



PERSEPOLIS ADMINISTRATIVE ARCHIVES

PERSEPOLIS ADMINISTRATIVE ARCHIVES, two groups of clay tablets, fragments, and sealings produced and stored by administrative agencies based at Persepolis. The groups are named for their find spots: the Persepolis Fortification Archive ([Figure 1, A](#)) and the Persepolis Treasury Archive ([Figure 1, B](#)). Clay sealings found elsewhere in the fortification wall at Persepolis ([Figure 1, C](#)) may stem from other, perhaps related, administrative documents.

PERSEPOLIS FORTIFICATION ARCHIVE

Discovery, Locations, Components, Numbers. In March 1933, archaeological excavations directed by [Ernst Herzfeld](#) for the [Oriental Institute of The University of Chicago](#) discovered inscribed and sealed clay tablets and fragments at the northeastern corner of the platform of [Persepolis](#), in two small spaces of a bastion in the casemate fortification wall (Garrison and Root, 2001, pp. 23-6, Henkelman, 2008a, pp. 69-71, Stolper 2017a, pp. vi-xii). Herzfeld estimated that the find included about 30,000 or more tablets and fragments (“Recent Discoveries,” p. 232).

In 1935, Iranian authorities loaned these objects to the Oriental Institute for analysis and publication (Stolper 2017a, pp. xiv f.). About 450 tablets and tens of thousands of fragments were returned to Tehran; a small number of tablets and fragments have since been excavated at Persepolis or identified in the National Museum, and 12 others have been identified in other collections



(Henkelman, 2008a, pp. 75-79). As of 2017, the balance of the Fortification archive is at the Oriental Institute, about 20,000-25,000 tablets and fragments representing about 15,000-18,000 original documents (Jones and Stolper, 2008, pp. 37-44).

There are three main kinds of Fortification tablets. Most (ca. 70 percent or more, remains of about 10,000 or more original documents) have texts in [cuneiform script](#), in [Elamite language](#). A few (ca. 5 percent, remains of about 1,000 or fewer original documents) have texts in [Aramaic](#) script and language. Many (ca. 20 percent, remains of about 5,000 or more original documents) have no texts, but only impressions of seals. The functional relationship among these components — whether they represent relatively autonomous streams of information recording comparable kinds of administrative transactions or more interdependent ways of recording the same transactions — is an unsettled issue (Garrison, 2008, pp. 183-84; Henkelman, 2008a, pp. 157-62; Garrison and Henkelman).

There are unique Fortification documents in Old Persian script and language, in Greek script and language, in the Babylonian dialect of Akkadian, and (probably) in Phrygian script and language (Stolper and Tavernier, pp. 1-5), as well as sealed clay bag or box closures, and tablets with impressions of Greek and Persian coins in place of seals.

Most of these documents were produced in the middle of the reign of [Darius I](#) by an agency that managed the intake, transfer, storage, and distribution of food crops (cereals, fruit, cress), livestock (sheep and goats, cattle, equids, poultry), food products (flour, cereal products, beer, wine, processed fruit, oil, meat), and byproducts (hides, perhaps textiles) in a region centered on Persepolis, reaching roughly from the Rām Hormoz/[Behbahān](#) area to Neyrīz, providing support for livestock, workers, craftsmen, administrators, travelers, religious personnel, courtiers, and gods.

Elamite Fortification Documents. Current understanding of the Persepolis Fortification Archive rests chiefly on a sample of the Elamite documents that includes 2,284 published texts (Hallock, 1969, 1978; Grillot; Vallat, 1994; Jones and Stolper, 2006, pp. 7-9; Arfaee, 2008b), and 2,550 texts widely cited from draft editions by Richard T. Hallock (some of them published in collated editions with photographs, see Henkelman, 2003, pp. 103-15; 2008a, pp. 379, 385-415, 455-63; 2011a, pp. 134-56; 2011c, p. 28; 2017a, pp. 274-98; 2017b, pp. 288-89, 307, 309; 2017c, pp. 187-207; Henkelman, Jones and Stolper, 2006;



