

## PERSEPOLIS FORTIFICATION ARCHIVE PROJECT

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To answer the first question posed by followers of the Persepolis Fortification Archive Project: the Other Shoe has dropped, at least part way (fig. 1). In mid-July 2016, just as this report was submitted, the US Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit affirmed the district court's summary judgment against the plaintiffs and in favor of the OI and Iran in the lawsuit over the Persepolis Fortification tablets (précis at <http://us7thcircuitcourtofappealsopinions.justia.com/2016/07/19/rubin-v-islamic-republic-of-iran/>, more at <http://www.chicagolawbulletin.com/Articles/2016/07/20/Museum-Persian-artifacts-7-20-16.aspx>). One of the judges on the panel dissented against obstacles to review by the whole circuit bench. Full review would have been desirable, as he observed, because in this decision the Seventh Circuit contradicts a Ninth Circuit interpretation of earlier rulings by the very same Seventh Circuit. This perhaps falls short of an actual "circuit split," a conflict between appellate rulings that would require Supreme Court review, but the difference in reasoning between the two circuits invites further appeal, and in October the plaintiffs filed a petition for a hearing before the US Supreme Court. Stay tuned to the PFA Project weblog (<http://perspolistablets.blogspot.com/>) for further developments

As the wheels of justice continue to turn, the Persepolis Fortification Archive Project continues to collect, correct, and display images, texts, seals, and catalog information. Dude-like, the editorial staff abides, sometimes daunted by the scope of the work to be done, sometimes delighted by fresh discoveries. As veteran student workers move on in their academic lives new students come into the Project, thanks to timely support from the Roshan Cultural Heritage Institute, and some student workers begin to build their own research with the products of the PFA Project.



*Figure 1. The Other Shoe: in a split decision, the Court of Appeals affirmed the summary judgment against the plaintiffs in the lawsuit over possession of the PFA*

When last year's *Annual Report* left graduate students Christina Chandler (Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology, Bryn Mawr) and Erin Daly (Classics), they were finishing the identification and recording of seals on the unpublished tablets being edited for publication by PFA Project editor Wouter Henkelman (École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris). They were also beginning to make final collated drawings of selected new seals under supervision and instruction from PFA Project editor Mark Garrison (Trinity University, San Antonio). They focused first on seals with inscriptions in Aramaic or Elamite, typically used by offices and individuals of high administrative rank. By the end of summer 2015, they had completed drawings of about 50 tablets, and they are returning to this project during the summer of 2016. Daly has also begun to identify and record the seals on about 800 of the unpublished Elamite tablets and fragments whose texts I have recorded over the life of the Project. This complements identifications and records of seals on about 750 others already compiled by Tytus Mikołajczak (NELC). Garrison, Chandler, and Daly also continued to record seals on uninscribed Fortification tablets (PFUT), processing about 70 of the ca. 3,500 items with analytically useful seal impressions. Following up on the newly completed seal identifications, Garrison began to supplement and update earlier collated drawings of seals, drawings that were based on the smaller corpus of published documents. Mikołajczak did the same for seals impressed on the accounting tablets that are the focus of his dissertation work. The corpus of seals on Fortification tablets that the historian Albert Olmstead long ago foresaw as "a whole new museum of Achaemenid art" now includes more than 3,400 distinct legible images.

PFA Project editor Annalisa Azzoni (Vanderbilt University) finalized her readings of the ca. 245 Aramaic epigraphs (PFAE) identified so far on Elamite Fortification tablets, and she continues to add to this corpus as new items are identified.

During the past year she reviewed and finalized her readings of about 150 more of the monolingual Aramaic Fortification tablets. Her ongoing collaboration with Jan Tavernier (Catholic University of Leuven) on the Iranian names and words in the Aramaic Fortification material, and on the evidence of Iranian-Aramaic language interference, underpinned Tavernier's presentation at a conference in Leuven in February.

PFA Project editor Wouter Henkelman continued his work on the late Richard T. Hallock's draft editions of ca. 2,500 Elamite Fortification texts, collating and recollating the tablets, supplying textual and critical notes for a final, authoritative publication of this corpus. These notes sometimes draw also on his collations of additional related Elamite tablets and fragments that I have recorded in draft form.

I recorded first-draft editions of Elamite texts on about 30 more Fortification tablets and fragments, for a running total of about



Figure 2. A tablet nerd's garden of delight: a close parallel to a hitherto unique text. This damaged list of thousands of fruit seedlings or saplings — including apples, pears, dates, figs, olives, quince, mulberries, prune-plums, pomegranates(?), and others — and their nurserymen at several plantations ("paradises") corroborates Classical historians' descriptions of the lush paradises in the Persian heartland that Alexander the Great encountered

1,555 items (bringing the number of available Elamite Fortification texts to almost 6,400). Along the way, I encountered occasional surprises of the kind that warm the heart of a tablet nerd (fig. 2). Graduate students Teagan Wolter and Seunghee Yie imported about 300 of these editions, glossed and parsed in preliminary form, into the Online Cultural and Historical Research Environment (OCHRE), where PFA Project data is made public as it is captured and processed.

