Already in winter 1931-32 a partial reconstruction for the accommodation of the excavation crew was ready. Therefore Herzfeld in 1932 was in the position to enlarge the team with four new members: Karl Bergner as architect, Dr. Alexander Langsdorff as prehistorian, Donald MacCown of the Oriental Institute, and a professional photographer, Hans von Busse. A. Langsdorff and D. N. MacCown continued the trial excavation of Herzfeld of one of the Neolithic mounds south of Persepolis, Tall-e Bākun A (Langsdorff and MacCown, 1942; cf. Herzfeld, 1932).

At the Apadana the greatest achievement of Herzfeld's excavations was the unearthing of the eastern stairway, which, contrary to the northern one, was well preserved by a thick layer of mud-brick debris. Another important object of Herzfeld's investigations was the subterranean water canal system on the northern part of the terrace, although this endeavor never led to a satisfying conclusion (Schmidt, 1939, pp. VII -1X).

On the eastern wall of the northern doorway of the Tripylon remarkable traces of the original coloring were discovered on the figure of the king and his two attendants. A reproduction of the watercolor record of Friedrich Krefter was published soon afterwards (Herzfeld, *ILN*, 8 April 1933, p. 488; cf. Krefter, 1989, pp. 131 f., pl. 1), however, other sketches in watercolor and with color pencil of the Ahura Mazda symbol in the Hall of a Hundred Columns and the Tripylon remained unpublished (cf. A. B. Tilia, 1978, p. 93). Almost 40 years later, when most of the unearthed traces of ancient Persian polychromy had faded away, J. Lerner (1971, 1973) and G. Tilia (A. B. Tilia 1978, pp. 31-44) took advantage of these irreplaceable records for their investigations on the original coloring of the stone sculpture in Persepolis.

While reconstruction work was going on, the foundation tablet of the Southeast Palace (Harem) with the inscription of Xerxes was found (Herzfeld, 1932; idem, 1938, pp. 35-38, no. 15; Kent, *Old Persian*, pp. 112, 149 f. [XPf]). In September 1933 the golden and silver foundation plates of the Apadana with the inscriptions of Darius were discovered by Krefter in the northeastern and



southeastern corners of the central hall (Herzfeld, 1938, pp. 18 ff., no. 6; Schmidt, 1953, pp. 70, 79; Kent, *Old Persian*, p. 109 [DPh]; Abka'i-Khavari, 1988, pp. 41 f.). In the same year the foundation document of the Hall of a Hundred Columns was also discovered, a stone plate stating that this building was begun by Xerxes and completed by Artaxerxes I (Herzfeld, 1938, p. 45, no. 22; Schmidt, 1953, p. 129). In 1932 the inscriptions of the peoples on tomb V (the southern tomb in Persepolis, probably belonging to Artaxerxes II) were photographed from a scaffold, and Herzfeld was able to correct his earlier interpretations (Krefter, 1979, p. 23; the inscriptions: Herzfeld, 1938, pp. 46-50, no. 24).

From the historical point of view the most outstanding discovery was an archive of about 30,000 tablets written in Elamite cuneiform script. These 'Fortification tablets' were excavated in 1934-35 in the fortification wall at the northeastern corner of the terrace. They have proved indispensable for any study of the social, economic, and administrative conditions in Persepolis (Hallock, 1969; cf. Herzfeld, 1938, p. 11). Apart from the work on the terrace, researches were also carried out in the surrounding sites, the so-called Fratadara Temple (Herzfeld, 1941, pp. 286 f.), Naqš-e Rostam, and Eštākr (Herzfeld, 1941, pp. 276-81). At Naqš-e Rostam Herzfeld copied the inscription DNb on the tomb of Darius with the help of a scaffold (Herzfeld, 1938, pp. 4-13 no. 4; cf. Schmidt, 1953, p. 3; Kent, *Old Persian*, pp. 138-40).

A stone platform, located between Naqš-e Rajab and Naqš-e Rostam and called Taqt-e Rostam, with apparently the remains of a tomb similar to that of Cyrus the Great at Pasargadae, was thoroughly investigated. All stones were lifted and set aside, presumably in the hope of finding foundation documents (Schmidt, 1953, p. 3). According to Herzfeld (1935, p. 36), the monument was presumably the tomb of Cambyses. Eventually, in 1975, the monument was restored to its original state by G. Tilia and A. Sh. Shahbazi (A. B. Tilia, 1978, pp. XIII, 73, pl. 41; Krefter, 1979, p. 24).

Towards the end of 1933 and the beginning of 1934 the Persian government demanded that the excavation be headed by an American (Krefter, 1979, p. 25), and Herzfeld left Persepolis permanently in spring 1934. E. F. Schmidt was appointed as his successor by the Oriental Institute in Chicago; but because of his activity at Rayy he could not come to Persepolis before May 1935 (Schmidt, 1953, pp. 4 f.), and in the interim Friedrich Krefter led the excavation. Krefter's earlier reconstruction drawings of Persepolis later were published by Herzfeld (Herzfeld, 1941, pls. 48, 50, 58); but the complete reconstruction of Persepolis



in plans and perspective views was not possible until the publication of the excavation results of 1935-39 by E. F. Schmidt in 1952. It took another two decades until, in 1971, Krefter's reconstruction work appeared as a publication of the German Archaeological Institute in Tehran (on which, see [GERMANY ii.](#)).

It was Herzfeld's greatest wish to publish his most outstanding discovery in Persepolis, the Apadana friezes, himself. Therefore E. F. Schmidt in the first part of the Persepolis publication mentioned the friezes only briefly, thinking that a detailed treatment would be contributed by Herzfeld. However, due to the untimely death of the latter in 1948, this concept could not be realized (Schmidt, 1953, p. 82). Therefore Schmidt decided to deal with the Apadana friezes in an appendix of the third part of his publication (Schmidt, 1970, pp. 143-63), even though this volume was primarily for the investigations in Naqš-e Rostam. Thus, unfortunately, there is no coherent scientific publication of Herzfeld on Persepolis. Even so, the topic of the satrapies and the subject peoples of the Achaemenid empire plays a prominent role in his last work, *The Persian Empire* (published posthumously by Gerold Walser in 1968).

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