Henkelman and Stolper, pp. 284-86), and about 1,550 texts recorded since 2006 (some of them published in collated editions, with photographs, see Azzoni and Stolper, pp. 48-82; Henkelman, 2017a, pp. 275-76, 289-90; 2017b, pp. 320-29; Stolper 2015, pp. 6-21; 2017b, pp. 748-73; forthcoming[b]). Current understanding also draws on impressions 1,148 seals accompanying published Elamite texts (Garrison and Root, 1998, 2001, forthcoming[a], forthcoming[b]), and impressions of over 2,200 more seals on mostly unpublished Fortification documents (some published with detailed drawings and photographs, e.g., Garrison, 2017c, with references). Draft editions of many unpublished texts and documentation of many unpublished seals are available via “Persepolis Fortification Archive Project” at <http://ochre.uchicago.edu/page/projects>.

The earliest known dated Elamite Fortification text was written in month I, regnal year 13 of Darius I (April, 509 BC); the latest in month XII, regnal year 28 (March/April 493 BC). The largest numbers of dated texts are from years 22 and 23. A few texts refer to administrative records and activity as early as regnal year 4 of Darius I (518/17 BC) and a fragment that mentions regnal year 35 suggests that the Archive was still consulted as late as 487/86 BC (Stolper, 2017b, pp. 752, 767-69).

The Elamite texts mention about 150 places in the region controlled from Persepolis, including villages, estates, “paradises” (here indicating walled plantations, mentioned as sites of fruit orchards, storage facilities, and ritual activity, see Henkelman, 2008a, pp. 427-52; Boucharlat, 2016), way-stations, storehouses, fortresses, treasuries, poultry farms, towns, rivers, and mountains. The territory administered included settled areas in most of what is now Fārs, valley systems between Fārs and Kuzestān, areas along routes to the north and northwest, routes south to the Persian Gulf coast, and a strip of eastern modern Kuzestān. Travelers’ points of departure or destinations mentioned include places in the extreme east (India, Arachosia, Bactria) and west (Sardis) of the Achaemenid Empire (Koch, 1990; Vallat, 1993; Arfae, 2008a; Henkelman, 2008b, 2017c, pp. 157-69; forthcoming[d]). Achaemenid archaeological evidence from some of the districts administered from Persepolis is considered in Askari Chaverdi et al., 2010, 2014; Boucharlat, 2003, 2005, 2013; Boucharlat and Benech; Callieri; Carter and Wright; Carter et al., 2006; Henkelman, 2012a, 2013; Potts, 2008; Potts et al., 2007; Potts and Roustaie, 2006; Sumner).

Almost half of the Elamite texts are written on tablets with flattened left edges and rounded right edges, circa 3-5 cm wide, formed around knotted strings



(PLATE I). Most of these are memoranda of single transactions. About 75 percent of them record outlays of commodities as rations to official travelers, as regular or special rations to workers, as fodder for animals, as payments to officials and others, and as sacrifices to various deities; about 25 percent record receipt, deposit, exchange, and transfer of commodities and by-products. Some texts on tablets of this form are not records of completed transactions, but orders to execute extraordinary or unscheduled transactions, cast as letters from administrators at Persepolis.

The strings around which these tablets were formed may have been attached to clay sealings, and/or to uninscribed Fortification tablets. Attachment to counterpart documents in Aramaic on perishable materials, sometimes suggested, is improbable from a practical point of view.

Most of the remaining Elamite texts are on rectangular tablets, not formed around strings, many of them in tabular formats (PLATE II). Almost all of the texts on them are secondary or tertiary records, that is, compilations and/or tabulations of information from many memoranda, sometimes supplemented with oral information or written information not preserved in the Fortification Archive. They include summaries of intake and outlay of particular commodities at particular places during one or more accounting periods (one or several years), balanced accounts, and records of year-end balances.

A few texts were labels on sealings of diverse shapes (PLATE III), once attached to bags, baskets or boxes of documents, often showing traces of strings that closed the containers and attached the sealings (Henkelman, 2008a, pp. 138-40).