Most of my effort went toward collating my first drafts of previously recorded texts. This results in a humbling range and volume of corrections and a delightful range and number of connections to other PFA data. Beginning with the single-transaction memoranda, letters, and labels, I collated about 800 items. Graduate student Rhyme King (NELC) updated the editions, glossary entries, and links for about half of these in OCHRE. While doing so, he cleaned up inconsistencies in OCHRE data and display, revised and corrected entries in OCHRE's Elamite glossary, added new lemmas and newly attested forms to existing lemmas, and began to add bibliography to on-line editions.

Veteran photographer Ami Huang (graduate, NELC), mostly working alone, made more than 4,000 new conventional digital images of about 500 Elamite Fortification tablets, including supplementary images of about 400 previously documented items. Huang and Alexandra Hoffmann (graduate, NELC) edited about four-fifths of these in standard PFA Project format. In summer 2016, Hoffman also began to make conventional digital images of newly cataloged Elamite tablets and fragments, and Nilofar Mehdi Saraj (graduate, CMES) began to correct color and contrast issues in some previously edited images (fig. 3).

In August 2015, Edward Fernandez (graduate, CMES) left the Project after two years of productive, often solitary work in the high-resolution imaging lab. Jordan Johansen (graduate, Classics) and Emily Duzan (graduate, CMES) began work there in the autumn and Theresa Tiliakos (graduate, CMES) and Nathaniel Downey (first-year, College) in winter. Despite disruptions of staff turnover and training, they made dynamic polynomial texture mapping (PTM) image sets of about 1,100 surfaces from about 120 tablets and fragments (mostly uninscribed sealed documents and large-format Elamite tablets), and about 280 high-resolution, filtered-light scans to supplement records of about 210 monolingual Aramaic tablets and about 40 Aramaic epigraphs (fig. 4).

After years of cheerful, assiduous post-processing of PTM imagery, Aimee Genova (graduate, History) left for dissertation-related fieldwork in autumn 2015. Ashley Clark (graduate, History) and Timothy Clark (graduate, Classics), stepped up to continue processing the large backlog of these images, joined during summer 2015 by Project veteran Seunghee Yie (gradu-



*Figure 3. Updating images: Nilofar Mehdi Saraj (CMES) corrects and re-edits images of Elamite Fortification tablets*



*Figure 4. Documenting the Aramaic corpus: Theresa Tiliakos (NELC) makes filtered-light scans of an epigraph on a late-stage Elamite document*



Figure 5. Cutting the backlog: Ashley Clark (History) and Oliver Natarajan (Williams College) edit PTM images of Fortification tablets

ate, NELC) and during summer 2016 by Oliver Natarajan (undergraduate, Williams College) (fig. 5). Altogether, they processed about 1,750 image sets from about 200 tablets and fragments.

Since trials of the OI Conservation Lab’s portable X-ray fluorescence scanner described in last year’s *Annual Report* were promising, Shaheen Chaudhri (graduate, CMES) began to make pXRF scans of selected Fortification tablets (described and illustrated *infra*, in the *Annual Report* on Conservation). About 250 Elamite and Aramaic items selected by Henkelman and Azzoni have been scanned. Analysis and links to the other accumulated data on the tablets are deferred until

a large number of pieces have been scanned. These scans promise to add a new dimension to the documentation of the Fortification tablets, complementing images and editorial information with information on the material composition of the objects. Comparing the chemical signatures of the tablet clays with internal information of the texts, patterns of seal usage, and eventually with clay samples from Fars collected by recent archaeological projects should make it possible to refine our knowledge of the historical geography of Achaemenid Fars.

