



PERSEPOLIS ADMINISTRATIVE ARCHIVES II. PERSEPOLIS TREASURY ARCHIVE

ii. 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).

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