Memoranda of transactions were made at settlements outside Persepolis. Some were collected and audited at district centers. Most were sent periodically to Persepolis. At Persepolis, the memoranda were collated, transcribed and digested in secondary and tertiary records. The memoranda were to be discarded. The compilations were to be kept on file. Fair copies or digests of these compilations were also made in Aramaic, on perishable materials (Azzoni and Stolper, 2015, pp. 41-47).

Aramaic Fortification Documents. About 850 Fortification tablets and fragments with monolingual Aramaic texts have been identified (PLATE IV; Azzoni, 2008; Dusinberre). Almost all were formed around knotted strings that



originally emerged from a flattened edge, opposite a rounded or pointed edge. The texts were incised with styluses or written in ink with pens or brushes. Some tablets have two texts, one incised, the other inked after the clay had hardened. All have impressions of seals.

Like the Elamite Fortification documents, the dated Aramaic texts fall between year 13 and year 28 of Darius I, with the greatest concentration in years 23-25. The formal properties of the Aramaic texts do not conform to those of the Elamite texts, but the contents resemble those of some categories of Elamite memoranda, including transport or deposit of commodities; disbursal of seed; disbursal of provisions for travel parties moving to and from the king, Persepolis, and distant provincial centers (e.g., [Bactria](#), [Babylon](#)); disbursal of feed for equids; and disbursal of rations for workers (Azzoni, 2008, pp. 258-62; Azzoni, 2017; Azzoni and Dusinberre; Henkelman, 2008a, pp. 89-93; Garrison and Henkelman). Most of the texts are terser than comparable Elamite documents, sometimes no more than keywords or dates. Aramaic counterparts to the Elamite letter-orders and registers are absent. Aramaic documents written on leather, sometimes alluded to in the Elamite texts, are not preserved.

Other Aramaic texts are short epigraphs in ink on 250 or more Elamite cuneiform tablets and fragments, ranging from a single word to several lines, notes made as documents and information were processed (Azzoni and Stolper, 2015).

Uninscribed (Anepigraphic) Fortification Documents (Garrison, 2008, 2017b, 2017c). Almost all of the uninscribed tablets have one flattened edge, opposite a rounded or pointed edge ([PLATE V](#)). Almost all tablets are formed around knotted strings. They have impressions of up to five seals, some of them also used on Elamite and/or Aramaic documents. Patterns of seal use imply that at least some of the uninscribed tablets were produced in connection with outlays or deliveries of commodities in transactions comparable to some of those recorded in the Elamite and/or Aramaic Fortification tablets. Conspicuously absent from the seals impressed on uninscribed tablets and the Aramaic tablets are those found on Elamite registers and accounts, those belonging to the chief administrative officer Parnakka (Old Iranian *Farnaka-) and his deputy Ziššawiš (Old Iranian *Čiçavauš), and those associated in the Elamite texts with the principal offices and officials of high rank or wide competence.



Miscellaneous Documents. The single document written in Greek script resembles Aramaic documents in its terseness, recording only an amount of wine and an Aramaic month-name (PLATE VI, Fort. 1711 obverse). It has the impression of a seal that is also found on Elamite Fortification documents (Stolper and Tavernier, pp. 3 f., 24 f., Pompeo, 2015, pp. 157-67; 2017, pp. 9-16).

The single document written in Old Persian script and language resembles some of the Elamite Fortification documents, recording outlays of a dry commodity among five villages (PLATE VI, Fort. 1208-101). The seal impression has not been identified on other Fortification documents (Stolper and Tavernier, 2007, pp. 5-21).

The single document written in Babylonian script and language is not an administrative record, but a legal document recording the purchase of a slave at Persepolis in the reign of Darius. The parties and witnesses have Babylonian names and the document conforms to Babylonian conventions (Stolper, 1984, pp. 300-303). Transactions involving slaves are rarely mentioned in the Elamite Fortification texts (Henkelman, 2005, pp. 151-52).

The single document written in Phrygian script and language has not been interpreted (Brixhe, pp. 118-26).