A new grant from the Roshan Cultural Heritage Institute has enabled the OI to take over the long-delayed publication of Mark Garrison’s monograph on *The Ritual Landscape at Persepolis: The Glyptic Imagery from the Persepolis Fortification Archive*, now scheduled to appear in the OI series *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization*. Noteworthy among ten other PFA-related articles published or submitted during the last year are substantially enlarged versions of papers on Achaemenid administration by Azzoni, Garrison, Henkelman, and me, first presented at the PFA anniversary conference in Basel in 2013, and now appearing as the

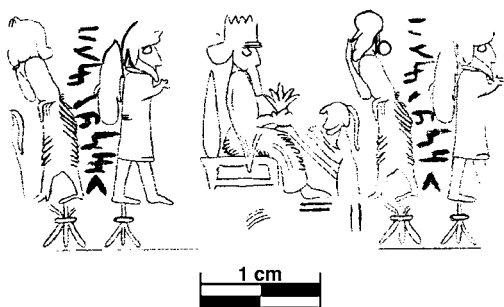


Figure 6. The enthroned king, his attendants, and a kneeling figure: working collated drawing of PFUTS 0305\*, the focus of Christina Chandler’s MA thesis

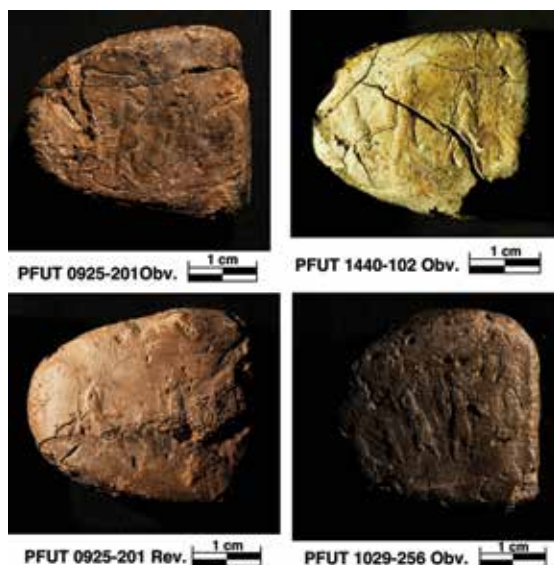


Figure 7. Pieces of the audience scene: some of the incomplete impressions from which Mark Garrison and Christina Chandler compiled the working drawing of PFUTS 0305\*



core of a conference volume to be published in the series *Classica et Orientalia*; surveys on art, administration, religion, and language by Garrison, Henkelman, and me, to appear in the *Oxford Companion to the Achaemenid Persian Empire*; and contributions by Dusinberre, Garrison, Henkelman, and me on art, chronology, recording methods and other topics, to appear in volumes that celebrate the careers of distinguished colleagues.

As publications like these make new basic evidence available, we are starting to see Project work bearing fruit in current published research and criticism by senior colleagues. At another stage of the research process, Christina Chandler and Rhyné King submitted MA theses at Bryn Mawr and University of Chicago, respectively, based on new data arising from the PFA Project, exemplifying a rising generation of Achaemenid scholars versed in the rich material of the PFA (figs. 6, 7, and 8).

PFA-related public lectures and presentations at academic meetings delivered by Project members include Henkelman’s lectures on “Granaries, Camels and Tablets” at Tehran University and on “Persepolis, Arachosia and Bactria” at UCLA; Tytus Mikołajczak’s presentations on seals used on the accounting texts of the Fortification Archive at the annual meeting of the American Oriental Society (Boston), the *Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale* (Philadelphia) and the University of Poznań; and presentations by Henkelman and me on aspects of Achaemenid Elamite writing, at the third installment of the Neubauer Collegium’s “Signs of Writing” project organized by Christopher Woods and Edward Shaughnessy, in Paris.

Since 2006, the PFA Project has increased the number of known Elamite Fortification documents (the largest Elamite language corpus anywhere) by more than 40 percent; increased the number of known Aramaic Fortification documents (the largest unpublished Imperial Aramaic epigraphic corpus) by about 80 percent; increased the number of known epigraphs on Elamite tablets (the largest corpus of such epigraphs anywhere) by about 300 percent; increased the number of identified Fortification seals (the largest corpus of Achaemenid art anywhere) by about 125 percent; increased the number of publicly accessible Persepolis Fortification tablets and fragments — via images, preliminary and advanced text editions, seal drawings, and/or cataloging information — by about 350 percent; and published many of the implications of this corpus for Achaemenid languages, art, religion, society, institutions, geography, and history (sometimes with effects beyond the ordinary limits of ancient philology, art, and history).



*Figure 8. The royal audience in monumental form: relief moved in antiquity from the Apadana staircase to the Treasury of Persepolis, where it was discovered by OI excavators in 1935–37*

Is this a comprehensive record of the PFA? Yes, in the broad sense that it has improved the breadth, depth, understanding, and availability of the corpus by orders of magnitude. Is it an accurate record? Not yet; it is a record compiled under emergency conditions and often released in first-draft form, so our focus turns increasingly to correction and consolidation of the records. Is it a complete record? No; as is true of all progressive research, the more we do and know, the more we can do and know. As we learn again every day, the results up to now make previously useless fragments into tractable data, and there will be years of fruitful original work to do even after the archive leaves the custody of the OI.

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