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On Old Persian *tačara-* and its Elusive Meaning

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1. Being rather scanty and repetitive, the royal Achaemenid corpus is in the main fairly intelligible. This is true especially for the OP texts.¹ Nevertheless, many points still deserve attention, both in the field of syntax and lexicon. Suffice to think to the OP palatial terms, such as *t/dačara-*, *hadiš-*, *apadāna-*, *ardastāna-*, etc., whose full semantic implications are still far from being grasped, despite great efforts by scholars.

In what follows I will review the scholars' views on *t/dačara-* and advance some remarks on possible cognates in Modern Iranian languages.² My contribution will be modest and will provide no definitive solution. Inversely proportional to its scantiness is however the respect and affection with which these pages are dedicated to Maria Macuch for her sixty-fifth birthday, in recognition of the deep scientific value of her works on the Sasanian society and her natural cheerfulness and geniality, which always makes people feel good in her presence.

2. The first occurrence of *t/dačara-* is found in a multilingual inscription (DPa) attested in two copies in one of the oldest building in Persepolis, situated on the SW sector of the Terrace and commonly referred to as 'Palace of Darius' or 'Tachara'.³ This building consists of a columned hall with a southern portico, flanked by rooms on its sides. A double reversed stairway connects it to the south court.

- 1 As well known, the Achaemenid royal inscriptions were written in three languages: Old Persians (OP), Achaemenid Babylonian (AB), Achaemenid Elamite (AE).
- 2 The present paper contains results of research conducted in the framework of a Project on Achaemenid epigraphy funded by the MIUR (PRIN prot. 2009JHSEE7_002); it also benefits from the results of former Projects funded by the MIUR (PRIN 2005105580_002, 2007ZKPPSM_003) and the DARIOSH Project for a new edition of the multilingual Achaemenid corpus (L'Orientale University, Naples—Tuscia University, Viterbo).
- 3 For the sake of convenience, the buildings at Persepolis and Susa will be referred to by the names frequently used in the literature; they will be written in inverted commas to stress the fact that I agree with the scholars who questioned these conjectural terms and the functions arbitrarily attributed to buildings (cf. ROSSI 2003; RAZMJOU 2010).