Seal Impressions. Impressions of [cylinder seals](#) and stamp seals appear on Fortification documents of all kinds. In a few cases buttons, coins, or other objects were impressed instead of seals. Coins impressed on tablets include an Athenian tetradrachm and an Achaemenid [daric](#) (Starr; Root, 1988, pp. 8-12, 1989).

About 85 percent of the Elamite documents have impressions of seals, representing individuals or offices connected with the transactions that the documents record; impressions of up to six distinct seals appear on single tablets, but about 85 percent of the sealed tablets have impressions either of a single seal or of two seals. All of the Aramaic tablets have impressions of seals; impressions of up to four distinct seals occur, but about 90 percent have impressions either of a single seal or of two seals. All of the uninscribed tablets have impressions of seals; impressions of up to five seals occur, but about 85 percent have impressions either of a single seal or of two seals. About 15 percent of seals impressed on Aramaic tablets were also impressed on uninscribed or Elamite Fortification tablets. About 15 percent of seals impressed on uninscribed tablets were also impressed on Elamite and/or



Aramaic tablets. To date, some 24 seals are known to occur on all three document types, Elamite, Aramaic and uninscribed. Stamp seals are more common on Aramaic tablets (ca. 34 percent) and uninscribed tablets (ca. 30 percent) than on Elamite tablets (ca. 15 percent; Root, 1996).

Inscriptions were cut into 170 or more of the seals impressed on the tablets, normally identifying the seal's original owner or his superior. About half the inscriptions are in Elamite, about a third in Aramaic, and a few each in Akkadian and Greek. Several give the name and title of the king in the three languages of the royal inscriptions, Old Persian, Elamite, and Akkadian (Garrison, 2002, pp. 71, 80-90; 2014a, 2017c.; Henkelman, 2008a, pp. 95-103).

Many of the seals impressed on Elamite tablets can be confidently associated with individuals named in the texts (e.g., the chief administrative officer Parnakka or his deputy Ziššawiš) or with offices occupied by several individuals (e.g., the seal used successively by two "chiefs of workers" [Elamite *kurdabattiš*, reflecting Old Iranian **grdapāti*-]). Some seals belonged to offices with regional competence (for example, PFS 0001* used in transactions recorded in the immediate vicinity of Persepolis, PFS 0003 and PFS 0030 in the region around modern Kāmfiruz, PFS 0004* in the region around modern [Fahliān](#)).

Among the Elamite Fortification tablets, when a single seal was impressed, it commonly represents an individual or office of high rank and/or wide competence, and when two seals are impressed on memoranda, the seal used on the left edge commonly represents the individual or office that supplied the commodity involved in the transaction (Henkelman, 2008a, pp. 129-34; Root, 2008, pp. 106-8, Garrison, 2017b; Garrison and Henkelman). It is likely that comparable circumstances are implied by comparable patterns of seal use on at least some Aramaic Fortification tablets and at least some of uninscribed Fortification texts (Garrison, 2008, pp. 158-65, 183).

PERSEPOLIS TREASURY ARCHIVE

Excavations between 1934 and 1938 directed by Erich Schmidt for the Oriental Institute discovered 198 cuneiform tablets and substantial fragments of tablets, along with 548 smaller fragments, in the Treasury on the southeastern part of the Persepolis terrace, most of them concentrated in or around a single room. Herzfeld had found a fragment from this group in 1932 (Jones and Yie). The excavators also found 199 sealings, that is, clay objects of various shapes with impressions of stamp seals, cylinder seals and seal rings, many of them



with marks of strings that secured bags or boxes and/or attached the sealings to containers; 72 of these sealings were found in the room where most of the tablets were concentrated (Schmidt, 1957, pp. 4-5).

All but one of the Treasury tablets are approximately tongue-shaped and formed around knotted strings, similar to the majority of Fortification tablets with Elamite memoranda or letters, but generally larger (ca. 7-10 cm wide; [PLATE VII](#)). All of these have texts in Achaemenid Elamite. One tablet is rectangular, unsealed, and stringless; it has a text in the Babylonian dialect of Akkadian. Some of the associated clay sealings resemble those used elsewhere with folded papyrus or parchment documents. Few if any of them resemble the uninscribed Fortification tablets.

Forty-six of the Elamite documents and the Akkadian document belong to collections of the Oriental Institute. The remaining Treasury tablets are in the National Museum of Iran, Tehran (Cameron, 1948, p. viii; Razmjou, p. 55). The single Akkadian text and 139 Elamite texts have been published (Cameron 1948, 1958, pp. 172-76; 1965, with collations and corrections by Hallock, 1960 and Arfa'i, 2008c; Jones and Yie).

The Elamite Treasury texts are dated between year 30 of Darius I and year 7 of [Artaxerxes I](#), 492-457 BCE. The largest numbers of dated texts are from years 19 and 20 of Xerxes.

Impressions of a few seals shared by the Elamite Treasury tablets and/or the Treasury sealings and/or the Elamite Fortification tablets confirm functional connections and administrative continuity among these groups of records.

All but a few of the Treasury texts deal with payments of silver from a treasury at Persepolis made in lieu of partial or full rations of sheep, wine, or grain, to workers and craftsmen active at or near Persepolis. The geographical range is more limited than that of the Fortification texts (Henkelman, forthcoming[d]). They include letters ordering payments to groups of workers and memoranda of such payments made. The letters are addressed to four men in succession over the thirteen-year interval, sometimes entitled “treasurer” (Elamite *kapnuškir*, corresponding to Iranian *ganzabara*). In the memoranda of payment, the same men are sometimes characterized with the Elamite word *šaramanna*, common in the Fortification texts to indicate officials in charge of work groups and their provisions. The earliest-named of these men also appears in this role in Fortification texts.



Senders of the Treasury letters were men of the same effective rank as the chief administrative officers in the Fortification archive (Hallock, 1985, p. 592; Henkelman, forthcoming[d.]). One of them is sometimes termed “foremost” (Elamite *pirratamma*, transcribing Old Iranian **fratama*), probably intended as a title, “chief,” “director” (Tuplin, 2005; Tavernier, 2007, p. 405). The recipients of Treasury payments included craftsmen working at Persepolis and, occasionally, at nearby district centers (woodworkers, goldsmiths, stonecutters, some described as Syrians, Ionians, Egyptians), and accountants working in the treasury.

The few Elamite Treasury documents that record other matters include details that link them to the Fortification Archive. Some tablets and fragments from the reign of Darius are marked with the seal of a high-ranking official (Elamite *Irdumartiya*, Aramaic *rtwrzy*, representing Old Iranian **Artavard/ziya-*) who is well-represented in the Fortification texts; they record outlays of silver according to royal orders, sometimes in very large amounts and sometimes at district centers also well-documented in the Fortification texts (PT 4-8, and fragments listed in Schmidt, 1957, p. 31, Seal No. 33 [PTS 33* = PFS 0071*]). Another text records a deposit of a large amount of gold, taken from the main settlement nearest Persepolis to one of the same district centers (PT 83).

The single Akkadian text from the Treasury records assays of silver payments made, perhaps at or near Persepolis, by three individuals in years 19 and 20 of Darius I (503-502 BC; PT 85, see Briant, 2002, p. 441). Its functional connection, if any, to the Elamite Treasury documents is not known (Tamerus, pp. 255-57, with references).

OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS FROM PERSEPOLIS

Excavations directed by Akbar Tadjvidi in 1968 at one of the upper towers of the fortification wall running up the slope and along the crest of the mountain to the east of the Persepolis terrace (Figure 1, C) recovered a group of 52 clay sealings (Tadjvidi, 1970, 1976, p. 195 f.; Garrison, 2017b, pp. 439-40, Garrison and Root, 2001, p. 34; Henkelman, Jones, and Stolper, 2004, p. 41 f.; Rahimifar, 2005; Razmjou, 2008, p. 57). Some resemble uninscribed Fortification tablets (Rahimifar, 2005, pl. 16f.). Others resemble sealings used elsewhere to secure folded papyrus or parchment documents. Some of these have impressions of a seal that was also impressed on sealings found in the Treasury (Tadjvidi, 1976, p. 195 figs. 140ff.; Rahimifar, pl. 18; Tallis, p. 231 no. 424; cf. Schmidt, 1957, pl. 9 no. 28).



SIGNIFICANCE

The Persepolis administrative archives are an exceptional resource for the study of Achaemenid languages, both individually and in connection with each other, as they were written in the heart of the empire at its zenith. The Elamite texts are the largest single corpus in the Elamite language. The Aramaic texts constitute one of the largest corpora of Imperial Aramaic, a dialect used throughout the empire for local recording and inter-regional communication. The single Old Persian Fortification text is the only explicit evidence for the use of Persian in practical recording, rather than in display and sumptuary uses. The transcriptions of Iranian words and names in the Elamite and Aramaic texts constitute the largest single corpus of Old Iranian preserved in indirect transmission, including evidence of lexicon, phonology, and dialect variation that cannot be found elsewhere (Tavernier, 2007). The collocation of these languages in a large, consistent corpus is the densest evidence for contact and interference among Achaemenid languages.

The Persepolis administrative archives are an exceptional resource for the study of Achaemenid heartland society. The recipients of food payments and the participants in administrative transactions recorded in the texts show a cross-section from livestock through gods. Between these extremes are gangs of workers, classified by sex and age, and sometimes with ethnic labels that indicate their origins (in [Egypt](#), Babylonia, [Cappadocia](#), [Caria](#), Lydia in the west, or in [Carmania](#), [Arachosia](#), Ghandara and [India](#) in the east, or elsewhere); workers identified by their occupations (craftsmen, agricultural workers, builders); clerks who operated the system that the texts record; supervisors of the workers; religious personnel; travelers going to, from or through Persepolis on official business, with their retinues, often classified by social status; and members of the elite, including some related to the king by blood or marriage. The terms and contexts in which such people are described enable reconstruction of social texture that other sources do not reveal.

The Persepolis Fortification Archive documents a regional system of administration and redistribution and a network of interlocking institutions. The chief officer, Parnakka, belonged to high Persian nobility, but was not necessarily a kinsman of the king (Henkelman, forthcoming[d]). Other members of the royal family had estates and households where goods controlled by the Persepolis administration were stored and expended, and where workers supported by the administration were employed (Henkelman, 2010, 2011c; Stolper, forthcoming[b]). District centers included strongholds,



storehouses, stockyards, treasuries, trading posts, and facilities for craft production. Distinct administrative branches controlled fruit, cereals, wine and beer, and livestock, and another branch controlled the workers whom the commodities supported. The Persepolis Treasury Archive, mostly dealing with the support of workers and craftsmen at Persepolis itself, exemplifies some operations of regional centers. Both archives mention or imply parallel contemporary institutions of market exchange (Aperghis, 1997, 1999; Hinz, 1970, 1971; Kawase 1980, 1984, 1986; Koch 1980, 1983; Henkelman 2005).

The Fortification texts provide unique detail on the Achaemenid crown's support of religious personnel (for example, "priests" [Elamite *šatin*, Aramaic *kmr*] and Magians (**Magi**) [Elamite *makuš*, Aramaic *mgwš*]) and provision of offerings to divinities, including some with Iranian names (for example, Auramazdā, *Miždušī, *Narēsanga, *Spantārmatiš, *Šēθrapatiš) and others with Elamite names (for example, Humban, Šimut, Napiriša), as well as to mountains and rivers. They supply terminology of offerings and ceremonies (for example, Elamite *lan*, *šip*, Old Iranian **dauča-*), and sites of religious activities that are found rarely or not at all in other sources (Henkelman, 2008a, 2011f, 2017b, forthcoming[b], forthcoming[c]). The seal impressions on all classes of tablets include imagery of religious activity, symbols, and figures, some of it unique to this corpus (Garrison, 2011, 2017a, 2017c).

Legible impressions of more than 3,400 distinct cylinder seals and stamp seals have been identified, and further recording may yield legible impressions of 4,000 or more distinct seals. This is one of the largest bodies of imagery from anywhere in the ancient world. Its range surpasses that of Achaemenid monumental art, including scenes of heroic combat and control, hunting, worship, chariotry, erotic activity, animals in combat or in heraldic attitudes, and abstract designs. It displays adaptations of earlier Mesopotamian and Iranian art along with Achaemenid innovations. It displays a range of styles and skills in the designers and engravers. Because many seals are associated with individuals or offices whose relative social or administrative status is known, this corpus displays an extraordinary connection between art and social context (Garrison, 2000, 2014b; Root, 1989, 1997, 2008).

The Persepolis administrative archives, the largest body of primary documents from the political heart of the Empire, elucidate fragmentary narrative sources on Achaemenid history. Some of the members of court who appear in the texts are known to such sources (e.g., **Artystone** and **Atossa**, wives of Darius, or **Gobryas**, son-in-law of Darius, **Arsames** and **Xerxes**, sons of Darius;



see Lewis, 1985; Henkelman, 2003, 2010, 2011c; Garrison, 2014b, 496-500; Stolper, forthcoming[b]). Others are previously unknown figures of similar status (for example, daughters of Vištāšpa-/Hystaspes [*Goštāsp*], other women of the king's family), and the texts present them in contexts unknown to the narrative sources. Because official travelers were required to show authorizations from governors at the points of origin of their trips, the texts name some satraps known from narrative sources (e.g., *Artaphernēs* at Sardis), and more satraps previously unknown (e.g., governors at Arachosia, Carmania, *Susa*, Babylon). Fortification tablets of this kind elucidate reflections of the same practices in Greek and Aramaic documents (for example, satraps' support and regulation of official travel, see Briant, 2002, pp. 364-68; Henkelman, 2010, 2011a, Lewis, 1984, 1987, Seibert, 2002, Tuplin, 1998, Henkelman and Jacobs).

The Persepolis administrative archives account for isolated or fragmentary Achaemenid Elamite administrative texts from other sites as evidence of similar administrative activity and recording across most of Iran itself, from Susa (Garrison, 1996) to *Kandahar* (Helms, 1982, p. 13; 1997, p. 101; Fisher and Stolper). Particulars of administrative vocabulary, practice and recording found in the Persepolis administrative archives elucidate particulars in archival sources from Achaemenid Bactria (Shaked; Naveh and Shaked), Babylonia, Anatolia, Judea, and Egypt.

Each of the Persepolis archives documents operations of a narrow sector of administrative activity over a short period. The two archives together document a continuity of activity and recording over more than fifty years. A few of the sources that the Persepolis archives elucidate document similar administrative practices in the Persian heartland in the reign of Cambyses or earlier (Henkelman and Kleber), and many more document similar administrative institutions and systemic continuities in much of the Achaemenid Empire through and after its last years (Briant, 2009, pp. 164-68; forthcoming; Henkelman and Folmer, 2016; Henkelman, 2017c).

The Persepolis administrative archives are thus the key to a manifold view of Achaemenid imperial structure and practice, the centerpiece in a discontinuous array of dense documentary sources that reveal commonality and variability, inheritance and innovation, adaptation and continuity in the operations of control, support, and governance within Achaemenid Iran, across the breadth of Achaemenid empire, and throughout the life of the Achaemenid empire.



See also [PERSEPOLIS ELAMITE TABLETS](#).

Abbreviations

Fort. = Persepolis Fortification tablet.

PF = tablet published in Hallock 1969.

PFAT = Persepolis Fortification Aramaic Tablet.

PFUT = Persepolis Fortification Uninscribed Tablet.

PT = tablet published in Cameron 1948.

PTS = Persepolis Treasury Seal (designating seals represented by impressions on tablets and/or sealings excavated the Persepolis Treasury).

PFS = Persepolis Fortification Seal (designating seals represented by impressions on Elamite tablets from the Persepolis Fortification Archive; see Garrison and Root 1998, 2001, forthcoming[a], forthcoming[b]).

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